

THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

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immaculatechurch@rogers.com

www.immaculateheartofmarysc.archtoronto.org

Rev Fr Peter Tammearu, Pastor



MASS SCHEDULE

Monday to Friday at 12.05 pm

Saturday at 9 am & 5 pm (Vigil)

Sunday at 9 am & 11 am

CONFESSIONS

Monday to Friday at 11.45 am

Saturday at 4.30 pm

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

(First Communion, Confirmation, RCIA)

Alice Warford, Sacramental Coordinator

ihmsacraments@gmail.com

SACRAMENTS OF BAPTISM AND MARRIAGE

Please make an appointment to see the pastor

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Please call 647.428.2880

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Darlene Barron, President 416.264.6407

LEGION OF MARY

Letty Denovan 416.755.9569

OUR LADY OF GOOD HEALTH

Rev Fr Peter Gitendran, Pastor 416.264.6544

Sunday Mass at 4.30 pm (in Tamil)

OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Thursday 10 am to 4 pm

Susan Lee, Parish Secretary

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 17, 2017

God, tear open the heavens and come down!

by Fr. Robert Wild

While praying and reflecting on the prophet Isaiah I came across this passage, which spoke powerfully to me about hope and what hope really is: "Oh, that you would tear open the heavens and come down to make your name known, working unexpected miracles such as no one has ever heard of before" (Is 64:1).

"Unexpected miracles!" In the scriptures, our God is a God who does new and unexpected things. Think for a moment of some wonderful thing, some totally unexpected blessing that happened to you, something you never dreamed would happen, never dared to ask for. In the scriptures, hope is not simply people asking God to help with their own plans. Hope is about unexpected miracles.

Think of the patriarch Joseph, for example, who was thrown into a well by his brothers. I'm sure he prayed, "Oh God, get me out of this well!" He never would have dreamed of praying, "Oh God, rescue me from this well and raise me to a position of great power in Egypt." But that's exactly what happened. God not only rescued him, but because of Joseph's goodness and trust in the Lord, made him one of the great men of neighboring Egypt. (Gen, ch 37-50)

Consider Hannah, mother of the prophet Samuel (Sm 1:1-28) praying, "Oh God, give me a child." She never would have dreamed of praying, "Oh God, give me a child and let him become one of the great prophets of Israel, so great as to anoint the first king of your people." She never would have asked for that, but that is exactly what happened.

Remember David tending his flock. He probably often asked God for large and healthy flocks when he grew up. He never would have dreamed of asking God that he become the chief shepherd of his people, Israel. But that's exactly what happened.

All throughout the scriptures, people have little plans and little ideas. God looks on them and says, "Why are your hopes so small? Don't you know who I am? I am the God who created the universe. I hold the whole future and all possibilities in my hands. You have no idea what I'd like to do for you, what I'm able to do for you, what I desire to do for you."

Even with Our Lady, God was greater than her desires. She was praying for the coming of the Messiah, as all Jewish maidens did at that time. Full of grace though she was, did Mary—even Mary—ever imagine that God himself would come in the flesh? Who did Mary think the Messiah would be? A king greater than David, a prophet greater than Elijah, a priest greater than Aaron, a legislator greater than Moses. But did she ever conceive the plan in the Father's heart? God even said to her, to Mary, "Your plans are too small, your hopes too limited. I myself will come and save my people!"

Who ever would have prayed for that! Who ever would have suspected that God himself would come! Maybe Our Lady's hopes were that immense, but certainly no one else's were.

In our own lives we often conceive hope as God helping us out with our small plans. Christian hope is hope in God, a God who can do so much more than we could ever hope or imagine. Our God, the God of the scriptures, the Father of Jesus, is Someone who does totally unexpected miracles. Who ever would have expected the resurrection!

Haven't those of us who have tried to follow Christ in faith often experienced new and wonderful blessings? Haven't we seen God do things in and around us that have amazed and excited us and filled

us with wonder? And he will do much more if we keep following him and put our hope in him.

We hope in God, not merely in the success of our plans with God's help. God's plans, we may be sure, will be much more vast and fruitful than ours. God told Abraham simply to travel west; he told Moses to go to Egypt. He didn't tell them too much else, except that he, the God of gods and the Lord of lords, would be with them.

God is constantly trying to get us to put our hope in him. "We don't know what the future holds," it has been said, "but we know who holds the future." So we walk into the future hand in hand with God. It most certainly may not be what we had planned but it will be something much better—what God has planned. Who ever would have expected that God himself would come to save us? What wonders still lie ahead of us in the immense creativity and goodness and omnipotence of God!

THANK YOU NOTE

FOR THE WORLD DAY OF THE POOR DONATIONS

Dear Father, CNU & Parishioners:

Thank you for your generous donations for the Out of the Cold. Our clients appreciated the many items you provided especially the toothbrushes, toothpaste, hats, socks and gloves. Our volunteers were elated with the support they felt from you. It helps us to help the poor and homeless of Toronto. Know that you have made a difference in the lives of others.

With prayers and much gratitude,

The Volunteers of the Out of the Cold Program, St. Brigid's

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday December 18

12:30 - 3 pm Fellowship & refreshment in the Church Hall

Wednesday December 20

6:30 pm St. Vincent de Paul meeting

Thursday December 21

10 am - 12 pm Praying with Scripture

7:30 pm - 9 pm Legion of Mary meeting [Seniors]

Friday December 22

3:45 - 5 pm Children's Choir Practice

Saturday December 23

11 am St. Vincent de Paul - Gift preparation

3:30 - 4:30 pm Legion of Mary meeting [Juniors]

JOIN US for refreshments and fellowship
Monday, December 18th

All who attend the 12:05 Mass are invited to join us for light refreshments and fellowship in the Church Hall after Mass. It will be our Christmas Gathering. If you would like to help with this event or for more information please contact Lorraine at treacylor@hotmail.com. Hope to see you there!

MASS ATTENDANCE

5 pm 92

9 am 100

11 am 173

OFFERTORY \$1,641

47% of our weekly goal of \$3,500



Monday December 18

12:05 pm † Ramona Solevilla
requested by Tess & Lito

Tuesday December 19

12:05 pm † Christiana Hoban
requested by Mary Grabham

Wednesday December 20

12:05 pm † Genadio Ferreira
requested by Fatima Cabral

Thursday December 21

St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church

9:30 am School Mass

12:05 pm † Joan Caffrey Connors
requested by her husband, Jim Connors

Friday December 22

St. John of Kanty, Priest

12:05 pm † Arcely Briones
requested by the Briones & Patacsil families

Saturday December 23

9 am In thanksgiving and for the intentions of Letty Denovan on her birthday
requested by her family

5 pm In thanksgiving
requested by Sonia Javier

Sunday December 24

[Fourth Sunday of Advent]

9 am † Delphin Briones
requested by Patacsil & Briones families

11 am † Julio & Cristeta Enriquez
requested by Mary Grace Lazaro

Christmas Eve

5 pm † Felicidad S. Galase
requested by the Galase family

9 pm For the intentions of Eric, Maricel Nilo & Family
requested by Maricel

2018 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

Please pick up your 2018 envelopes in the foyer of the Church. If your envelope # is above the 300 range, please check the listing before picking up your envelope. There will be extra boxes of envelopes for those wishing to use Church envelopes; and forms, for those wishing to give via the 'Pre-Authorized Giving Plan' [PAG]. **NOTE:** For parishioners currently using PAG, you will still need to pick up a box of envelopes for special collections.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S MASSES

The obligation to attend Mass is one of the fundamental precepts of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, there are some Catholics who are not sure what this "Sunday obligation" means. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that:

2180 *The precept of the Church specifies the law of the Lord more precisely: "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass." "The precept of participating in the Mass is satisfied by assistance at a Mass which is celebrated anywhere in a Catholic rite either on the holy day or on the evening of the preceding day."*

2181 *The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin.*

2182 *Participation in the communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and to his Church. The faithful give witness by this to their communion in faith and charity. Together they testify to God's holiness and their hope of salvation. They strengthen one another under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*

Please be reminded that Christmas and New Year both fall on a Monday this year. Faithful Catholics are obliged to attend separate Masses for both the regular Sunday liturgy as well as the holy day of obligation on Monday. This creates an unusual situation where some people may choose to attend two different Masses on the same day in order to fulfill their spiritual duty. Our parish celebrations will take place as follows:

- ✘ **4th Sunday of Advent**
 - Saturday December 23rd at 5pm
 - Sunday December 24th at 9 & 11am
- ✘ **Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord**
 - Sunday December 24th at 5 & 9pm
 - Monday December 25th at 9 & 11am
- ✘ **Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**
 - Saturday December 30th at 5 pm
 - Sunday December 31st at 9 & 11am
- ✘ **Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**
 - Monday January 1st at 9 & 11am

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Thursday, December 21st

10 - 11:30am in the Church Hall

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish invites you to join us once again for our Praying with Scripture Series during Advent.

We will explore the Gospel of Luke. Come and join us as we discover the treasures of Luke's Gospel through reflection, prayer, and fellowship. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

Refreshments will be provided. For more information contact Lorraine Rozario at treacylor@hotmail.com or contact the Parish Office. **BYOB (Bring your own Bible, if you can).**

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