

THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

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Feast of the Holy Family

A Family built on Stewardship

This Sunday's great solemnity invites us to contemplate the beauty of the Holy Family. Pope Paul VI says that the Holy Family should "serve as a model of what the family should be. May it show us the family's holy and enduring character and exemplify its basic function in society: a community of love and sharing."

What is a community of love and sharing but one rich with stewardship. We should strive to be true stewards towards the members in our family, bearing their faults with love and sharing our gifts with them. One thing we can all grow in is sharing the gift of our time with our family. Not just time together in the same room, but actual quality and intentional



time with one another.

A tangible practice we can adopt is being faithful to the family dinner, a dinner without external distractions like the television or radio in the background. This involves being totally present to those in our family which can help begin to alleviate the rampant loneliness that ravages our culture. We can then move outwards and be stewards of our time with our second family, our parish community. **Let us ask ourselves this week, how can we play our part in making our family more like the Holy Family in Nazareth?**

~ Stewardship Bulletin Reflection – Archdiocese of Toronto ~

NEW YEAR MASS SCHEDULE

New Year's Eve – Wednesday, December 31st at 5:00 p.m.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God [New Year's Day]

Thursday, January 1st at 10:00 a.m.



DEADLINE FOR 2025 OFFERTORY DONATIONS

Tax receipts will be issued for donations received at the parish no later than Tuesday, December 31st, 2025.

Holiday Office Hours

Closed from Monday, December 22nd

Will reopen on Monday, January 5th, 2025

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

Monday December 29th

12:05 pm Thanksgiving for blessings received
requested by Erlinda Quial

Tuesday, December 30th

12:05 pm † Monica & Russel Masters
requested by Henry Masters

Wednesday, December 31st – New Year's Eve

5:00 pm For the intentions of good health of Our Parish
Priests: Fr. Charles & Fr. Peter
requested by the Sevilla family

Thursday, January 1st – New Year's Day Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

10:00 am For the People of the Parish

Friday, January 2nd

12:05 pm † Holy Souls
requested by Idith

Saturday, January 3rd

9:00 am † Monica & Russel Masters
requested by Henry Masters

5:00 pm For the People of the Parish

Sunday, January 4th

9:00 am † Jorgina Medeiros on her death anniversary
requested by Ida & family

11:00 am † Maggie D'Souza
requested by the Costales family

TIPS BEFORE USING YOUR 2026 ENVELOPES

To ensure accurate processing of all donations received, kindly adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Ensure that the box of 2026 offertory envelopes, which you have picked up, has your name on it.
2. Discard all OLD including 2025 offertory envelopes before using your 2026 envelopes
3. If you have not picked up your 2026 offertory envelopes, kindly use the VISITOR envelopes which are available in the foyer of the church in the literature rack, behind the back pew inside the church or at the side entrance. All information on the envelope MUST be filled out and CLEARLY written.
4. **Note:** Your 2026 offertory envelopes can also be picked up at the parish office. Kindly call the parish office ahead of time.

Thank you for your co-operation!



Honoring Mary as the Mother of God reminds us of her unwavering trust in God's plan. Her "yes" at the Annunciation made her the model of faith and love. As we begin a new year, her example calls us to embrace God's will with peace, humility, and devotion in our daily lives.

Celebrated on January 1st, the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, honors Mary's unique role as the Mother of Jesus Christ, who is both fully God and fully man. Declared at the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD, the title "Mother of God" (Theotokos) emphasizes her vital role in God's plan of salvation. This feast also marks the beginning of a new year, inviting us to reflect on Mary's virtues and her maternal care for all believers.

Mary's "yes" to God at the Annunciation exemplifies complete trust and faith. As the Mother of God, she nurtured Jesus in His humanity, teaching us the value of love, service, and obedience to God's will. Her maternal intercession continues to guide and inspire Christians to live lives of faith, humility, and devotion.

PRACTICAL LESSONS

- 1. Start Your Day with Trust in God:** Mary's "yes" to God was a simple yet profound act of trust. Begin each day with a short prayer asking for God's guidance and strength. A simple morning offering can help align your actions with His will and bring peace to your daily routine.
- 2. Show Love Through Small Acts of Care:** Just as Mary cared for Jesus in practical and loving ways, show love to your family and those around you through small, intentional acts—whether it's preparing a meal, listening attentively, or offering encouragement.
- 3. Mary "kept all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Lk. 2:19).** Take a few minutes each day to reflect on God's blessings and how He is present in your life. Journaling or silent prayer can help you cultivate a habit of gratitude and awareness.

PRAYER

Holy Mary, Mother of God, you who embraced God's plan with faith and love, intercede for us as we strive to follow your example of trust and humility. Help us to welcome Christ into our hearts and homes each day. Teach us to love as you loved and to serve as you served. May your maternal care guide us through this year and always. Amen.

QUOTE

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." (Lk. 1:38)

~ <https://catholicexchange.com>

WHEN DOES THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS ENDS?

Octave of Christmas

December 25 – January 1 (inclusive)

An octave extends the celebration of a feast or solemnity for eight days. During the Octave of Christmas, for example, all the readings and prayers during the celebration of Mass are related to the birth of Christ. Octave celebrations got their start in the Church way back in the fourth century. (Check out a detailed history of octaves at Wikipedia.) The "octave day" (eighth day) of Christmas is January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God—a holy day on which all Catholics are obliged to celebrate Mass.

The Twelve Days of Christmas (Christmastide)

December 26 – January 6 (or Epiphany)

Traditionally, the twelve days of Christmas begin on December 26 and end on January 6, the traditional date of Epiphany. Since 1970, Roman Catholics have celebrated Epiphany on the first Sunday after the Octave of Christmas (that is, the first Sunday after January 1).

The Christmas Season (for Catholics)

December 25 to The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Roman Catholics (and some other Christians) mark the end of the liturgical Christmas season with the celebration of the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which falls on the Sunday after the Feast of the Epiphany (usually the second Sunday of January). Ordinary Time begins the day after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

Epiphany means "manifestation" or "appearance." So while the baptism of Christ marks the beginning of his public ministry, it is also part of his "manifestation" or "appearance"—one of the events signaling that God has broken into human history in a unique way.

Bonus! The Presentation of the Lord

December 25 – February 2 (The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord)

But wait, there's more! The Church circles back around to the Christmas season forty days after Christmas, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. The Law of Moses required first-born sons to be dedicated to the Lord, so Mary and Joseph dutifully brought the baby Jesus to the Temple for his dedication and circumcision (Luke 2:22-38). In some countries (and some households), it is traditional to keep Christmas decorations up until this feast.

This feast is also traditionally known as Candlemas; centuries ago, the feast was accompanied by a candlelight procession and a blessing of beeswax candles from the home.

Every day is Christmas

For Catholics, every day is, in the most basic sense, Christmas. That's because every day, the Word becomes flesh in the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist; and through the sacraments, the people of God become of the Body of Christ in the world. Just as Mary's "yes" made her an instrument of God's incarnation in the world, by our "yes," we too birth the Son of God into the world.



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