



Welcome to HOLY FAMILY PARISH

DECEMBER 25, 2022 – NATIVITY OF THE LORD - YEAR A

Email: contact@holyfamilymh.ca ~ Website: www.holyfamilymh.ca ~ Phone 403-527-6933
Facebook: Medicine Hat Holy Family Parish ~ YouTube: Medicine Hat Holy Family Church
Office Hrs. Monday to Friday - 8:30am – 12:00pm & 1:00pm to 4:30pm. Closed on Holidays.

CLERGY AT HOLY FAMILY PARISH

Fr. Iqbal Khurshid & Fr Naveed Arif
& Deacon Robert Risling

RECONCILIATION...

Friday 9:30am–10:30am. & Saturday 3:30–
4:45pm. Or by Appointment

MASS TIMES... MONDAY to FRIDAY at 9:00AM

FIRST SATURDAY OF MONTH at 8:30AM, SATURDAY at 5:00PM
SUNDAY at 8:30AM, 10:30AM & 6:00PM

THE CHAPEL IS OPEN

MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:30am - 4:00pm
ADORATION FRIDAY 9:30 – 10:30am

Knights of Columbus - Kirby Peterson
Catholic Women's League - Marjorie Bowlby

Parish Pastoral Council Chair - Gary Heinbecker
Parish Finance Committee Chair - Cheryl Pocsik



The Nativity of the Lord

Sunday's Readings

1st Reading: Isaiah 9.2-4, 6-7

A child has been born for us; a son given to us.

Responsorial Psalm: 9.1-4, 11-13 (R. Luke 2.11)

R. Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord..

2nd Reading: Titus 2.11-14

The grace of God has appeared to all.

Gospel: Luke 2.1-16++

To you is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ.

We acknowledge that Treaty 7 territory,
on which we stand, is the ancestral land
of the Indigenous peoples and is common
home to everyone in virtue of God our
Creator's gracious gift.

Coming Together

All manner of gatherings occur at Christmas: of families, of friends, of associates – some invited, some not. Filled with joy because of a new child or spouse added to the family. Touched with grief because of the death of one we love. Tinged with tension because of some wrong – perceived or real – yet unresolved. Christmas speaks to all of this and more. The birth of God in Jesus assures us that all life is good and holy. The assigned Bible readings speak of vindication, being God's delight, abundant joy, great rejoicing, peace for ever, justice filled, not forsaken, comforted. This day speaks to every emotion, everything, everyone.

★ How will I show God's love to everyone with whom I gather?

★ How will I let go of some hurt to be at peace?

★ How will I be holy – and help those with whom I gather to be holy?

December 25, 2022 – Nativity of the Lord - Year A

OPERATING FINANCES	
NOVEMBER 1-30, 2022	
Operating Budget 2022	\$ 59,708
General Envelope Collection	\$ 45,506
Loose Collections	\$ 2,391
Future Development	\$ 2,817
Sale of Church Supplies & Other	\$ 9,374
Budget Vs Actual	\$ 380
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS	
Together in Action (TIA)	\$ 3,576
St Vincent de Paul	\$ 3,624
World Mission	\$ 95
Clergy Retirement	\$ 150
Mission Mexico	\$ 185
CARO	\$ 90
Seminary Fund	\$ 20
Catholic Education	\$ 1,730
Gift Sharing Sunday	\$ 2,485
<i>Thank You for your Generous Contributions</i>	
Average Weekly Attendance	771

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

December 23-12:00pm to December 28-8:30am

Holy Family Parish Office Closed

December 24 - 5:00pm, 8:30pm & 10:30pm

Nativity of the Lord Mass

December 25 - 9:30am

Nativity of the Lord Mass

December 31 - 5:00pm

Mary, the Holy Mother of God Mass

January 1 - 9:30am

Mary, the Holy Mother of God Mass

December 31, 2022, Deadline

Goal \$70,938

total to date \$ 47,711.78



which is only 68%

Short \$ 23,226.22

Please Give Generously ~ Thank You!

† Masses & Mass Intentions †



Saturday, December 24 - Nativity of the Lord

5:00pm - Gualberto & Lucia Pimentel †

8:30pm - Jennifer Wrzosek (Jaw-Sick) †

10:30pm - The Sehn Kids

Saturday, December 25 - Nativity of the Lord

9:30am - Sophia Dumanowski †

Monday, December 26 NO MASS TODAY

Tuesday, December 27

9:00am - Margaret Davis †

Wednesday, December 28

9:00am - Trey - Special Intention

Thursday, December 29

9:00am - Italo Dal Molin †

Friday, December 30

9:00am - Anne Dirk †

Saturday, December 31 - Mary, Holy Mother of God

5:00pm - Sydney - Special Intention

Saturday, January 1 - Mary, Holy Mother of God

9:30am - Valentine † & Victoria † Deis and

Sr. Vicki Hagel †

**The 29th Annual
GIFT SHARING
SUNDAY**

november 26th & 27th, 2022

We Collected 623
pounds of food, valued
at \$1970.00 + \$705.00

**ROOT
CELLAR**

FOOD & WELLNESS HUB

We Collected
\$2,449.25

**Thank
YOU**

We Collected 115 Toys
Valued at \$1765.00

Christmas Mass Schedule 2022

The Nativity of the Lord
Saturday Dec. 24
5:00pm - Livestreamed
8:30pm
10:30pm

Sunday Dec. 25
9:30am - Livestreamed

Solemnity of Mary
Saturday Dec. 31
5:00pm

Sunday Jan. 1
9:30am -
Livestreamed

We wish you a peaceful, blessed Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of God's only son, our Savior. May God bless you and remain close to you always. Thank you for your prayers and generous support throughout the year.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

(Email address for E transfers:
ssvpmehat@gmail.com)



Sacramental Preparation

Confirmation Class - HFP Faith Rm

Thursday, January 12 at 6:00pm

1st Communion Parent Meeting

Holy Family Parish Hall

Thursday, January 12 at 6:30pm

1st Communion Class

Holy Family Parish Faith Room

Sunday, January 15 at 10:15am



NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Medicine Hat Catholic Schools'
Education Foundation AGM



January 17, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
at Medicine Hat Catholic Board Office

All public welcome to attend!

**Thank You to Pattison
Funeral Home for the
kind Donation of Baby
Jesus.**

**Thank You Ray Bosch
for making the life
size manger for this
sweet Baby Jesus.**



****** ALL DONATIONS HAVE TO BE RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 31 IN ORDER TO BE RECEIPTED TO THIS YEAR 2022!****DO NOT TO USE OLD ENVELOPES SINCE THE NUMBERS MAY HAVE CHANGED AND IT CAN CAUSE CONFUSION!******

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS AND FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS! RIA



nuture
pregnancy centre

The Nuture Pregnancy Centre is seeking a team member to assist in all aspects of the Centre activities. As this is fairly dynamic environment, experience could come from a wide area of backgrounds. This position will be 30 hours per week starting January 2023. As some of the activities will involve young children both a current Police Check and a Child Welfare Check clearance will be necessary. For more information, you may contact:

Keith Knodel at call or text 403 548-9799 or by email at kknodel@memlane.com

OR Elissa Aasman, call or text 403 952-8255 or by email at elisanaasman@gmail.com

Ukrainian Christmas Potluck Dinner

Friday, January 6th

St. Patrick's Church Social Committee is pleased to help facilitate a Ukrainian Christmas Potluck Dinner on Friday, January 6th. To reserve an entrance ticket and discuss the potluck item you will bring, contact Karen-Anne at (403) 952-8991 or by e-mail at kacherwono@gmail.com



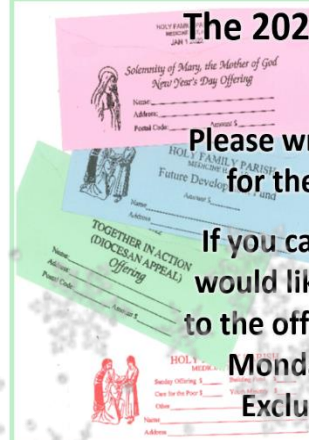
The 2023 Donation Envelopes are in the Foyer

Please write your names on the envelopes for the first few times you use them!

If you can't find your envelopes or if you would like new envelopes for 2023, come to the office during regular business hours.

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

Excluding Noon Hour and Holidays



*The Clergy and Staff would like to
wish all our Parishioners and
Visitors a Safe & Joyful Christmas.*



[Sunday 10:30am Mass on YOUTUBE](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG6zK-XzuXdDHj79rV6ut_Q)
[Medicine Hat Holy Family Church Live Stream](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG6zK-XzuXdDHj79rV6ut_Q)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG6zK-XzuXdDHj79rV6ut_Q



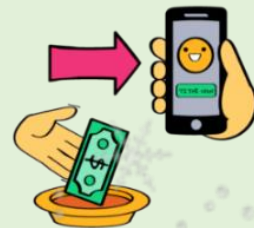
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 - Enter our PARISH CODE: GPQWK7
 - Create a personal account with your personal username/email and password.
 - Start enjoying the best Catholic content all in one place!
- IMPORTANT:** Do not sign up as an individual. Our parish access code provides more content than an individual subscription and it costs you nothing!

E-Transfer Donations



accounting@holyfamilymh.ca

Listen to Mass on your phone...
Download the "Audio Fetch" app.
Our Network is: HFP_LIVE
The Password is: Liv3HFP*



Faithfully
FAITH. LIVED. FULLY.

catholiccyyc.ca/Faithfully

Faithfully keeps you updated with
what's happening in and around our
Diocese!

Monsignor McCoy High School

Monsignor McCoy High School is the only high school in the Medicine Hat Catholic School Division. We are privileged to be able to work with our Division's students who are closest to realizing their goal of achieving their High School Diploma and the completion of high school. This year, we have become home to a large number of international students, as well. Their involvement at our school has brought a wonderful dynamic of energy and diversity as they become a part of the fabric of our school and community. As a school community, our students are involved in charitable activities throughout the year, including donating turkey hampers to our families in need during the Christmas season.

Our school provides a wide variety of high-interest curricular and extracurricular programming that provides them with a transcript of experiences that better prepares them for their transition to work and post-secondary education. Along with traditional, in-class programming, Monsignor McCoy High School offers an array of online programming and a Learning Centre to support students who prefer to work outside of the classroom, or at home. St. Joseph's Education Centre, which runs out of our school, provides many different pathways for students to complete high school.

Our school also provides a full slate of extracurricular programming, including a Fine Arts Academy with eight different fine arts courses. All of our students also have the opportunity to take part in an annual musical production. We offer a Baseball Academy, and our students also participate in many different sports throughout the school year with great success, including provincial appearances by our golf and volleyball teams this fall. We look forward to your continued support of Monsignor McCoy High School with your prayers, your attendance at our events, and your financial support of our different projects.

UNDER SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF FR. IQBAL KHURSHID

MAY 13 – MAY 27, 2023 - 15 DAYS

\$5,290.00 INCLUDING TAXES AND TIPS (CALGARY DEPARTURE)

MARIAN PILGRIMAGE TO PORTUGAL, SPAIN & FRANCE

CONNAISSANCE TRAVEL AND TOURS

3852 FINCH AVE EAST, SUITE #306, TORONTO ON, M1T 3T9, TEL: 416 291 2676

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER PLEASE CONTACT

Agnes: 416-418-3599 agnes@cttour.ca or Maria: 905-334-0559 maria@cttour.ca



WILLIAM T. MCGRATTAN



BISHOP of CALGARY

December 14, 2022

St. John of the Cross, Memorial

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we prepare for the Solemnity of Christmas our focus is drawn to the mystery of the Incarnation, Jesus, the Word made Flesh. This taking on of our humanity by God in the Person of Jesus, serves to remind us of the inherent dignity of every human life.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 2258) states:

"Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being."

The Government whose role is to protect our basic human rights, including the fundamental right to life from conception to natural death, has sought instead to expand access to physician-assisted suicide. This new legislation would now include those suffering with forms of mental illness and disabilities.

In responding to this current moral and social issue, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) formed a Joint Ad hoc Committee on Palliative Care. It was comprised of medical, theological, ethical, and pastoral experts who were united in addressing this culture of death. They developed **Horizons of Hope: A toolkit for Catholic Parishes on Palliative Care**, an educational resource to help understand and reflect upon the many end-of-life issues we will face.

The **Horizons of Hope** program has been designed for:

- People seeking to learn more about palliative care and Catholic Church teaching on end-of-life;
- Individuals recently diagnosed with serious and/or terminal illness;
- Family members and friends seeking guidance and access to resources as they accompany the loved one faced with a serious or terminal illness;
- Medical professionals, caregivers;
- Members of pastoral care teams and other parishioners; and
- Parishes seeking to form a Compassionate Community program.

This program will allow parishioners to learn and reflect upon end-of-life issues and to promote the need for excellent palliative care. It will assist in clarifying misinformation, and reverse the

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF CALGARY

Catholic Pastoral Centre | 120 17 Ave SW, Calgary, AB T2S 2T2

Phone: 403-218-5526 | Fax : 403-264-0272

deceptive messaging found in this increasing culture of death. This 4-module program is being offered simultaneously to all the faithful in our Diocese at several locations:

- **Module 1:** Understanding the Human Experience of Dying and Death - January 9 (7 to 9 pm)
- **Module 2:** Discerning and Making Decisions at the End of Life - January 16 (7 to 9 pm)
- **Module 3:** Accompanying Those at the End of Life - January 23 (7 to 9 pm)
- **Module 4:** Supporting and Integrating Within the Wider Community - January 30 (7 to 9 pm)

To register, please visit catholiccyvc.ca/horizonsofhope to participate in one of the following six sites:

- Catholic Pastoral Centre (120 – 17th Avenue SW, Calgary)
- Ascension Parish, Calgary
- St Gerard Parish, Calgary
- All Saints, Lethbridge
- Holy Family, Medicine Hat
- St James, Okotoks

The program will also be offered in February 2023 for the clergy and religious. It will address the specific pastoral and sacramental considerations they face in their ministry regarding end-of-life issues.

The Catholic Church remains opposed to euthanasia and as such stands for the dignity of every human life from conception to natural death. It will continue to support the conscience rights of health care professionals and all organizations in our society that protect and defend human life. Through this diocesan initiative it is my sincere hope that we can work together in bringing about a renewed culture of life that respects the inherent dignity of every human life, from conception to natural death.

May our Lord, who comes into this world as a humble and defenseless child, teach us to receive and protect the precious gift of life in every person.

Yours in Christ,



+William T. McGrattan
Bishop of Calgary

HORIZONS *of* HOPE

A TOOLKIT FOR CATHOLIC PARISHES ON PALLIATIVE CARE



Horizons of Hope is an educational resource to help understand and reflect upon end-of-life issues and to promote the need for excellent palliative care. It will assist in clarifying misinformation, and reverse the deceptive messaging found in this increasing culture of death. We invite you to attend the 4-module workshop program being offered in January 2023.

The Horizons of Hope program has been designed for:

- People seeking to learn more about palliative care and Catholic Church teaching on end-of-life;
- Individuals recently diagnosed with serious and/or terminal illness;
- Family members and friends seeking guidance and access to resources as they accompany the loved one faced with a serious or terminal illness;
- Medical professionals, caregivers;
- Members of pastoral care teams and other parishioners; and
- Parishes seeking to form a Compassionate Community program.

SCHEDULE

- **Monday, Jan 9 (7 to 9 pm)**
Module 1: Understanding the Human Experience of Dying and Death
- **Monday, Jan 16 (7 to 9 pm)**
Module 2: Discerning and Making Decisions at the End of Life
- **Monday, Jan 23 (7 to 9 pm)**
Module 3: Accompanying Those at the End of Life
- **Monday, Jan 30 (7 to 9 pm)**
Module 4: Supporting and Integrating Within the Wider Community

WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

Pick from the following sites:

- Catholic Pastoral Centre
(120 17 Ave SW, Calgary)
- Ascension Parish, Calgary
- St Gerard Parish, Calgary
- St. Martha's Parish, Lethbridge
- Holy Family Parish, Medicine Hat
- St James' Parish, Okotoks

FOR MORE INFORMATION
[CATHOLICYYC.CA/
HORIZONSOFHOP](http://CATHOLICYYC.CA/HORIZONSOFHOP)

REGISTRATION

To attend, register online at
catholicyyyc.ca/horizonsofhope



Or call 403-218-5500



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of Calgary



The Nativity of the Lord ~ Year A

December 25, 2022

HE DWELT AMONG US

Prophet Isaiah opens us our hearts to reflect on the mystery of God becoming man and dwelling among us “Behold a virgin is with a Child and she will name him Emmanuel which means God is with us”. He, being Emmanuel walks with us and shares our humanity. St. Bernard rightly reflects on this mystery this way as he believes that conceiving of Jesus, Blessed Virgin Mary has made the path clear for us to understand that he dwells among us and walks with us. “You have heard, O Virgin, that you will conceive and bear a son; you have heard that it will not be by man but by the Holy Spirit. The angel awaits an answer; it is time for him to return to God who sent him. We too are waiting, O Lady, for your word of compassion; the sentence of condemnation weighs heavily upon us. The price of our salvation is offered to you. We shall be set free at once if you consent. In the eternal Word of God we all came to be, and behold, we die. In your brief response we are to be remade in order to be recalled to life. Tearful Adam with his sorrowing family begs this of you, O loving Virgin, in their exile from Paradise. Abraham begs it, David begs it. All the other holy patriarchs, your ancestors, ask it of you, as they dwell in the country of the shadow of death. This is what the whole earth waits for, prostrate at your feet. It is right in doing so, for on your word depends, comfort for the wretched, ransom for the captive, freedom for the condemned, indeed, salvation for all the sons of Adam, the whole of your race. Answer quickly, O Virgin. Reply in haste to the angel, or rather through the angel to the Lord. Answer with a word, receive the Word of God. Speak your own word, conceive the divine Word. Breathe a passing word, embrace the eternal Word.

Why do you delay, why are you afraid? Believe, give praise, and receive. Let humility be bold, let modesty be confident. This is no time for virginal simplicity to forget prudence. In this matter alone, O prudent Virgin, do not fear to be presumptuous. Though modest silence is pleasing, dutiful speech is now more necessary. Open your heart to faith, O blessed Virgin, your lips to praise, your womb to the Creator. See, the desired of all nations is at your door, knocking to enter. If he should pass by because of your delay, in sorrow you would begin to seek him afresh, the One whom your soul loves. Arise, hasten,

open. Arise in faith, hasten in devotion, open in praise and thanksgiving. Behold the handmaid of the Lord, she says, be it done to me according to your word”.

This mystery of God’s taking flesh and dwelling among us leads to us reflect on the title of Jesus found in O Antiphons as mentioned in the last week’s reflection. Those seven titles of Jesus in fact sum up the whole mystery of the Lord’s Nativity and his dwelling among us. Let me share them again.

O Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge! The Old Testament teaches Wisdom as the eldest daughter of creation, but also as a co-creator with God. Many of the OT references are commonly (and easily,) applied to the Holy Spirit, but this antiphon clearly applies to Jesus. Prophet Isaiah had prophesied, the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, and his delight shall be the fear of the Lord. (11:2-3), and Wonderful is His counsel and great is His wisdom. (28:29). Wisdom is here personified, present with God at the beginning of creation. This is a pre-figurement of Jesus, the eternal Word of God, the "logos" John described in the opening of his gospel. Wisdom is the foundation of fear of the Lord, of holiness, or right living: it is wisdom whom we bid to come and teach us prudence. The cry "Come" will be repeated again and again, insistent and hope filled. His might is gentle, not harsh, He is forceful and holds a creator’s power, but sweetly, bearing these two traits, not in contrast, but in perfect, divine complement.

O Leader (Lord) of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power! With this second antiphon we progress from creation to the familiar story of God manifesting himself by name to Moses and giving his law to Israel as their way of life. We are also reminded of the Israelites' deliverance from bondage under pharaoh a foreshadowing of our own redemption from sin. The image of God's arm outstretched in power to save his chosen people also brings to mind the later scene of Jesus with his arms outstretched for us on the cross.

O Flower of Jesse’s stem, sign of God’s love for all his people: come to save us without delay! Isaiah prophesied a restoration of David's throne a new branch budding out of the old root. Christ is the root of Jesse in a two-fold sense: he is the descendant of David, who was the youngest son of Jesse, and he inherited the royal throne. The angel foretold to Mary, "The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over the house of Jacob forever and his reign will be without end" (Luke 1:32-33). Our hearts more and more urgently cry out for God's reign to extend over all humanity: "Come, save us, and do not delay".

O Key of David, opening the gates of God’s eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness! Isaiah had prophesied, God will place the Key of the House of David on His shoulder; when he opens, no one will shut, when he shuts, no one will open. And His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David’s throne, and over His kingdom, which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever. The key and scepter are traditional symbols of kingly power and authority. Christ, the anointed one, is the heir of David and possessor of the kingdom. Jesus himself also made use of this

symbol, showing the prophetic relationship of the earthly kingdom of David to the kingdom of God. All power and authority were given to him after the resurrection, and he entrusted this power to "bind and to loose" to Peter and the ministers of his church.

○ Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death. This title is variously translated "morning star", "Dayspring", "rising sun", "radiant dawn", "orient". All beautifully express the idea of light shattering the darkness of night, of sin and death, of sickness and despair, with its brightness bringing healing and warmth to cold hearts. Jesus is indeed the true light, the radiance of his Father's splendor. The church prays this petition daily in the Benedictus, joining in the words of Zechariah: "He, the Dayspring, shall visit us in his mercy to shine on those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1:78-79).

○ King of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust! The earlier antiphons have already alluded to the Messiah coming not only to Israel but to convert the gentile nations and redeem them for his own. Now this sixth antiphon clearly addresses the savior as the king of the gentiles (Jer. 10:7) and the Desired One of the nations. The Messiah is the cornerstone on whom our spiritual foundations are laid, but on whom unbelievers stumble (Matt. 21:42). This cornerstone unites and binds Jew and gentile into one, making peace between them. The plea is that God save all humanity, all his creation that he formed from the dust of the earth (Gen. 2:7). We yearn for him once again to breathe the breath of his new life into us.

○ Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!

These titles of Jesus really help us to understand the mystery of Incarnation of the Lord. With this last antiphon our expectation finds joy now in the certainty of fulfillment. We call Jesus by one of the most personal and intimate of his titles, Emmanuel, God-with-us. We recall that in his birth from the Virgin Mary God takes on our very flesh and human nature: God coming nearer to us than we could have ever imagined! Yet he is also to be exalted above us as our king, the lawgiver and judge, the one whom we honor and obey. And he is our savior, long expected by all creation. The final cry rises from us urgent in our need for daily salvation and forgiveness of our sins, and confident that our God will not withhold himself from us.

The mystery of God's dwelling among us is also revealed in the visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth, where these two women, mothers and sisters encounter the greatest mystery of God becoming man "why has this happened that the mother of my Lord has come to visit me" as Elizabeth says. St. Ambrose explains the greatest mystery by saying "When the angel revealed his message to the Virgin Mary he gave her a sign to win her trust. He told her of the motherhood of an old and barren woman to show that God is able to do all that he wills. When she hears this Mary sets out for the hill country. She does not disbelieve God's word; she feels no uncertainty over the message or doubt about the sign. She goes eager in purpose, dutiful in conscience, hastening for joy. Filled with God, where would she hasten but to the heights? The Holy Spirit does not proceed by slow, laborious efforts. Quickly, too, the blessings of her

coming and the Lord's presence are made clear: as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting the child leapt in her womb, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit".

He continues to explain "Notice the contrast and the choice of words. Elizabeth is the first to hear Mary's voice, but John is the first to be aware of grace. She hears with the ears of the body, but he leaps for joy at the meaning of the mystery. She is aware of Mary's presence, but he is aware of the Lord's: a woman aware of a woman's presence, the forerunner aware of the pledge of our salvation. The women speak of the grace they have received while the children are active in secret, unfolding the mystery of love with the help of their mothers, who prophesy by the spirit of their sons. The child leaps in the womb; the mother is filled with the Holy Spirit; he fills his mother with the same Spirit. John leaps for joy, and the spirit of Mary rejoices in her turn. When John leaps for joy Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit, but we know that though Mary's spirit rejoices she does not need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Her son, who is beyond our understanding, is active in his mother in a way beyond our understanding. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit after conceiving John, while Mary is filled with the Holy Spirit before conceiving the Lord. Elizabeth says: Blessed are you because you have believed. You also are blessed because you have heard and believed. A soul that believes both conceives and brings forth the Word of God and acknowledges his works. Let Mary's soul be in each of you to proclaim the greatness of the Lord. Let her spirit be in each to rejoice in the Lord. Christ has only one mother in the flesh, but we all bring forth Christ in faith. Every soul receives the Word of God if only it keeps chaste, remaining pure and free from sin, its modesty undefiled. The soul that succeeds in this proclaims the greatness of the Lord, just as Mary's soul magnified the Lord and her spirit rejoiced in God her Savior. In another place we read: Magnify the Lord with me. The Lord is magnified, not because the human voice can add anything to God but because he is magnified within us. Christ is the image of God, and if the soul does what is right and holy, it magnifies that image of God, in whose likeness it was created and, in magnifying the image of God, the soul has a share in its greatness and is exalted".

In the words of Holy Father Pope Francis, the mystery God's sharing our humanity and dwelling among us is the greatest ever. Who would have thought God all powerful can take our image and will walk in our streets. This prophecy of Isaiah never ceases to touch us, especially when we hear it proclaimed in the liturgy of Christmas Night. This is not simply an emotional or sentimental matter. It moves us because it states the deep reality of what we are: a people who walk, and all around us – and within us as well – there is darkness and light. In this night, as the spirit of darkness enfolds the world, there takes place anew the event which always amazes and surprises us: the people who walk see a great light. A light which makes us reflect on this mystery: the mystery of walking and seeing".

This verb makes us reflect on the course of history, that long journey, which is the history of salvation, starting with Abraham, our father in faith, whom the Lord called one day to set out, to go forth from his country towards the land which he would show him. From that time on, our identity as believers has been that of a people making its pilgrim way

towards the promised land. This history has always been accompanied by the Lord! He is ever faithful to his covenant and to his promises. Because he is faithful, "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 Jn 1:5). Yet on the part of the people there are times of both light and darkness, fidelity and infidelity, obedience, and rebellion; times of being a pilgrim people and times of being a people adrift. In our personal history too, there are both bright and dark moments, lights and shadows. If we love God and our brothers and sisters, we walk in the light; but if our heart is closed, if we are dominated by pride, deceit, self-seeking, then darkness falls within us and around us. "Whoever hates his brother — writes the Apostle John — is in the darkness; he walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has blinded his eyes" (1 Jn 2:11). A people who walk, but as a pilgrim people who do not want to go astray. There rings out the proclamation of the Apostle: "God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race" (Tit 2:11). The grace which was revealed in our world is Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, true man and true God. He has entered our history; he has shared our journey. He came to free us from darkness and to grant us light. In him was revealed the grace, the mercy, and the tender love of the Father: Jesus is Love incarnate. He is not simply a teacher of wisdom; he is not an ideal for which we strive while knowing that we are hopelessly distant from it. He is the meaning of life and history, who has pitched his tent in our midst.

The mystery of God's dwelling among needs to be celebrated with joy and love because our God is an awesome God who loves us all. Let me conclude my reflection with this story by Ted A. Thompson, which will help us to understand the true meaning of Christmas and mystery of God's dwelling among us.

The year our youngest daughter, Shelly, was four, she received an unusual Christmas present from "Santa." She was the perfect age for Christmas, able to understand the true meaning of the season, but still completely enchanted by the magic of it. Her innocent joyfulness was compelling and catching -- a great gift to parents, reminding us of what Christmas should represent no matter how old we are. The most highly prized gift Shelly received that Christmas Eve was a giant bubble-maker, a simple device of plastic and cloth the inventor promised would create huge billowing bubbles, large enough to swallow a wide-eyed four-year-old. Both Shelly and I were excited about trying it out, but it was after dark, so we'd have to wait until the next day.

Later that night I read the instruction booklet while Shelly played with some of her other new toys. The inventor of the bubble-maker had tried all types of soaps for formulating bubbles and found that Joy dishwashing detergent created the best giant bubbles. I'd have to buy some. The next morning, I was awakened very early by small stirrings in the house. Shelly was up. I knew in my sleepy mind that Christmas Day festivities would soon begin, so I arose and made my way toward the kitchen to start the coffee. In the hallway, I met my daughter, already wide awake, the bubble-maker clutched in her chubby little hand, the magic of Christmas morning embraced in her four-year-old heart. Her eyes were shining with excitement, and she asked, "Daddy, can we make bubbles now?"

I sighed heavily and rubbed my eyes. I looked toward the window, where the sky was only beginning to lighten with the dawn. I looked toward the kitchen, where the coffee pot had yet to start dripping its aromatic reward for early-rising Christmas dads. "Shelly," I said, my voice almost pleading and perhaps a little annoyed, "it's too early. I haven't even had my coffee yet." Her smile fell away. Immediately I felt a father's remorse for bursting her bright Christmas bubble with what I suddenly realized was my own selfish problem, and my heart broke a little.

But I was a grown-up. I could fix this. In a flash of adult inspiration, I unshouldered the responsibility. Recalling the inventor's recommendation of a particular brand of bubble-making detergent -- which I knew we did not have in the house -- I laid the blame squarely on him, pointing out gently, "Besides, you have to have Joy." I watched her eyes light back up as she realized, in less than an instant, that she could neutralize this small problem with the great and wonderful truth she was about to reveal.

"Oh, Daddy," she promised, with all the honesty and enthusiasm and Christmas excitement she could possibly communicate, "Oh, Daddy, I do." I broke records getting to the store, and in no time at all we were out on the front lawn creating gigantic, billowing, gossamer orbs--each one filled with Joy and sent forth shimmering into the Christmas sun.



DIOCESAN SUNDAY UPDATES

The Fourth Sunday of Advent & Christmas Season



catholiccyyc.ca/horizonsofhope

A Pastoral Letter from Bishop McGrattan: *Horizons of Hope*

Bishop McGrattan releases a pastoral letter for the faithful on the **Horizons of Hope: A toolkit for Catholic Parishes on Palliative Care**. This toolkit was developed by the CCCB as a positive response to the end of life issues and is a meaningful resource for Catholics.

- [Download Bishop's Letter](#) at

All the faithful are invited to take part in the 4-module program being offered in January 2023.

- **Monday, Jan. 9 (7 to 9 pm)** | Module 1: Understanding the Human Experience of Dying and Death
- **Monday, Jan. 16 (7 to 9 pm)** | Module 2: Discerning and Making Decisions at the End of Life
- **Monday, Jan. 23 (7 to 9 pm)** | Module 3: Accompanying Those at the End of Life
- **Monday, Jan. 30 (7 to 9 pm)** | Module 4: Supporting and Integrating Within the Wider Community

You will be able to choose one of the six following locations: Catholic Pastoral Centre (120 17 Ave SW, Calgary); Ascension Parish, Calgary; St Gerard Parish, Calgary; All Saints, Lethbridge; Holy Family, Medicine Hat; St James, Okotoks

Register at catholiccyyc.ca/horizonsofhope

Career opportunities

There are a number of employment opportunities that are currently available in the Diocese of Calgary and beyond.

- Coordinator & Assistant Coordinator (Casual) - Feed the Hungry, Calgary
- Cook (Part Time) - St. Mary's Cathedral, Calgary

Please visit catholiccyyc.ca/careers for more information and application details.

End of Year Giving

We are truly grateful for your support! Thank you. In order to receive a tax receipt for the 2022 calendar year, online donation to parishes or diocesan programs or ministries must be received by **Dec. 31, 2022**. To donate online, visit: iamblessed.ca (and click GIVE NOW)

Winter Young Adult Retreat - Jan 7-8

Young adults are invited to a retreat at Mount St. Francis on **Saturday, Jan 7 at 1 pm to Sunday Jan 8 at 1 pm**. Theme: "The word became flesh and dwelt among us: Celebrating the gift of Baptism together." The retreat will feature: *Lectio Divina* on Sunday mass readings, small group reflection, Emmaus walk, Adoration, opportunity for reconciliation, Mass, prayer time, quiet time, meals together, fellowship and a prayer night. For more information, contact maritzachouza@gmail.com



Visit the [Diocesan Event Calendar](#)

Follow us on Social Media
[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)

Weekly reflections can be found here:

[Vatican News](#) | [The Sunday Website](#)
[Sunday Connection](#)

Daily and Sunday Mass Prayers & Readings: [CCCB Daily Readings](#)
 (pick the desired date)

Full schedule of Parish Livestream Masses:
<https://www.catholicyc.ca> | TELUS Optik TV Ch. 877 (choose Diocese of Calgary tile logo). For other online Masses, visit [Salt+Light TV](#), [Shalom World TV](#), [EWTN](#) and [Vision TV](#)

Resources

- [Sacraments & Liturgies](#)
- [Spiritual Resources](#)
- [Sacrament Preparation](#)
- [Online Formation Opportunities](#)

Resources for children

Kid's challenge this week: Name someone you trust and discuss why you trust this person. In today's Gospel Reading, we hear the story of how God sends a message to Joseph in a dream and asks Joseph to trust in God's plan. Do you think it was easy for Joseph to trust God and God's messenger? Why or why not? Let us pray as we celebrate Christmas this week that we will always be people who trust God.

(Loyola Press)

[Colouring page this Sunday](#)

[Kid's Bulletin for this Sunday](#)

[Sunday Connection - Fourth Sunday of Advent](#) (Gr. 1-8 & family)

Children's Liturgy of the Word this Sunday

[Children's Liturgy sheet for leaders/parents](#) (CAFOD)

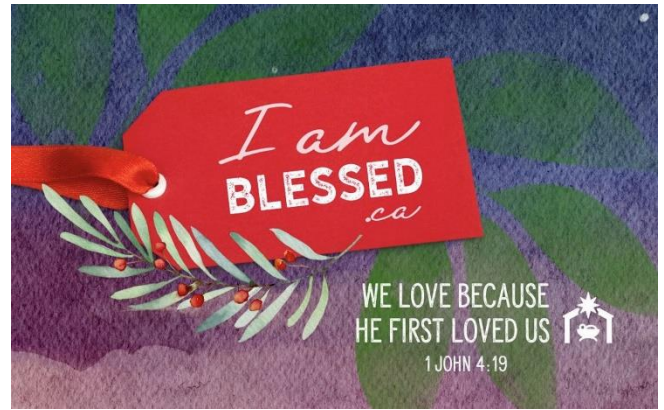
| [Illustration](#)

[Children's Liturgy of the Word with Miss Heidi](#)

(Catholic TV)

I am Blessed Campaign action items this year:

1. [Pray now](#) - Supporting others with prayer by praying in solidarity with them; ideas on what prayers to pray and what to do if others ask to pray for them.
2. [Act now](#) - Offering tips on how to be a good friend especially to those who are in need; getting familiar with services available in our midst as we may need to lead others to seek help.
3. [Give now](#) - Providing financial assistance online to programs and initiatives that empower others.
4. For Advent resources for individual, families or children, [visit our Advent Page](#)



Pope's Prayer intention for December

This month, let us pray that volunteer non-profit and human development organisations may find people willing to commit themselves to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths of international cooperation.

In his intention, the **Holy Father** encourages volunteers to continue their labour, working "not just **for** the people, but **with** the people," being close to them, being "**artisans of mercy**" and always listening to other people's needs. [Watch Pope's video this month](#)

We give thanks

Since the beginning of October, over 100 school faith leaders and administrators from 91 CCSD schools have responded to the Bishop's call to accompany and prepare children and their families for the reception of the sacraments. During this season of Advent, over 1500 children in grade 3-9 have been brought to experience the depth of God's love in the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

EXTRAORDINARY SACRAMENT PREPARATION PROGRAM (ESPP)

The mission to support families with children enrolled in Calgary Catholic School District who missed the regular parish-based sacramental preparation in previous years has reached its **first milestone!**

"We are blessed with missionary disciples in our teachers, administrators, pastors and parish leaders, who are committed to share Christ with those entrusted to their care. Ultimately, the blessing comes from our families, parents, and children who have responded to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and avail themselves to the sanctifying grace of the sacraments. May the joy of Christ bring us closer to Him and one another!"

1500+ Students **27 Parishes**
91 Schools **100+ Facilitators**

The program involves preparation sessions for children at each school, online preparation sessions for parents, retreats, and the reception of the sacrament occurring at the parish.

We give thanks to all parents, pastors, catechists, schools and parish staff, volunteers, and all participating students! You have blessed us with your support and participation, and we could not have reached these milestones without you!

One more reason to be thankful...

Since the beginning of October, over 100 school faith leaders and administrators from 91 CCSD schools have responded to the Bishop's call to accompany and prepare children and their families for the reception of the sacraments. During this season of Advent, over 1500 children in grade 3-9 have been brought to experience the depth of God's love in the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Thank you to all parents, pastors, catechists, schools and parish staff, volunteers, and all participating students with your involvement in the Extraordinary Sacrament Preparation Program (ESPP)! You have blessed us with your support and participation, and we could not have reached these milestones without you!

- [Read our brief report on the Extraordinary Sacrament Preparation Program \(ESPP\)](#)

Worth sharing

The War in Ukraine

Ukraine and its people are still in crisis. Let us renew our efforts to pray, fast, and act. Together we can make a difference in the millions of lives of the children, men and women who are counting on us. Read the [Pastoral Letter from The Ukrainian Catholic Bishops of Canada](#) and kindly donate through your local parish or online at www.cnewa.org/c a and www.devp.org

Subscribe to Faithfully

If you haven't already, please subscribe to the [Diocesan publication Faithfully](#) - to keep you updated with what's happening in our Diocese. Faithfully gives a snapshot of faith at work in the lives of everyday people in our Diocese and provide us with opportunities to spread the Good News of Christ beyond the walls of our churches. New release is coming up this Monday! Subscribe at catholiccyyc.ca/faithfully

National Synodal Report

We invite everyone to read the Synod on Synodality reports.. To read the Diocesan, Western Region and National reports, visit catholiccyyc.ca/synod

World Youth Day 2023

For information re: SFXC group that will be travelling to Lisbon, Portugal for [World Youth Day in 2023](#), contact SFXC at sfxc@calgarydiocese.ca

Pastoral Care: Accompanying in Conflict and Complicated Situations

Join Fr. Timothy Boyle in a monthly reflection on ministry, pastoral care, and the art of accompaniment, inspired by the teachings of Pope Francis. When: Tuesday, Nov. 22 at 10:30 am at St. Martha's Church in Lethbridge, or join via livestream: stmarthasparish.ca

Pastoral Letter for Young People (CCCB)

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) has issued a Pastoral Letter to Young People in honour of the anniversary of the death of Blessed Carlo Acutis, the first beatified millennial. Read now at catholiccyyc.ca/blog.

Marriage Preparation Courses

Next course: Weekend of Nov. 25 at Ascension Parish, Calgary. For more dates, visit our Diocesan website where couples can choose the course date with access to registration and payment catholiccyyc.ca/marriageprep

Bishops of Canada deepen commitments for healing and reconciliation

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), gathered in the Plenary Assembly last week, agreed upon a series of next steps related to the painful legacy of residential schools. This work builds

on previous commitments to promote access to records, educate clergy on Indigenous cultures and spirituality, and contribute \$30 million to healing and reconciliation initiatives across Canada. Read more at cccb.ca

National Synodal Report

We invite everyone to read the Synod on Synodality reports, which is the culmination of a sincere listening exercise that occurred in every diocese across the country. To read the Diocesan, Western Region and National reports, visit catholiccyyc.ca/synod

National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples | Dec. 12

"This year, we have been blessed to have had a delegation of Indigenous people visit Pope Francis in Rome in order to receive his apology on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church, and again to welcome the Holy Father to this land to hear his words of sorrow as he embarked on his, self described, "Pilgrimage of Penance". Let us take this opportunity to build on the reflections offered by Pope Francis."

The National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples will be celebrated on December 12, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas.

- Download/print [this reflection](#) from the Canadian Catholic Indigenous Council

Faith Formation Courses

These formation opportunities will help you with your faith journey and to help you grow closer to Christ. Find a list of webinars and courses on our diocesan website [here](#).

Catechesis webinar recordings from CCCB

The webinar recordings, PowerPoint presentations and guides for reflections are available [here on the CCCB website](#). They represent a rich collection of resources that can be used in diocesan/eparchial and parish settings for the formation of catechists and leaders in evangelization. Past Webinars:

- [Directory for Catechesis](#)
- [Nurturing Friendship: The Directory for Catechesis in Dialogue with the Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*](#)
- [Encounters of Hope: The Process Of Evangelization In Our Daily Lives](#)
- [For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission](#)

Livestreams

Full schedule of Parish Livestream Masses in the Diocese of Calgary is available at: <https://www.catholiccyyc.ca>.

You can also watch parish Sunday Masses via TELUS Optik TV Ch. 876 and 877 (choose Diocese of Calgary tile logo). For other online Masses, visit [Salt+Light TV](#), [Shalom World TV](#), [EWTN](#) and [Vision TV](#).

The Kids' Bulletin



*Christmas Day
December 25, 2022*

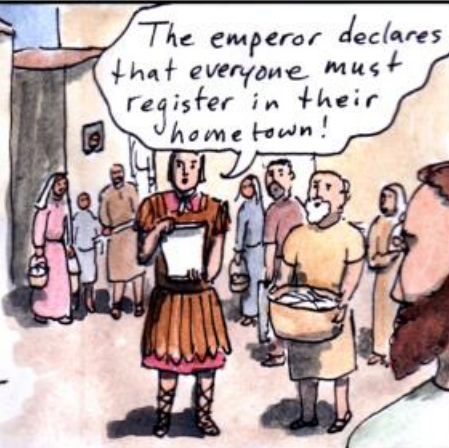


*Help the shepherds find their way to
Bethlehem to see Baby Jesus.*

The First Christmas



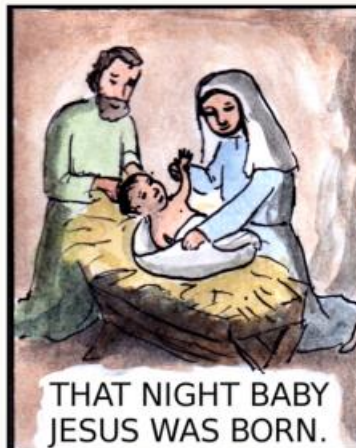
AT THAT TIME THE ROMAN EMPEROR, WHO WAS THE RULER OF ALL THAT AREA, MADE EVERYONE REGISTER IN THEIR HOME - TOWNS.



MARY AND JOSEPH WENT TO BETHLEHEM. MARY WAS GOING TO HAVE A BABY VERY SOON.



BECAUSE NOBODY HAD ROOM FOR THEM THEY FOUND A STABLE FOR SHELTER.



SUDDENLY ANGELS APPEARED TO THE SHEPHERDS OUT IN THE FIELDS.



THE SHEPHERDS CAME TO SEE AND WORSHIP THE NEWBORN SAVIOUR.



EVERYONE WAS AMAZED AT WHAT THE SHEPHERDS SAID. MARY KEPT ALL THESE THINGS IN HER HEART AND ALWAYS REMEMBERED THEM.

WHY DO YOU THINK GOD CAME INTO THE WORLD AS A POOR AND TINY BABY WHEN HE COULD HAVE COME AS A POWERFUL KING? JESUS BECAME LITTLE SO THAT HE COULD SUFFER WITH US AND SO WE COULD LOVE HIM AS SOMEONE LIKE OURSELVES. HOW CAN YOU SHOW YOU LOVE JESUS TODAY ON HIS BIRTHDAY?

Christmas Word-Find

B E T H L E H E M D
M N J E S P O O R O
O I M C J E S U S N
T G A H O X E N T K
H H N R S C U M A E
E T G I E O B A B Y
R S E S P L D R L W
B I R T H D A Y E A
O N N A Z A R E T H
R N S T A Y K S B O
N W R A P P E D R N



BABY
BETHLEHEM
BIRTHDAY
BORN
CHRIST
COLD
DARK

DONKEY
INN
JESUS
JOSEPH
MANGER
MARY
MOTHER

NAZARETH
NIGHT
OXEN
POOR
STABLE
STAY
WRAPPED

Why is Christmas so special? Because



— — — — — — — — — — !

A Little Story for Christmas



Before Emmanuel was born, his brother and sister felt that they were enough - and they certainly kept things busy at home. There was a lot of noise in the house after school when they were fighting for the couch, the TV, or the favorite snack. One time, even as Christmas drew near, there were a lot of loud temper tantrums: she had ruined his video game and he had thrown her doll and taken her favorite snack. For these two, it was almost like Emmanuel would never come.

They weren't really expecting him, but Mom and Dad knew that he would arrive. They tried to remind the kids but it wasn't easy. However, on December 25th, all was quiet in the house. And that was the day Emmanuel came too, very quietly. He could have been the centre of attention, but he was the kind of baby that could not be heard unless you were very quiet. His brother and sister began to understand that. Actually it was like that even when he was older. It was because you didn't expect him, they said.

Emmanuel was Jesus, and we are his brothers and sisters. A little noisy at times, a little selfish, and sometimes we just don't expect him. We feel that we are enough. Even today, unless we stop to visit him, and come up quietly to the crib to talk to him in our hearts, we might never realize that God has come.



Answer to Word-Find: Jesus was born!

www.thekidsbulletin.com

Retreat Centers in Southern Alberta

AN "OASIS" IN THE HEART OF CALGARY

FCJ Retreat & Conference Centre is seen by many as a spiritual home where God feels very present both in the building and the surrounding landscape, and every year welcomes thousands of visitors to a unique experience of warm hospitality and deep spirituality.

Our hope is that those who come to the FCJ Centre will encounter God, whether in prayer, in the Word, in the silence and the beauty; and that this encounter will touch many other lives too.



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Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre is nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains where are all welcome in the name of Christ. The Franciscan Friars of Canada, inspired by the vision and example of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, have served here since 1949.

We offer silent retreats and spiritual direction. We also serve those in the 12 Step Program through weekend and evening Serenity

retreats. We listen to 5th steps. We host groups and individuals seeking a place of quiet and stillness in an often-hectic world. We can accommodate up to 50 people (46 rooms/50 beds). We have one large and one small meeting room, a library and chapel. We can accommodate most dietary restrictions. There are approximately 500 acres to explore.

Our retreats are organized through a group of dedicated volunteer Captains that oversee the registration. Please see our retreats page for more information.

We have strong ties with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary; other Christian Churches, schools, and organizations; as well as others not affiliated with any particular faith but who are in accord with our mission of peace, healing and prayer. We value the many loyal friends and benefactors that have supported us in our ministry for over 70 years.

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Martha Retreat Centre, situated on the edge of the beautiful Lethbridge coulees, is a ministry of the Martha Retreat Centre Society, which was established in 2018. Originally founded by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish, Nova Scotia in 1968, the Centre continues to be supported by and aligned with the mission of the Sisters of St. Martha: inspired by God's graciousness, we strive to hear, embrace and respond to the cry for gospel hospitality.





Scams Alert

There are many scams going around masquerading as your clergy (priests, deacons or lately, the bishop).

Please exercise caution when responding to email messages. If you receive unusual emails, check the sender's email address to see whether it is the person's genuine address. Even if the sender's address looks correct, always verify suspicious emails by phoning the sender. There have been many similar scams reported by several parishes in our diocese and across Canada.

Note that these scams do not stop at emails. Those in social media should stay vigilant when responding to friend requests or to other compelling posts requiring a response. There are many fake Twitter, Facebook and other social media accounts trying to impersonate people you know and our church leaders. Some scammers may take the time to build a relationship with you to gain your trust, before trying to extort money or other things like gift cards.

Please exercise vigilance when you are being charitable. Use the channels you are most familiar with and avoid becoming victims of a scam.

NOBODY is going to ask you for gift cards, or bit coins from the church! NOBODY!!!

All our email addresses only end in @holyfamilymh.ca never a @gmail account.

If you get an email or a text, PLEASE DO NOT RESOND to it, you can forward it to contact@holyfamilymh.ca so it can be sent to the diocese.