

WEEKLY E-BULLETIN

Saint Dunstan's Parish, Scarborough



From the Administrator's Desk

Merry Christmas, brothers and sisters in Christ!

I hope your Christmas was joyous, albeit quiet and simple given the present time. We thank God all the same for his love, especially for sending us his son Jesus, our new-born King.

The communion services went really well. Thank you for calling in to reserve your spaces. May the Lord Jesus nourish us unto life everlasting, Amen.

I wish to thank all our ushers who helped us in coordinating the communion services, and Jean who fielded so many calls back and forth and helped organize all of the reservations. Thank you all for your dedication and hard work!

Have a great week ahead, and please continue to tune in to our livestreamed masses.

May God keep you, and yours, safe. Have a great week and see you next year!

Sincerely in Christ,

Fv. Victor Amole

OVERVIEW:

- From the Administrator's Desk
- Gospel Inspiration
- Ongoing Parish Projects
- Around the Diocese
- Wednesday Audience with Pope Francis
- Feature: The Holy Innocents



CHRISTMAS **LIVE** **STREAM** MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve	10:00PM
Christmas Day	10:00AM
December 26th	5:00 PM
December 27th	12:30PM
January 1st	10:00AM
January 2nd	5:00PM
January 3rd	12:30AM



Gospel Inspiration

We celebrate and laud today the feast of the holy family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

It is beautiful to realize that the very manner in which we all came into the world is what our God, in the person of Jesus, chose to come into the world also. Nothing says he was limited to that option. But Jesus came through a family, and as the gospel of St. John tells us: "the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

The family is therefore a sacrosanct, most sacred institution blessed by Christ himself as a means to jump-start the learning of the kernels of the faith and

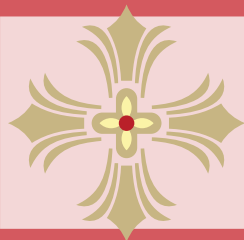
growing up into matured members of the larger family of God.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the home is the first school of Christian life and "a school for human enrichment." Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous — even repeated — forgiveness, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one's life (CCC, 1657).

May the Holy Family help us to model our families after its own.

May the new-born King reign in our hearts and in our homes.

Universal Intention of Pope Francis for Dec. 2020: for a Life of Prayer. We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.



Ongoing Parish Projects

Parish Website

Take a few seconds to poke around the parish's new website. Do you have any suggestions? How about jotting down your ideas and sharing them so that they may be published in the new e-bulletin? Email stdunstan@rogers.com or simply give us a call.

A word of **special appreciation** to one of my anonymous special collaborators and to Dora at the Archdiocese of Toronto who worked tirelessly to bring the website to life. Parishioners now have access to daily readings, online mass schedules, and information about how to support the parish. Thank you!



Ongoing Livestreamed Masses

St. Dunstan's Parish launched its first livestreamed mass on **Saturday, November 28 at 5:00pm**. Our team is working hard to improve your viewing experience. Thanks to Jose, Enrico, & El King for their expertise, dedication, and good will.

Digitizing Telephone Communication

We are delighted to report that we've now completed the upgrades to our telephone system. Please feel free to call and keep in touch with us. Let us know how we may serve you better.



Weekly E-Bulletin

If you wish to receive the newsletter directly, please email us so that we may add your name to the mailing list: stdunstan@rogers.com



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Around the Diocese

Joyful Unions

Congratulations to **Kevin and Nadia Dias!** The duo were married at **Saint Clare's Catholic Church, Toronto**, last weekend, December 19, 2020.

It is heartwarming to literally see joy breaking out at this celebration which I was glad to officiate. And as Kevin and Nadia remarked, *"We believe it's a nice way to end off a year full of heartache, and the start of a new beginning."*

How true; how Christian! May the Lord grant you joy, steadfastness and grace in your new home. May you flourish and grow together in the Lord.



The Little Douglins

Due to popular demand from several of our viewers of the Virtual Christmas Carol, I am providing further information about one of our star artistes for the carol night, **Carissa Douglas** and the little Douglins. You can read more about the wonderful project of Carissa at www.littledouglins.com We thank her, Patrick and the little Douglins for their great witness to our world.

The Making of a Jewish Nun

A Virtual Event on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 7:00pm. Raised in a conservative Jewish home in New York, Mother Miriam came to faith in Yeshua as Messiah after many years as a business executive. Then, later on, after being convinced of the "beauty, goodness and truth" of the Catholic Church, she came into full communion. Mother Miriam is a dynamic speaker, teacher, radio personality and writer who is now the founder of a religious order that promotes the faith in families and schools. In this evening she will share her amazing journey from Judaism to being a Jewish Catholic Nun. **All are welcome.**

For more information on Mother Miriam, see: <https://bit.ly/MotherMiriam> No registration is required, but contact AHC Toronto for the Zoom link at: ahctoronto@gmail.com.

LIVE 7:00PM
January 3, 2021

LECTIO DIVINA
with Cardinal Thomas Collins
stmichaelscathedral.com



Lectio Divina is not a catechesis or a teaching but it is a prayer, a divine reading, a personal encounter with God in Sacred Scripture. Each episode begins with a glimpse of Cardinal Collins presiding over Vespers at St. Michael's Cathedral in downtown Toronto. Lectio Divina follows immediately afterwards. In each session, Cardinal Collins slowly reads an excerpt from Scripture, offers a short reflection, and invites the congregation to quietly meditate on the passage. More than that, Lectio Divina is not intended to increase our intellectual knowledge of the Bible [though it also has that effect]; instead, it is intended to draw us closer to God, and to transform our attitudes and behaviour. **Next prayer: In Life's Struggle: Despair and Trust (Psalm 13 & 14)**

Weekly Wednesday Audience with Pope Francis



by Vatican News Staff Writer

During his Wednesday General Audience, Pope Francis urges Christians to make the celebration of the birth of Jesus rich in faith, not merely a sentimental or consumerist event.

Christmas teaches us that God did not look down upon us and pass by but He fully assumed our nature and our human condition, except sin. This event gives meaning to human existence and to the whole of history and can remove the pessimism generated by the pandemic.

Overcoming Worldly Mentality

The birth of Jesus, he noted, has become a universal feast and has a charm about it even among people of other faiths. For Christians, it is a “decisive event, an eternal fire that God has kindled in the world, and must not be confused with ephemeral things”. Hence, “it is important that it should not be reduced to a merely sentimental or consumerist festival, full of gifts and good wishes but poor in Christian faith.” Last Sunday, the Pope said he drew attention to this problem, pointing out that consumerism has “hijacked” Christmas from us. Christmas, he said, must not be reduced to a merely sentimental or consumerist celebration, rich in gifts and good wishes but poor in Christian faith, and also poor

“God did not look down on us, did not pass us by, was not repulsed by our misery ...”

- Pope Francis

in humanity. “It is necessary,” he said, “to curb a certain worldly mentality, incapable of grasping the incandescent core of our faith:” namely God became man and dwelt among us.

God's Goodness Overcomes Man's Failures

This fact, the Pope explained, invites us to reflect on two things. On the one hand, there is the drama of history, in which men and women, wounded by sin, ceaselessly search for truth, mercy and redemption.

On the other, there is the goodness of God, who has come towards us to communicate to us the Truth that saves and to make us sharers in His friendship and His life, which is pure grace, no something we merit. The simplicity and humanity of Christmas, the Pope said, can remove from our hearts and minds the pessimism that has spread today because of the pandemic. As we rediscover and become aware that the humble and poor Child, hidden and helpless, is God Himself, made man for us, the Pope said, we cannot allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by defeats, failures and the sense of disquieting bewilderment. The event of the birth of Jesus shows us that “God did not look down on us, did not pass us by, was not repulsed by our misery, did not clothe Himself superficially in a body, but rather He fully assumed our nature and our human condition”. “He left nothing out except sin: all humanity is in Him. He took all that we are, just as we are.” This, the Pope said, is essential to understanding the Christian faith.

DECEMBER 28th: THE HOLY INNOCENTS, Martyrs



The Virgin and Child Surrounded by the Holy Innocents - by Peter Paul Rubens, Louvre

King Herod was a Roman-appointed King of Judea at the time of Jesus' birth. Interestingly, King Herod was not really Jewish, but rather Idumean, a descendent of people who were forcibly made Jewish by a high priest and ruler named John Hyrcanus. The New Testament tells us that King Herod was a tyrant. Despite his great power over Judea, the news of the birth of Jesus and the fact that wise men came from the East to worship the One "born king of the Jews", made Herod insecure and fearful for his own throne.

Herod assembled the chief priests and scribes to learn more about Jesus, and he cross-examined the Magi before they travelled to Bethlehem, ordering them to return to him after their visit to provide the exact location of the baby's whereabouts so that Herod, too, could go and worship him.

Although the Magi initially agreed to tell Herod the information that he needed, they were warned in their sleep not to return to the King. The Magi chose another route to travel back to their countries of origin. The disobedience and perceived betrayal of the wise men made King Herod furious.

He ordered that all male babies who were two years old and under be killed in Bethlehem and in the immediate vicinity. Jesus would have been killed in the mass-murder of the children had Joseph not been warned by an angel of the Lord to escape to Egypt with his wife and child.

The Feast of these Holy Innocents has been kept in the Church since the 5th century, and the Church venerates these children as martyrs, who died not only for Christ but **instead** of Christ. They were the first witnesses to the newborn King. The massacre of these innocent children is a powerful reminder of the fact that there are so many things in this world that are unjust and unfair. But one thing we must hold on to is that God will right every wrong in the end.

This Feast was formerly called Childermas in England or Innocents' Day, and St. Bede wrote a long hymn in honour of the Innocents. They are venerated in Bethlehem; their feast is a holy day of obligation.

The number of King Herod's victims in Bethlehem is unknown.

- The Byzantine liturgy speaks of 14,000, the Syrian menologies of 64,000
- Other scholars say that Bethlehem was a small place and could not have had more than 25 boys under two, at the very most.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Reflections from Our Parishioners

SWEET CHILD JESUS

WRITTEN BY CHRISTIE-ANNE D'SOUZA

December!!! And it was time for festivities—songs, gifts, fun, and food. Cathy loved Christmas. When asked, she would sit you down and tell you all her Santa stories. Every year the school had a talent competition in December based on Christmas. And every year, Cathy wrote a story about Santa Claus, her favorite man of the season. Although they were different stories, the title would always be the same: "My favorite person of the season". The biggest fan of her stories were her friends Kim, Carole, Gail, and Gerry. The 5 of them called themselves the Awesome5some. "So, Cathy, what will you be writing about this year?" Carole asked. "Oh, it will be about her favorite man of the season," Gail teased. Before Kim or Gerry could say anything, Cathy said, "Well, girls ... it's a secret. Just wait and watch." Cathy had not yet started writing her story, and there were just two days left for the competition. She had spent the entire month trying. Her sister Bridget and their friend Ferdy had concluded that it was Writer's block. Cathy did not know what that meant, but it sounded serious. She was an 11-year-old story writer with a severe sickness-Writer's block.

Now home, Cathy took her notebook and started writing "My favorite person of the season". Tears rolling down her cheeks, she turned the pages, one by one, every page had the same words "My favorite person of the season." Nothing more. She was in total despair. This writer's block was even more severe than she had imagined. Her favorite teacher Ms. Faye had always encouraged her to write. How disappointed Ms. Faye would be.



Everyone at home was already asleep. Cathy thought a little walk around the house might help her. And it did. She remembered her mum listening to the preacher Brother Aneel Aranha's talks about Jesus. Be close to Jesus, he had said. Tears still rolling down her cheeks, Cathy tiptoed to the living room and made her way to the nativity set box. She placed the statues out on the table. It seemed like the statue of Baby Jesus was smiling at her "Jesus, I wish I could talk to you," she whispered. Cathy closed her eyes and lay her head in front of the statues. In a few minutes, the tears had stopped, and she fell into a deep sleep. When she woke up in her dream, she found herself in a strange land. She did not understand the language, she tried asking for help, but they seemed to ignore her; it felt like they could not see her. Tears once again rolling down her cheeks, she made her way through the busy streets. The crisp cool air made her shiver; it was dark, she was afraid and lost, and everyone continued to ignore her pleas for help. Cathy crouched in a street corner in fear and closed her eyes, and cried, "Help me, Jesus". She suddenly felt a soothing light fall over her, and it felt like someone with a lantern was standing next to her. She looked up; he was smiling. He could see her, not like the others. He stretched out his hand. As soon as she held his hand, she

Reflections from Our Parishioners

felt calm; she felt warm. "Do not be afraid, Cathy, my name is Gabriel." She was no longer afraid. "Here, Cathy, you can have this." She looked up at him and saw him holding the most beautiful Lily ever. She was now excited as they walked through some busy streets towards a stable. A bright star shone above it, the brightest she had ever seen. The people who were there could not see her. "Why can't they see me? And why can you?" He only smiled. When she walked in, she saw the manger. She looked up at him. "It's Jesus; It's Jesus," she almost shouted. "Can I hold him? Can I hug him?" But she saw the others kneeling, so she went up to the manger and kneeled before him. Jesus reached out to her and smiled. "Jesus, You can see me?" Cathy was delighted; she put her head down close to Baby Jesus and held his hand. She closed her eyes as she sang, "Sweet O sweet Child Jesus."

"Cathy... Cathy, wake up, child. Did you sleep here all night, my dear?" Cathy looked at her dad; she was still holding the statue of Baby Jesus in her hand. "Umm, no, dad, I was at the stable, and...." She stopped when she saw the look on her dad's face. She ran excitedly back to her room as her voice trailed off. "Daddy, I will tell you later I have to write; I have to write."

Talent competition day. Cathy walked onto the stage. Her friends were in the first row waiting eagerly to hear about her favorite man of the season. Bridget and Ferdy were two rows behind. Ms. Faye was at one end of the stage next to Sr. Marion. Cathy cleared her throat. "I have written a poem today dedicated to my favorite person of Every Season."

His name is Jesus.

Cathy looked around and smiled. She saw Sr. Marion almost fall off her chair. For the first time, she saw Bridget and Ferdy smile so much. Her friends looked confused but

excited at the same time. She cleared her throat again as she sang:

*Sweet O Sweet Child Jesus
Joy and peace abound
Clothed in swaddling majesty
My King without a crown*

*Your divine face and amazing grace
Blessing us all around
Blessing us all around*

*Cradled in glorious splendor
King of Kings, My God
Your crib a humble manger
Am in awe, my Christ, my Lord*

*Your divine face and amazing grace
Blessing us all around
Blessing us all around*

*Lord, I want to hold you
Love and worship you
You shine like the brightest star
Drawing all from afar*

*Your divine face and amazing grace
Blessing us all around
Blessing us all around*

*As I kneel before you
My gifts my life I lay,
There's peace and calm that adorns you,
And that's what I take away.*

*Your divine face and amazing grace
Blessing us all around
Blessing us all around*

Cathy looked around again. Her friends were clapping, and so was Ms. Faye, who almost had tears of happiness. But at one end of the hall, there was a guest no one else could see. "Thank you, Gabriel," Cathy whispered she knew he had heard her as she saw him smile.

2021

Merry Christmas
and a **HAPPY NEW YEAR**

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Joke of the week

A day before Christmas, two young brothers were spending the night at their grandparent's house. When it was time to go to bed, anxious to do the right thing, they both knelt down to say their prayers. Suddenly, the younger one began to do so in a very loud voice. "Dear Lord, please ask Santa Claus to bring me a play station, a mountain bike and a telescope." His older brother leaned over and nudged his brother and said, "why are you shouting your prayers? God isn't deaf."

"I know", he replied. "But, Grandma is!"

We will be leaving 2020 behind in the very near future. Please do not forget that Saint Dunstan's Parish will continue livestreaming masses during the lockdown period - including New Year's Day. We pray for the Lord's spirit to lead us each step of this New Year.

Sunday Liturgy: Livestreamed

December 27, 2020
12:30pm

New Year's Day: Livestreamed

Friday, January 1, 2021
12:30pm

Sunday Liturgy: Livestreamed

Saturday, January 2, 2021
5:00pm

Sunday, January 3, 2021
12:30am



BUILDING THE CHURCH TOGETHER

BY FATHER VICTOR

In the name of Jesus Christ, dear parishioners, I am reaching out to you today because our church - like many churches in Toronto and the GTA - is struggling financially. Money is needed for many expenses at Saint Dunstan's including: heat, hydro, phones, insurance, snow plow services and staff salaries.

Standing behind the ambo giving a homily that I prepared is easy compared to asking for donations during a pandemic. Many parishioners have experienced unemployment and great hardship at this time, so to ask parishioners to open

their purse strings to sustain the church is a deeply humbling experience for me.

The Church is not a business. It has never been a business and it will never be a business. We do our best to rely on the generosity of volunteers and the kindness of local businesses to sustain us, but the limitations caused by the pandemic have created a large shortfall. If you are able to donate, please consider one of the options listed at the end of this short article. *Any amount is greatly appreciated at this time of need.*

The situation we are living through brings to mind St. Francis of Assisi. He trusted completely in the providence of the Creator. His entire existence was Christ-centred, and he lived with complete confidence in Him. God has always provided, dear friends in Christ. He will always provide! I have confidence that God's miraculous love will get us through this difficult moment in time.

“ Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

— FR. VICTOR

- **ENVELOPES:** Envelopes can be dropped off at the church office. Please call ahead: 416-694-2811
- **MONTHLY WITHDRAWALS:** Consider pre-authorized giving For more information: <https://stdunstanssc.archtoronto.org/About-Us/donate>
- **CREDIT / DEBIT:** Donate online using your credit card or your chequing account. Visit: <https://stdunstanssc.archtoronto.org/About-Us/donate>
- **ON-LINE BANKING:** Contribute to the offertory via on-line banking. Visit: <https://stdunstanssc.archtoronto.org/About-Us/donate>

100% of all monies collected will be put towards St. Dunstan Parish.