

# **THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY**

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**Rev. Fr. Charles Collins, Administrator**

**Rev. Fr. Peter Gitendran, In Residence**



**The Nativity of the Lord**



*A Christmas Message from the Administrator*

**My** Dear Parishioners,  
 Once again, this year 2022, the Lord has given us the opportunity to be with him in prayer, which strengthens our fraternity and is grounded in our contemplation of God’s love revealed at Christmas.

*“The birth of Christ is the greatest and most eloquent witness of how much God loved Man. He loved him with a personal love. That is why he took human body, united it to himself and made it his own forever.”*

Dear brothers and sisters, it is time for us to celebrate 2022 Christmas with our family. I am with you and your family in prayer always.

Let us make every effort to reach those who are isolated in creative and profound ways in this Christmas and New Year 2023. May you and your family be blessed with gifts this Christmas that remind us of the greatest gift of all, **JESUS!**

Wishing you all a Holy and Blessed Christmas and many Blessings in the New Year 2022.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Fr. Charles*

**CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASSES**

**Christmas Eve**  
**5:00 p.m. & 9:30 p.m.**

**Christmas Day**  
**10:00 a.m.**



**New Year’s Eve**  
**5:00 p.m.**

**Mary, The Holy Mother of God**  
**[New Year’s Day]**  
**9:00 & 11:00 a.m.**



**2023 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES**

**F**or 2023, all offertory envelopes box numbers **will be reassigned**. Please pick up a **NEW** box of offertory envelopes at all Masses this weekend – please see one of the volunteers at the back of the church.

**Please use these envelopes for 2023 ONLY.**

If you do not have envelopes for **2022** and wish to donate, **VISITOR ENVELOPES** are available in the literature rack for your convenience **or** visit our parish website and click the ‘DONATE’ button. Thank you for supporting the parish!



**This week**  
**The Sanctuary Lamp**  
**is dedicated for**  
**The intentions of**  
**the Cabral family**



*requested by*  
**Fatima Cabral**

**MASS Intentions**

Mon.	Dec. 26	12:05 pm	† Gerson Frias on his death anniversary, <i>requested by Nereza Frias</i>
Tue.	Dec.27	12:05 pm	Birthday blessings for Lydia Doromal, <i>requested by Nereza Frias</i>
Wed.	Dec.28	12:05 pm	† Socrates Fernandez,, <i>requested by the Llarenas family</i>
Thur.	Dec. 29	12:05 pm	† Vicky Luis, <i>requested by Francis Luis</i>
Fri.	Dec. 30	12:05 pm	In thanksgiving and intentions of Ray & Mila Villamil on their 33 <sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary, <i>requested by Mila</i>
Sat.	Dec. 31	5:00 pm	Christmas blessings & intentions of Fr. Charles Collins & Fr. Peter Gitendran, <i>requested by the Sevilla family</i>
Sun.	Jan. 1	9:00 am	Intentions of Michael McDonald, <i>requested by his wife &amp; daughter</i>
		11am	For the People of the Parish

**CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY**



The office will be closed from Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> 2022 and will reopen on Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**First Holy Communion & Confirmation**

Registration forms are available at our parish office; and also, at the school office. All completed registration forms must be returned by January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Classes will begin at



the end of January. For more information, please contact Alice Warford at [awarford@archtoronto.org](mailto:awarford@archtoronto.org). Thank you!



## Meanings of Christmas Symbols and Traditions

Christmas is filled with symbols, many of which have lost their Christian symbolism in a secular world. Here is the Christian meaning of some Christmas symbols with Christmas Prayers.

**CHRIST CHILD:** We celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas, which means Christ's Mass (the Mass of Christ).



Christ means "the anointed one". Jesus was God made flesh, come to earth so that we could understand how much God loves us and so that we would not be afraid to approach Him. Who could be afraid of an infant? The Infant Christ is a

living symbol of the humility of God Who left the glory of heaven to come to earth in poverty and obscurity, showing us that we, too, are to be little and simple and to give our lives for others. *Lord, the symbolism of Christmas is replete with many secular symbols, all of which point to You. You are the Beginning and the End, the Word made flesh, God in a manger. Help me, Lord, to imitate Your lowliness so that I can serve You well. Amen.*

**GIFTS:** For many people, gifts define Christmas. They focus on the giving and receiving of gifts instead of on our greatest Gift Jesus Who gave Himself to us at Christmas.



The wise men who brought their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to honor the infant King in Bethlehem's manger have inspired the

concept of gift giving at Christmas. God also gives us the gifts of the Holy Spirit which help us to follow God's direction in our lives. The seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Knowledge, Piety, Fortitude, and Fear of the Lord (Awe of God's Greatness and Power). *Lord, this Christmas I ask that you revive in me the Gifts of Your Holy Spirit. Give me great Wisdom, correct Understanding, sure Counsel, fuller Knowledge, fervent Piety, unshakeable Fortitude, and humble me before Your Greatness and Majesty so that Fear (Awe) of You forms the fabric of my life. I ask these gifts in the Name of Your Gift to us, Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**CHRISTMAS TREE:** The Christmas tree represents the original Tree of Paradise, the burning bush which spoke to



Moses, the branch of Jesse from which Jesus was born, the life-giving tree of the cross of Christ, and the tree which St. John the Apostle saw in the Book of Revelations whose leaves have medicine for the people and which yields fruit each month for the healing of the nations. Because it is green year-

round, the evergreen tree represents hope. Its needles and its narrow crest point upward, turning our thoughts to heaven. Because the tree is cut down and then erected again, it is a symbol of Christ's resurrection. *Lord, may I see Christmas trees as a sign of hope and as reminders of the many trees that figure in salvation history. I thank You, Lord, for turning the tree of Adam and Eve's sin into the tree of life through the cross of Christ. Because of the tree on which Christ died, You have given us the promise of eternal life. We praise you forever. Amen.*

**CANDLES AND CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:** In the Advent wreath, a purple (for penance) candle is lit for the first, second, and fourth Sundays of Advent and a pink (for joy) one for the

third Sunday of Advent. On Christmas Day, a white (for the purity of Christ) candle is lit. Candles and Christmas lights represent Christ, the Light of the World. *"I am the light of the world. No follower of mine shall ever walk in darkness; no, he shall possess the light of life" (John 8:12). "The light shines on in the darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it" (John 1: 5).* Candles and Christmas lights also remind us that we are to be light to others, to show them the way to Christ. *Lord, be my Light in the darkness and help me to be a light to others, to show them the way to you. When all seems hopeless, help me to remember that the darkness cannot overcome Your Light. You are the eternal Brilliance of God. May Your Light be my hope, my God. Amen.*



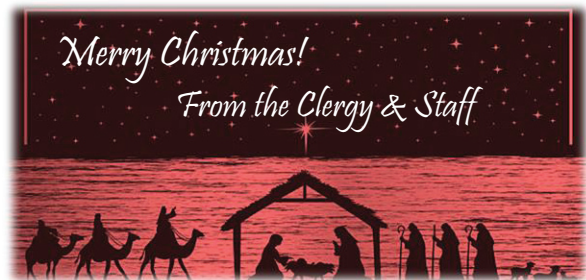
**WREATH:** Wreaths combine several Christmas symbols including holly, fruit, mistletoe, evergreens, tinsel, and so on, all



of which retain their symbolism on the wreath. The word wreath comes from an old English word, meaning to writhe or twist. Greens twisted into a circle made "crowns" for kings, military leaders, and athletes. Because wreaths, due to their circular shape, symbolize eternity, the circle of life, and endless hope, they began to be used at Christmas and hung. Because a wreath has neither beginning nor end, but is a continuous circle, it symbolized God Himself. *Lord, You are my God, uncreated and eternal Love. Draw me into the circle of Love that flows throughout the Trinity. May I find eternal life in you. Amen.*

**CANDY CANE:** The candy cane is shaped like a shepherd's crook, reminding us that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, came into our world at Christmas. The red stripe symbolizes Christ's sacrifice and the white background His purity. The candy cane reminds us of Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering servant who was led like a lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7) and by his stripes you were healed (Isaiah 53:5). Candy canes have a peppermint

flavor, reminiscent of hyssop which had medicinal purposes. The Psalmist prayed, Lord, cleanse me with hyssop that I may be clean (Psalm 51:9). Jesus came to heal our ills and to purge us of sin. The peppermint flavor reminds us that our healing came at the price of Christ's life. When Jesus was crucified, a bystander stuck a wine-filled sponge on a branch of hyssop to give Jesus a drink. After tasting the wine, Jesus said, "Now it is finished," and died (cf. John 19:29-30). The candy cane is meant to be broken and shared, just as Jesus' Body is broken and shared at every Eucharist. *Lord, you came to shepherd us rightly, to live for us purely, and to die for us lovingly. Cleanse me with hyssop that I may be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. . . My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit; a heart contrite and humbled, O God, You will not spurn (cf. Psalm 51). Amen.*





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