

December 24, 2023: Nativity of the Lord

Background on the Gospel Reading

During the Christmas season, our liturgy invites us to consider the birth of the Lord from many vantage points. As we begin this season, it is useful to remember that the stories of Jesus' birth and childhood are found in only two of our Gospels, Matthew and Luke. Throughout this season, we will hear stories from both Gospels. Those Gospels tell different but complementary stories about Jesus' birth, highlighting items of theological importance about the Incarnation and the salvation that Jesus brings.

On this day, the Feast of Christmas, we are given the details of Christ's birth as found in the Gospel of Luke. Here we learn about the census that brings Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem, where Jesus is born. We also hear about the angel's announcement of this good news to the shepherds. In these details, we find two of Luke's particular concerns: (1) to locate the coming of Christ in the wider framework of salvation history as good news for all people, Gentiles and Jews, and (2) to show the Lord's favor upon the poor and lowly.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus is born as one of the poor. Laid in a manger in a stable, because there was no room at the inn, he comes into the world through obscure and surprising means. Yet, as the angel proclaims this good news to the shepherds, this infant is announced as the Messiah and Lord. In the song of the angels, all are invited to give glory to God for this miraculous birth, in which God comes to share our humanity.

The angels sing that Jesus' coming brings peace. Yet there is little in the details of this Gospel that gives evidence of peace. Jesus is born as a traveler away from home, born in a stable in a crowded city under the occupation of foreigners. The appearance of the angel to the shepherds frightens them. When the angels proclaim Jesus' birth as the harbinger of "peace on earth," the evangelist Luke clearly wants us to take the long view. The shepherds are invited to claim a faith that will enable them to see this infant as a sign God's promise of a messiah. It is through such faith that one finds the peace of which the angels sing.

www.loyolapress.com

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: The next parish council meeting will be Tuesday January 9th, 2024, at 7pm at Sacred Heart Parish Church.

BIBLE STUDY: Resumes Thursday January 4, 2024.

December 24, 2023
Nativity of the Lord

Sacred Heart Parish

A Stewardship Parish in Union with Christ

Parish Information

Pastor: **Fr. Lee Lainey**

Office Administrator: **Roseann Janes**

Office Hours: **Monday to Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm**

465 Curling Street
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sacredheartrcparish@hotmail.com
Password "Church"
Note: include your envelope #
www.sacredheartrcparish.ca

Diocesan website: rcchurch.com



Christmas & New Years Mass Schedule

Christmas Day:	Monday Dec. 25 at 4:30pm
During Week:	<i>No Mass from Tuesday to Friday this week. Dec. 26-29</i>
Saturday Mass:	December 30 4:30 pm
New Years Eve:	Sunday Dec. 31 at 4:30pm
New Years Day:	Monday January 1, 2024 at 11am

Bible Study:

No bible study week of Dec. 24 to 31st.

Holy Hour of Adoration:

Resumes Thursday January 4 at 7pm

Reconciliation:

Postponed until further notice.

Marriages:

By request.

Baptisms:

Six months' notice required. A year's notice is recommended.

Family Connections:

Please call the Parish Office to schedule preparation session.

St. Vincent de Paul:

At www.rcchurch.com you will find a link to family connections.

To assist those in need. Call 709-638-9010.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS

December 16th & 17th, 2023

Regular Sunday	3175.00
Loose Offering	84.35
Parish Dues	200.00
Building Fund	40.00
Christmas Flowers & Christmas	260.00
Advent Folders	420.00
Votive Candles	25.00
Sunday Missals	85.00
Mass Stipends	50.00
Shepherds Fund	30.00

MASS INTENTIONS

Tue. to Fri.	No Mass at this time, church is closed.
Sat. 4:30 pm	Parish Community

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

December 25	
Reader	Eucharistic Minister
Marie Pennell	Eileen Moore
December 30	
Reader	Eucharistic Minister
Wayne Dicks	Amelia Dicks
Communion to the sick – Eileen Moore	
December 31	
Reader	Eucharistic Minister
Marie Pennell	Eileen Moore



CHRISTMAS HOURS: The church will be closed from Dec. 26 to 29, there will be no Mass or bible study during these days. Mass will resume Saturday December 30 at 4:30pm.

WEEKDAY MASS: Starting Tuesday January 9th, 2024 weekday mass will be at 10a.m. each morning. The weekend masses will remain the same. **NOTE:** Starting first week of January 2024, we will hold Weekday mass in the Meeting Room in order to cut down on oil costs of heating the entire church.

Reflection The greatness of our humanity

Sometimes people expect something extraordinary, or even miraculous to happen at Christmas.

But when Christ came on earth, he came clothed, not in the extraordinary, but in the ordinary.

He came dressed in the cloak of our weak, fragile, mortal humanity.

‘They wrapped the baby in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger.’

Like an acorn that falls to earth, silently and unheralded, in a remote corner of the forest, and which grows into a great oak tree, so from these lowly origins Jesus grew up to show us the greatness of our humanity.

Flor McCarthy, New Sunday and Holy Day Liturgies – Year B, Dominican Publications, Dublin (Ireland), 1999, p.42

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS:

Donated in memory of the following:

Bill Boland and Merdith Martin.

The Hutchings Family.

Parents Harold and Gertie Rockett

and sisters Estelle, Barbara and Sheila.

THE SEARCH: This is an innovative video series that tackles the key questions of every human heart. This will be held for 7 Wednesday evenings from 7pm – 8:15pm, Starting January 24th - March 13th (Ash Wednesday excluded) at Sacred Heart Parish Church.

This is FREE and open to All Adults.

For registration and information please contact the parish office by email (curlingparish@hotmail.com) or telephone during office hours at 709-785-5025.

Christmas Message from Father Lainey

As we take the time to prepare ourselves for another Christmas Season with decorations, gifts, and Christmas trees, we will also take the time to celebrate this festive season with family and friends. We will exchange gifts and gather for meals and tell family and friends that we love them and that they mean so much to us. As we celebrate this special time, let us not forget who we are celebrating, that is, the birth of Jesus the Emmanuel, God is with us. In Christ Jesus, God comes into our history, our world and our lives. He becomes one of us in flesh and bone and shows our love and solidarity with us by sharing and living our human experience. Jesus is the Prince of Peace who, through his teachings and actions, has made the love and compassion of God real for people.

I would like to take this moment to thank all those who volunteered in the parish over the past year and who help keep this parish alive - eucharistic ministers, musicians, readers, altar servers, John our maintenance man and Roseann our wonderful secretary, and last but not least, all parishioners whom I am delighted to serve.

I would like to wish all of you a Merry and blessed Christmas, and a Happy and Hopeful New Year full of the Lord’s many blessings.

Reflection

Lonely at Christmas

You sometimes hear people say, ‘I always find Christmas Day a lonely day.’

I think what they are really saying is: ‘I always feel lonely on Christmas day.’

Loneliness is caused chiefly by two things: absence and emptiness.

Let us spare a thought, a prayer, and maybe a visit for someone who will spend Christmas alone.

And if while spending Christmas in the midst of others, we still feel lonely, let us not be alarmed.

Our hearts are always longing for something more, or rather, for Someone else.

In every human heart there is an empty chamber waiting for a guest.

That guest is God.

Flor McCarthy, New Sunday and Holy Day Liturgies – Year B, Dominican Publications, Dublin (Ireland), 1999, p.32

