

THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

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Rev Fr Peter Tammearu, Pastor



**THE FEAST OF
THE HOLY FAMILY
DECEMBER 31, 2017**



Holiness & Sanctification

The Feast of the Holy Family is an essential part of the Christmas Season. It makes clear that the Incarnation means not just that the Divine Word assumed a human body, but entered into every aspect of human life, including family life sanctifying it all and making it a path to holiness.

Every year right after Christmas, we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. There is a reason for this. It's easy to think the "incarnation" means God took on a human body.

HUMAN NATURE, HUMAN EXPERIENCE

In Jesus, God unites himself to an entire human nature. He fully enters into human experience, with all its peaks and valleys. And a part of that human experience, with more than its share of peaks and valleys, is family.

Jesus spent over 90% of his years in the obscure nitty-gritty of family life. Though only a few chapters are devoted to this lengthy period, what they reveal is significant.

HARDSHIPS OF FAMILY LIFE

First of all, despite the cuddly image of our nativity scenes, the original Christmas was anything but cozy. A woman nine months pregnant rides 75 miles on the back of a donkey over bumpy, dusty roads so she can have her baby in a stable full of dirty, smelly animals. Quickly after the birth they have to pick up and flee for their lives, seeking asylum in a foreign land. A few years later, the now adolescent son goes missing for several days, and there ensues a conversation characterized by no little emotion. Joseph is a saint, Mary is without sin, Jesus is God incarnate, yet there are still challenges, hardships, tense moments, and opportunities for misunderstanding. Welcome to real family life.

All things created by God are good. Human beings and human life are very good according to Genesis chapter 1. Yet in assuming a human body, the Divine Word elevated its dignity, sanctifying it, and ennobling it. In accepting baptism from his cousin John, Jesus sanctifies water and, in baptism, makes it an instrument of his sanctifying power. In

entering into family life, Jesus does the same. The family, up til now naturally good, becomes an instrument of sanctification and growth in holiness.

HOLY FAMILY – HOLINESS & SANCTIFICATION

The feast of the Holy Family reminds us that, as Vatican II teaches, all human beings are called to the heights of holiness. That all states in life, including student, teenager, and parent, offer abundant opportunities to grow in faith, hope, and love. That the nitty gritty of family life, if approached right, can be a road to profound personal transformation and communion with God.

The creator of the universe spent most of his human life as a craftsman, working with dad in the family business and ultimately taking it over. Mary, the holiest of all creatures, spent most of her time changing diapers, cooking, and cleaning. The secret to holiness is not to do extraordinary things, but to do ordinary things with extraordinary love and gratitude (Colossians 3:15-17).

SEMINARY & SEED-BED

The word seminary means "seedbed." It is a greenhouse where, in a sheltered environment, vocations can develop till they cannot just survive in the real world, but actually thrive and bear fruit there.

The family is the original seminary. In its soil is sown the call to share in Christ's holiness and mission. Ironically, tending to the seedlings causes the parent/gardeners to grow as well. So family, in God's plan, is a community where everyone has growing to do. Maybe that's why Col 3 talks so much about forgiveness and forbearance!

The bottom line is this—we don't become holy despite the hustle-bustle of family life, but in and through it.

~ Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio ~

2018 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

All envelopes are ready for pick up at all Sunday Masses. If



your envelope # is above the 300 range, please check the listing [on the bulletin board] 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]. For parishioners currently using PAG, you will still need to pick up a box of envelopes.

If your box # is in the 8XX series, please pick up a box of envelopes which can be found in the 'EXTRA ENVELOPE' box.

THE FACES OF CHRIST

In the Book of Revelation

Speaker: Monsignor A. Robert Nusca

Date: January 20, 2018

Time: 9:30 am – 3 pm

[includes Mass in the seminary chapel]

Place: St. Augustine's Seminary of Toronto
2661 Kingston Rd., Scarborough, On M1M 1M3

Cost: \$50

Register online: www.staugustines.on.ca

MASS SCHEDULE

Please be reminded that New Year falls 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. Our parish celebrations will take place as follows:

- ✘ **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



Monday January 1

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

- 9 am For the intentions of the Parishioners of Immaculate Heart of Mary
- 11 am † Emily Nephin
requested by Alice & Brian Warford

Tuesday January 2

Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church

- 12:05 pm † Mary McCurley
requested by Teresa Buettner

Wednesday January 3

The Most Holy Name of Jesus

- 12:05 pm For the intentions of Sister Donata Kim on her birthday
requested by Rosa Lee

Thursday January 4

St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton, Religious

- 12:05 pm † Oweny & Rebecca Boyle
requested by Teresa Buettner

Friday January 5

St. John Neumann

- 12:05 pm For the intentions of the Cairns family
requested by Anne Hoban

Saturday January 6

St. Andre Bessette, Religious

- 9 am † Jose Botelito Family
requested by Jorgina Medeiros

- 5 pm For the People of the Parish

Sunday January 7

The Epiphany of the Lord

- 9 am For the intentions & health of Emily McClain
requested by Margaret & Jim Martin & family
- 11 am † Natalie Dubis
requested by the De Souza family

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday January 4

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

Saturday January 6

9:30 pm Devotions to Our Lady of Fatima

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Reflection:

Mary is presented at Christmas as the one who pondered. She heard much that puzzled her. In the message of the shepherds, gifts of the Magi, and maybe the odd conversation with Joseph when they wondered about their child and what would happen to him.



Her pondering led to wondering. It must have tried her faith but never left her without faith. She is a model of faith for today when faith leaves many questions. Pope Francis says: *‘in this quest to seek and find God in all things, there is still an area of uncertainty. There must be. If one has the answers to all the questions—that is the proof that God is not with him. Our life is not given to us like an opera libretto, in which all is written down; but it means going, walking, doing, searching, seeing.’* (Interview 2013).

We can question much about God but it is best if it leads us to wondering about him. The person who can wonder never gets tired of life and known that in wondering together, we find life for the mind and soul.

We find nourishment for ourselves in our capacity to wonder and be amazed. Christmas can do this for us. Family memories, gathering with friends, Christmas prayer can open us to new love and new faith. If we can do this for a day, can we do it for the year?

Prayer: *Come to birth Lord Jesus and help me to enjoy wonder and amazement at your coming.*

~ Donal Neary SJ ~



REGISTRATION FOR THE SACRAMENTS



Registration for the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation will take place on **Sunday January 14th, 2018** before and after the 9am and 11am Masses in the Church Hall.

Registration forms are available at the back of the Church for your convenience. Please remember to bring a **COPY** of your **child’s** Baptismal Certificate along with the completed registration form no later than **Thursday, February 1st**. Please note that no registration forms will be accepted after this deadline.

If you are unable to attend, please contact Alice Warford at the Parish Office. Thank you for your co-operation.

OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

The office will be closed on Friday, December 22, 2017 and will reopen on Tuesday, January 2, 2018.



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