



Welcome to HOLY FAMILY PARISH

DECEMBER 3, 2023 – 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Email: contact@holyfamilymh.ca ~ Website: www.holyfamilymh.ca ~ Phone 403-527-6933

Facebook: [Medicine Hat Holy Family Parish](https://www.facebook.com/Medicine-Hat-Holy-Family-Parish) ~ YouTube: [Medicine Hat Holy Family Church](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8vYUw1U1U1U1U1U1U1U1U1)

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 &
Deacon Robert Risling

RECONCILIATION...

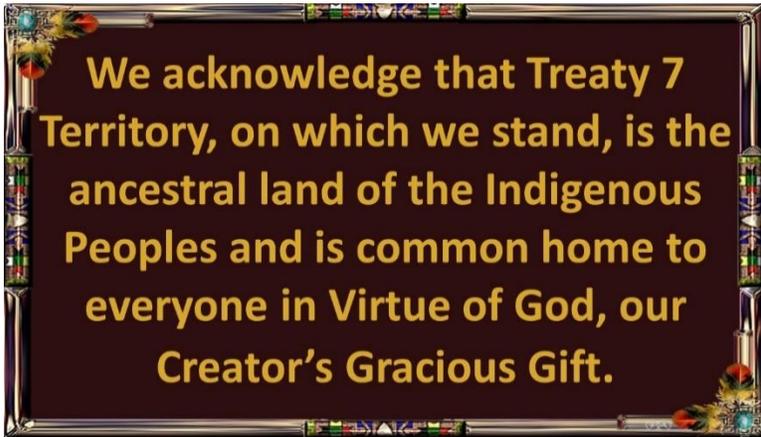
Friday 9:30am–10:30am. & Saturday 3:30–
4:45pm. Or by Appointment

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 – Greg Martin
Catholic Women's League – Cathy Koch

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



† Masses & Mass Intentions †



Saturday, December 2

8:30am - Jim & Carol Hintz
5:00pm ~ Ray Darr †

Sunday, December 3

8:30am - The Richard Family
10:30am - Philip Streifel †
6:00pm ~ Holy Family Parish

Monday, December 4

5:00pm - Jaxon Richard †

Tuesday, December 5

9:00am - Kay Tarnoczi †
6:30pm ~ Felicita Alvarado de Arce †

Wednesday, December 6

9:00am - Harry Sehn †

Thursday, December 7

9:00am - Patrick Volk †

Friday, December 8

9:00am - John Royle †



DECEMBER 3, 2023 – 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

OPERATING FINANCES

OCTOBER 1-31, 2023

Operating Budget 2022	\$ 63,984
General Envelope Collection	\$ 58,888
Loose Collections	\$ 4,387
Future Development	\$ 3,378
Sale of Church Supplies & Other	\$ 3,192
\$ 53,947- Budget Vs Actual	\$ 5,861

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Together in Action (TIA)	\$ 3,758
St Vincent de Paul	\$ 4,784
World Mission	\$ 1,740
Clergy Retirement	\$ 175
Mission Mexico	\$ 170
CARO	\$ 90
Seminary Fund	\$ 250
Needs of the Canadian Church	\$ 335

Thank You for your Generous Contributions



Year to Date: \$47,224
only 67% of total needed!
\$23,714 to go!

The amount needed before end 2023 is \$70,938.

**The end of the year is fast approaching.
We only have the month of December
to raise \$23,714**

May God bless your generosity!!!

First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7.

Psalms 80:2-19.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9.

Mark 13:33-37.

Be Alert! Watch!

We begin this new liturgical year as the old one ends alert, on the watch, looking to the end time (that is, the return of Jesus Christ) while still living in this middle time of grace. In our watching, we make the words at the center of the Isaiah reading our own: "Would that you might meet us doing right." Let us be faithful gatekeepers - of our thoughts and of our acts - actively looking for the face of the Lord.

† How will I maintain hope as I wait for Jesus Christ?

† What will I say?

† What will I do? The Works of Mercy can be a start.

Upcoming Events

- Dec. 1 - 9:30am - HFP Chapel
12 Hour Adoration
Reconciliation 9:30 - 10:30am & 8:00 - 9:30pm
- Dec. 2 - 7:00am - Faith Room
That Man Is You
- Dec. 2 - 10:00am - Faith Room
CWC Advent Women's Retreat
- Dec. 2 - 10:00am - Hope Room
Benedictine Group Meeting
- Dec. 2 & 3 - All Masses - Holy Family Parish
Gift Sharing Sunday
- Dec. 4 - 7:00pm - Holy Family Parish
Seeds of the Word Advent Mission
- Dec. 4 - 7:00pm - Faith Room
Knights of Columbus Executive Meeting
- Dec. 5 - 6:30pm - Faith Room
1st Reconciliation Parents Meeting
- Dec. 5 - 6:30pm - Holy Family Parish
Healing Mass
- Dec. 5 - 7:00pm - Hope Room
Catholic Women's League Executive Meeting
- Dec. 6 - 8:00am - Holy Family Parish Sanctuary
the Mother of Perpetual Help Novena
- Dec. 6 - 9:30am - Faith Room
Bible Study
- Dec. 6 - 7:00pm - Faith Room
R.C.I.A.
- Dec. 7 - 6:00pm - Faith Room
Confirmation Parents Meeting
- Dec. 9 - 7:00am - Faith Room
That Man Is You
- Dec. 9 - 10:00am - Hope Room
Benedictine Group Meeting
- Dec. 9 - 10:00am - HFP Hall
St. Pat's 1st Reconciliation & Confirmation Class
- Dec. 10 - 10:15am - Faith Room
1st Reconciliation Class



ADVENT WOMEN'S RETREAT
Sponsored by Catholic Women's League



"Having a Mary Heart During a Martha Season"

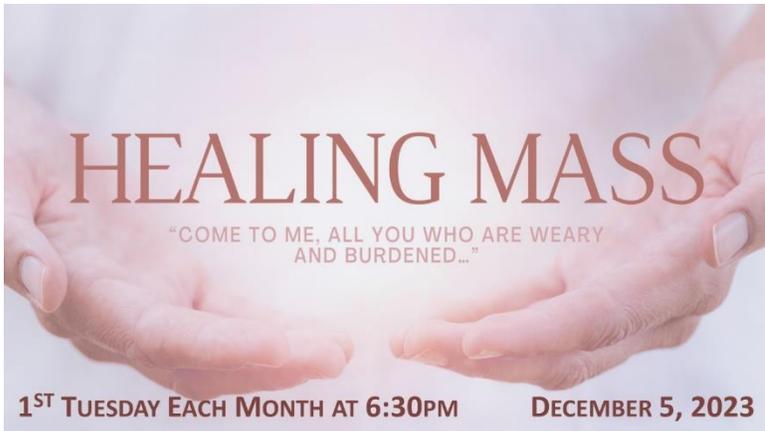


Guest Speakers: The Sisters of the Word
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2023
10:00AM – 4:00PM
\$15.00 – Lunch Included
Registration is open to all CWL members & all women interested in growing in their faith
Call Louella at 403-502-6883 or Imberger@telus.net



Seeds of the Word
Pro Mundis Vita

Advent Mission Talk
Monday, December 4, 2023
7:00pm at Holy Family Parish



HEALING MASS
"COME TO ME, ALL YOU WHO ARE WEARY AND BURDENED..."

1ST TUESDAY EACH MONTH AT 6:30PM **DECEMBER 5, 2023**

Sacramental Preparation 2023-2024

1st Reconciliation Parents Meeting
Tuesday, December 5 at 6:30pm in Faith Room

Confirmation Class
Thursday, December 7 at 6:00pm in Faith Room

St. Patrick's 1st Reconciliation & Confirmation Class
Saturday, December 9 at 10:00am in Faith Room

1st Reconciliation Class
Sunday, December 10 at 10:15am in Faith Room



THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH THE LEGION OF MARY HOSTS THE MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP NOVENA
BEFORE MASS AT 8:00AM
DECEMBER 6, 2023

Legion of Mary Annual General Meeting
December 8, 2023
7:00 to 8:30 pm
St. Patrick's Hall.



Our Spiritual Director, Fr. Roque, will speak on Immaculate Conception.

There will be time set aside for Fellowship, Carols & Marion Hymns. You are welcome to bring some light refreshments to share. We look forward to seeing all Active and Auxiliary Members.

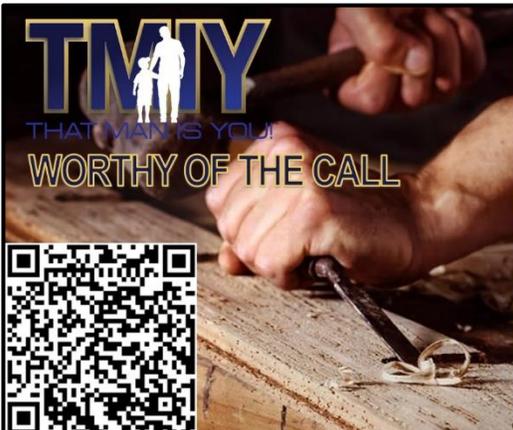
CWL Christmas Bake Sale
December 9th & 10th, Before & After Mass



Baking Donations may be dropped off in the Hall
Saturday
December 9th
3:00-5:00pm

Come out and get your Christmas Goodies!

TMIY
THAT MAN IS YOU!
WORTHY OF THE CALL




Holy Family Parish Hall
Breakfast 7:30am
Presentation 8:30 – 9:30 am
December 9/23
Theme
The Finding in the Temple
Presenter
Mark Hartfiel



#9502 Knights of Columbus
Family Christmas Party
 Monday, December 11 at 6:00pm
 Holy Family Parish Hall
 Spaghetti Supper
 For Members & their Families

RSVP to Greg Martin by December 4
 Call or Text 403-878-0639 or
 gmartin7@telus.net

Holy Family Parish Catholic Women's League
Christmas Potluck



December 12, 2023
 after 6:00pm mass
 HFP Hall
 We will be accepting
 donations for the
 Women's Shelter.

For the Potluck bring enough for yourself and a little extra.

**CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE
 GIFT BASKET RAFFLE**

Ticket Sales before & after
 Masses Nov. 25th & 26th
 and Dec. 2nd & 3rd.
 Draw Date: December 12
ONLY A TOONIE A TICKET!



Advent Penitential Services

Holy Family Parish - Thursday, Dec. 14 @ 7pm
 St. Patrick's Parish - Friday, Dec 15 @ 7pm



Reconciliation

The New 2023-24 Year B Missals are For Sale in the Foyer
\$5.00 each or \$7.00 for the Youth Missal.
AND Christian Christmas Cards for Sale at the Office for \$2.00

S
i
m
b
a
n
g



**A Filipino
 Christmas Tradition**

G
a
b
i

*Simbang Gabi is a novena of
 Masses celebrated at dawn,
 when the roosters crow.*

December 15th
 to the 23rd at 5:30am

**Parish Breakfast ~ December 17th
 After 8:30 & 10:30 Masses**



**PANCAKES,
 SAUSAGE, FRUIT &
 THE BEST
 FELLOWSHIP EVER!**

BREAKFAST-\$10, UNDER 12- \$5 & UNDER 6-FREE

Christmas Eve
 5:00pm Mass
**Children & Youth
 Choir**

Practices will be
 Friday Dec. 22
 6:00pm to 7:30pm &
 Saturday Dec. 23
 1:00pm to 3:00pm.



For Info. Call...
 Sally at 403-527-6933 Ext 105
 sac.prep@hollyfamilymh.ca

**Children's Liturgy
 Learning about God!
 10:30am Mass**



Questions or to
 volunteer call
Tammy at 403-866-7886

Christmas Mass Schedule 2023

Sunday Dec. 24

9:30am – Sunday Mass

The Nativity of the Lord

Sunday Dec. 24

5:00pm, 8:00pm & 10:30pm

Monday Dec. 25 - 10:30am

Tuesday Dec 26 - No Mass

Simbang Gabi
is a Filipino
Christmas
tradition.

It will be
celebrated

December 15th to
23rd at 5:30am

Sunday Dec. 31

Sunday Mass

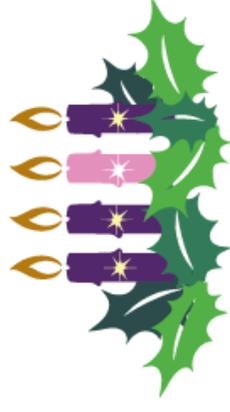
8:30 & 10:30am

Solemnity of Mary

5:00pm

Monday Jan. 1 - 9:00am

ADVENT CALENDAR 2023



BRING YOUR FAMILY CLOSER IN WELCOMING JESUS!



SHOW AFFECTION
Express what it is you love or admire in one another



WORK AS A TEAM
Grow closer through team work and by sharing household chores



HAVE FUN
Have fun as a family, be a source of joy for one another



LISTEN
Listen more, and learn how to take better care of one another



CELEBRATE
Celebrate Mass as a family; read, draw together, or talk with one another about stories in the Bible



GIVE THANKS
Thank Jesus for daily blessings; bless one another before each new activity with the sign of the cross on the forehead



BE OF SERVICE
Do something good for others as a family; help care of the poor, lonely and isolated

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 st Advent Sunday 3 	St. John of Damascus 4 	5 	St. Nicholas 6 	St. Ambrose 7 	The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary 8 	9 
2 nd Advent Sunday 10 	St. Damascus 11 	Our Lady of Guadalupe 12 	St. Lucy 13 	St. John of the Cross 14 	15 	16 
3 rd Advent Sunday 17 	18 	19 	St. Peter Camisius 20 	21 	22 	St. John of Kanty 23 
4 th Advent Sunday 24 	25 Nativity of the Lord 	MERRY CHRISTMAS!				

YOU ARE CALLED.
YOU MATTER.



COME, LORD
JESUS! SHOW
US YOUR
FACE.

St. Francis Xavier School

St. Francis Xavier School is proud to be part of the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education. We are a kindergarten to grade 6 elementary school that prides itself as being a small school that works closely with our families, community supports and our wonderful parishes and pastors. Located at the top of the hill in Crescent Heights, we are a short walk down the hill to St. Patrick's Church where we engage in retreats, school masses and holiday events. This December we are very much looking forward to celebrating our Christmas Mass followed by our annual Christmas Dinner. Both Holy Family Parish and St. Patrick's Church open their doors each day to evangelize those in our community, just as St. Francis himself did in his missionary work. We are proud to be part of the Catholic community here in Medicine Hat and a special thank you goes to you parishioners for your continued prayers and support for Catholic education.

As a school community here at St. Francis, we treat all of our children with the dignity and respect they deserve. We engage in conversation about our faith lives and work together to strengthen the bond we have with God the Father. During this season of Advent, let us remember to keep the birth of Jesus at the center of all that we do. Let us remember that God gave us his only son as the path to live a life filled with love and joy, and it is up to us to follow it.

God bless and Merry Christmas!
Ryan Irving - Principal

HOMESTAY FAMILIES NEEDED

Are you interested in hosting an international student? Desire to help a student learn about our Canadian culture? The international program with MHCBE is currently recruiting homestay families for our February intake. We have students joining us from all over the world to attend our highly rated junior high and high schools. If you have a spare room and the ability to make a student feel like part of the family, please reach out to... lori.frelick@mhcbe.ab.ca



Holy Family Parish, Medicine Hat, AB

WEDNESDAYS

7:00PM

FAITH ROOM

**RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF
ADULTS (RCIA)**

DO YOU HAVE A DESIRE TO LEARN ABOUT THE TRADITIONS AND TEACHINGS OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH? DO YOU FEEL A NEED FOR A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR FAITH BELIEFS IN ORDER TO KEEP UP WITH THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF YOUR CHILDREN?

IF SO, PERHAPS YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE RCIA PROGRAM.

Listen...with the ear of your heart.

This is the opening line of the rule of St. Benedict. Come join us (Benedictine Oblates) in prayer as we listen to the voice of God in our lives.



We meet every Saturday morning at 10:00 in the Hope Room at Holy Family Parish.

For more information call Carol at 403-526-0415.

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Thursday Mornings - 7:00 to 7:30 – Faith Room

Open to all men seeking to nurture their relationship with God and each other through prayer, song and reflection on the daily scripture readings.

More Information - Gord 527-7423 or Alan 527-4169

Pamphlets available at the Greeting Desk

REAL MEN PRAY

catholicyc.ca/Faithfully keeps you updated with what's happening in and around our Diocese!



Holy Communion to the Hospital

Volunteers are needed to bring Holy Communion to parishioners, in hospital, who desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Training will be provided.

If you have a family member or friend who is in hospital and is requesting Holy Communion, please phone the Parish Secretary with the name and room number of the parishioner. The information will be forwarded to Pastoral Care. Thank you!

**EMAIL SCAMS AGAIN FROM
PREISTS, CHURCH, STAFF, ETC.**

NOBODY is going to ask you for gift cards, or bit coins! **NOBODY!!!**

If you get an email or a text, **PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND** to it, **JUST DELETE IT!**

FORMED

THE CATHOLIC FAITH. ON DEMAND.



Visit signup.formed.org for more information

USE WITH



E-transfer
ONLINE GIVING



accounting@holyfamilymh.ca

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



Joe McKenna Council #9502 Knights of Columbus



Position	Name
Grand Knight	Greg Martin
Deputy Grand Knight	Jimmy Tablan
Financial Secretary	Pat Ries
Treasurer	Ron Pisoni
Chancellor	
Recorder	Pat Brigham
Advocate	Andy Hamel
Warden	Walter Pratt
Inside Guard	Dale Maddaford
Outside Guard	Michael Camphor
Year 1 Trustee	Herb Durda
Year 2 Trustee	Gary Heinbecker
Year 3 Trustee	Kent Friedt
Lecturer	Rick Brown
Membership Director	Garry Lux
Faith in Action Program Director	Greg Martin
Faith in Action Life Director	Allan Lawson
Faith in Action Family Director	Jimmy Tablan
Faith in Action Faith Director	Darrell Bonagofsky
Faith in Action Community Director	Ron Pisoni
Pastoral Parish Council Representative	Garry Mastel

2023-24 Knights Events
Date & Activity
Sunday, September 10 Corn Roast
Sunday, September 24 Knights Mass
Sunday, October 15 Breakfast
Sunday, November 19 Breakfast
Saturday, December 9 Knights Mass
Sunday, December 17 Christmas Breakfast
Sunday, January 21 Breakfast
Sunday, February 25 Breakfast
Sunday, April 7 Breakfast
Sunday, May 5 Breakfast
Sunday, June 23 Parish Picnic



1st Sunday of Advent- Year B

December 3, 2023

OUR HOPE KEEPS US AWAKE

Once, there was a farmer who was tired of various natural factors ruling the quality of his crop. So, one day he called God and said, "I am tired of all the natural nonsense happening. Obviously, you are not a farmer. You don't know what it means to farm so why don't you leave nature in my hands? I am a farmer. I know when it should rain, I know when there should be sunlight, everything is happening at the wrong times. You leave it to me." Whether you have a good deal or a bad deal, whatever the situation is, it's very useful – you use that for your wellbeing.

God said, "Okay, nature is in your hands." Then the farmer planned his crop. He calls out "Rain!" And it rains. He pokes the land with his finger and sees, "Okay it's soaked up to six inches," "Stop!" Then he ploughed his field and planted maize seeds and waited for two days, "Rain!" then "Sunlight!" One day he was working in the field, "Cloud!" Everything just happened the way he wanted, and a beautiful maize crop came. He was overjoyed.

When it was time for the harvest, he wanted to see that no birds come. He was surprised about that because when he said, "No birds!" – no birds came. He went down to his fields to harvest the maize but when he looked at the crop, there was no grain on the plants. Then he thought "What the hell is this? What did I do wrong?" He couldn't figure it out because he had managed everything – rain, water, and sunshine – properly.

He went back to God and asked, "I did everything right but there is no grain. Did you sabotage my crop?" God said, "I have been watching; you were in-charge, so I didn't want to interfere. The rain was great, the sunshine was great, everything was fine, but you stopped all the winds. I used to always send fierce winds which would threaten your crop but because the plants felt pushed and threatened, they put their roots deeper into the earth and so grain happened. Now you have a great maize crop but no maize."

As the maize crop used the winds to strengthen themselves, various situations in your life can either be used to make yourself stronger and better or you can sit and cry. This is

the choice you have. Everything, it does not matter what happens, even the most horrific event in your life can also be used for your growth and your wellbeing. The small events of your life – your business, your marriage, your children – all these things are just a stepping stone. All these things move around the element of hope and hope for the good to come. St. James says in his letter that “never say we will do but say God willing we will do”.

This week we begin our Advent season to prepare ourselves to celebrate the miraculous birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Advent is the time we are given to welcome the Lord who comes to encounter us, and to verify our longing for God, to look forward and prepare ourselves for Christ’s return. He will return to us in the celebration of Christmas, when we will remember his historic coming in the humility of the human condition; but he enters our heart each time we are willing to receive him; and he will come again at the end of time to “judge the living and the dead”. Therefore, we must always be vigilant and await the Lord with the hope of encountering him.

Advent season has two parts: First part (which is from 1st Sunday of Advent to December 16) addresses the importance of the second coming of Jesus. All the readings are focused on the preparation to welcome Jesus with hope, in our midst with various signs and symbols though sometimes we don’t like to hear about the end time because it seems very scary. However, Jesus always reminds us He is with us as he carries his name Emmanuel.

Second part of Advent (which is from December 17 to 24) emphasis on the importance of Jesus’s first coming through the prophecies we find in the Bible. Moreover, we are also reminded that our Salvation is at hand, and we need to rejoice in the Lord who was, who is and who is to come.

Today as we light our first Advent candle, we reflect on the theme “Hope” which keeps reminding not to lose our hearts but trust in the Lord. The two words Hope & awake are very crucial as we experience violence, wars, and storms of every kind. Everyone is waiting with hope to see an end to war between Russia & Ukraine and Israel and Hamas. What should we do in this situation? The Holy Father encourages everyone with these words: “The person who *takes heed* is the one who, amid the worldly din, does not let himself be overwhelmed by distraction or superficiality, but lives in a full and conscious way, with concern first and foremost *for others*. With this manner we become aware of the tears and the needs of neighbours, and we can also understand their human and spiritual strengths and qualities. The heedful person then also turns *toward the world*, seeking to counter the indifference and cruelty in it, and taking delight in its beautiful treasures which also exist and are to be safeguarded. It is a matter of having an understanding gaze to recognize both the misery and poverty of individuals and of society, and to recognize the richness hidden in little everyday things, precisely there where the Lord has placed us”.

This war between Israel and Hamas should not let us down from the Love of Jesus as St. Paul says, “who can separate us from the Love of Jesus”. In our discipleship we are asked

to hope in the Lord because our hope does not die. The one who accepts the invitation to keep watch, that is, not to let himself be overpowered by the listlessness of discouragement, by the lack of hope, by disappointment; and at the same time, it wards off the allure of the many vanities with which the world is brimming and for which, now and then, time and personal and familial peace is sacrificed. It is the painful experience of the people of Israel, recounted by the Prophet Isaiah: God seemed to have let his people err from his ways (63:17), but this was a result of the unfaithfulness of the people themselves (64:4b). We too often find ourselves in this situation of unfaithfulness to the call of the Lord: He shows us the good path, the way of faith, the way of love, but we seek our happiness elsewhere. The Psalmist says “but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love. (147:11). King Solomon in the Book of Ecclesiastes says “Vanity, vanity, everything is vanity” but on the other hand St. Peter reminds even everything is vanity but “Blessed be God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3).

St. Cyril of Jerusalem once said “We do not preach only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by patience; the second will bring the crown of a divine kingdom. In general, whatever relates to our Lord Jesus Christ has two aspects. There is a birth from God before the ages, and a birth from a virgin at the fullness of time. There is a hidden coming, like that of rain on fleece, and a coming before all eyes, still in the future.

At the first coming he was wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger. At his second coming he will be clothed in light as in a garment. In the first coming he endured the cross, despising the shame; in the second coming he will be in glory, escorted by an army of angels. We look then beyond the first coming and await the second. At the first coming we said: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. At the second we shall say it again; we shall go out with the angels to meet the Lord and cry out in adoration: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. The Saviour will not come to be judged again, but to judge those by whom he was judged. At his own judgment he was silent; then he will address those who committed the outrages against him when they crucified him and will remind them: You did these things, and I was silent.

His first coming was to fulfill his plan of love, to teach men by gentle persuasion. This time, whether men like it or not, they will be subjects of his kingdom by necessity. Malachi the prophet speaks of the two comings. And the Lord whom you seek will come suddenly to his temple: that is one coming. Again, he says of another coming: Look, the Lord almighty will come, and who will endure the day of his entry, or who will stand in his sight? Because he comes like a refiner's fire, a fuller's herb, and he will sit refining and cleansing.

These two comings are also referred to by Paul in writing to Titus: The grace of God the Saviour has appeared to all men, instructing us to put aside impiety and worldly desires and live temperately, uprightly, and religiously in this present age, waiting for the joyful hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Notice how he speaks of a first coming for which he gives thanks, and a second, the one we still await. That is why the faith we profess has been handed on to you in these words: He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. Our Lord Jesus Christ will therefore come from heaven. He will come at the end of the world, in glory, at the last day. For there will be an end to this world, and the created world will be made new. Through this Sunday's Gospel our Lord is calling out to everyone "Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come". These words are not to scare us but to prepare us for his Second Coming. In today's busy & hectic world we have been lost. We do not know our identity who we are as human and as Christians. We are led by the world, which is in the state of denial of everything, realities of life and of faith. We are just left to follow what is happening in the world with no option and very specially during this pandemic we are left with hopelessness. However, St. Peter strengthens us and encourages us to fight against the evil "The Devil is looking like a roaring lion to eat someone, be strong in faith and stand against him".

Today as we begin our Advent season, let us trust and believe in the Lord who is our living hope very especially during this pandemic. We may be some slow to understand but once we open our hearts and minds, then hope will bring new things in our lives just like the following story.

Once there was a frog and toad. One day Frog ran up the path to Toad's house. He knocked on the front door. There was no answer. "Toad, Toad," shouted Frog, "wake up. It is spring!" "Blah," said a voice from inside the house. "Toad, Toad," cried Frog "The sun is shining! The snow is melting. Wake up!" "I am not here," said the voice. Frog walked into the house. It was dark. All the shutters were closed. "Toad where are you?" called Frog. "Go away," said the voice from a corner of the room. Toad was lying in bed. He had pulled all the covers over his head. Frog pushed Toad out of bed. He pushed him out of the house and onto the front porch. Toad blinked in the bright sun. "Help!" said Toad. "I cannot see anything." "Don't be silly," said Frog. "What you see is the clear warm light of April. And it means that we can begin a whole new year together, Toad. Think of it," said Frog. "We will skip through the meadows and run through the woods and swim in the river.

In the evenings we will sit right here on this front porch and count the stars." "You can count them, Frog," said Toad. "I will be too tired. I am going back to bed." Toad went back into the house. He got into the bed and pulled the covers over his head again. "But, Toad," cried Frog, "you will miss all the fun!" "Listen, Frog," said Toad. "How long have I been

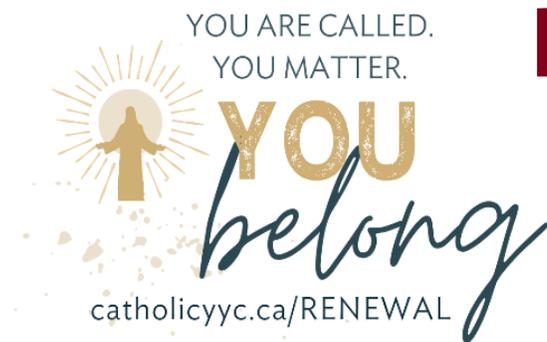
asleep?” “You have been asleep since November,” said Frog. “Well then,” said Toad, “a little more sleep will not hurt me. Come back again and wake me up at about half past May. Good night, Frog.” “But, Toad,” said Frog, “I will be lonely until then.” Toad did not answer. He had fallen asleep.

Frog looked at Toad’s calendar. The November page was still on top. Frog tore off the November page. He tore off the December page. And the January page, the February page, and the March page. He came to the April page. Frog tore off the April page too. Then Frog ran back to Toad’s bed. “Toad, Toad, wake up. It is May now.” “What?” said Toad. “Can it be May so soon?” “Yes,” said Frog. “Look at your calendar.” Toad looked at the calendar. The May page was on top. “Why, it is May!” said Toad as he climbed out of bed. Then he and Frog ran outside to see how the world was looking in the spring and there was greenery and brightness of the day.

Let us ask the Lord to help us to prepare ourselves during this time of war and uncertainties with prayer and hope to welcome Jesus our Saviour who became flesh and dwelt among us. Come Lord Jesus come and fill our hearts with your love and peace.

How do we see our hope to keep us awake?





DIOCESAN SUNDAY UPDATES

First Sunday of Advent



Welcome Home: How to make our parishes more inviting (#Renewal online session)

You are the parish! There are not enough programs or resources in the world that will make your church more welcoming. No mission and vision statements can ever convey the actual experience of being cared for. It takes the whole parish to welcome others home.

Join this exciting webinar with Fr. Troy Nguyen, Dr. Lance Dixon, and Dr. Bonnie Annicchiarico as we explore ways to truly welcome others home this Christmas and throughout the year. When: Thursday, December 7 at 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Online via Zoom | Register at catholicyc.ca or call Monica at 403-218-5521.

Stories of Portugal

All are welcome to join our Catholic young people for a night of fellowship and fundraising "Stories of Portugal", as the SFXC World Youth Day pilgrims give witness to and share testimonies of their experience at this past summer's World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal, over appetizers, charcuterie boards and mocktails! When: Saturday, Dec. 9 at 7 pm, at the Catholic Pastoral Centre. For more information, contact Kathryn at kathryn.yakielashek@calgarydiocese.ca or call 403-218-5542.

Priestly Vocations Night

Have you ever thought God might be calling you to be a priest? Join the 'Priestly Vocations Night.' Mass at 5 pm, Evening Prayer, supper, a talk about discerning a vocation, and silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. When: Saturday, Dec. 9 from 5 pm to 9 pm. To attend, please register to Fr. Derek Remus at derek.remus@calgarydiocese.ca or call 403-282-9488.

Hear the Angels Sing - High School Choral Festival

Come and listen to the High Choral Festival featuring choirs from Bishop Carroll, Bishop O'Byrne, Notre Dame, Bishop McNally, All Saints, St. Francis, St. Mary's and Our Lady of the Rockies. When: Tue, Dec. 5 at 7 pm - St. Michael's, Calgary.

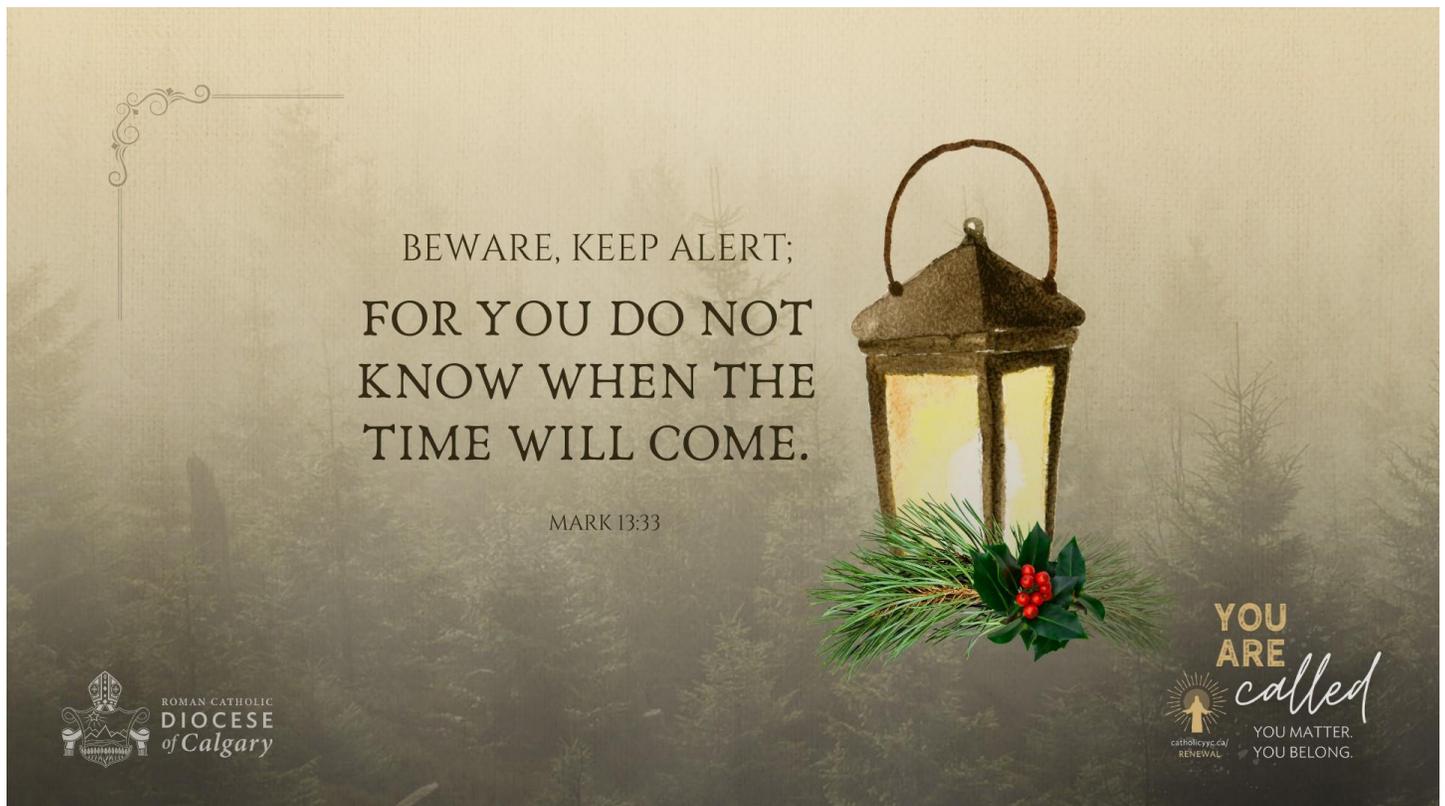
The Living Nativity

As we prepare for Christmas this year, St James Parish, in Okotoks, invites you to come and walk through the Town of Bethlehem and meet the Holy Family in this live replica of the Christmas Nativity. The Living Nativity will take place on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 4 to 8 pm in the

field next to the Church parking lot. The address is 338040 32nd St East, Okotoks. Admission is free. Donations will be gratefully accepted and given to charity. There will be light, warm refreshments available for a small fee in the Church hall.

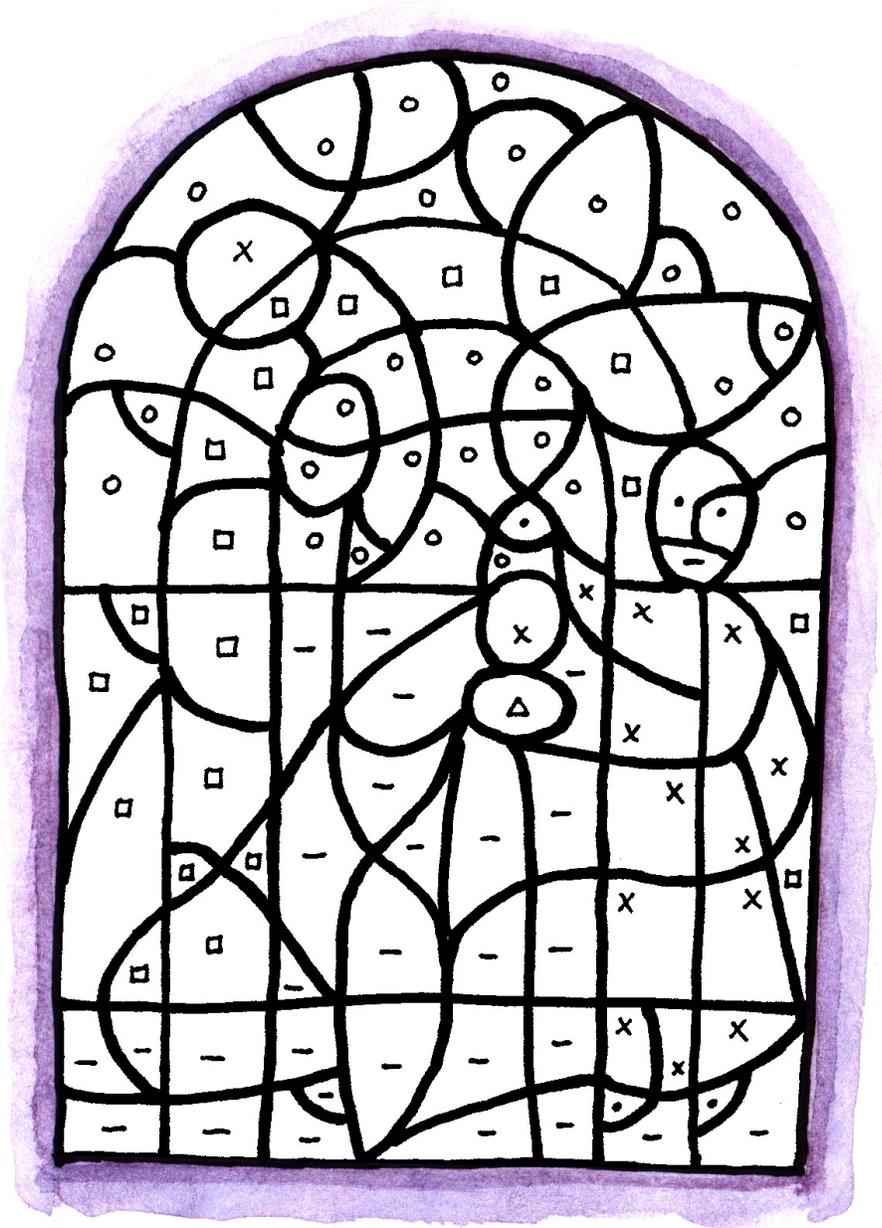
40-Hour Adoration for Vocations

"Could you not spend an hour?" Christ asks. Come, let us adore Him. Serra Calgary invites you to join the 40-hour Adoration to worship the Lord, and pray for the increase of vocations to the religious life in our Diocese. When: Thu (Nov. 30) at 7 pm to Sat (Dec 2) at 4 pm - Ascension Catholic Parish, Calgary.



The Kids' Bulletin

First Sunday of Advent
December 3rd, 2023



*In the Gospel, Jesus tells us to always be ready.
Here's someone waiting
for his master to return...*

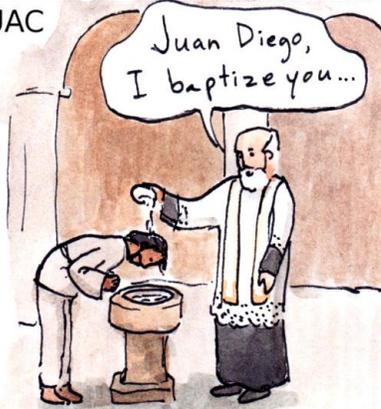
Use this code to colour the picture in:

- | | | |
|---------------|---------|---------|
| ◦ DARK BLUE | ◻ GREY | - BROWN |
| • SKIN COLOUR | × WHITE | △ RED |

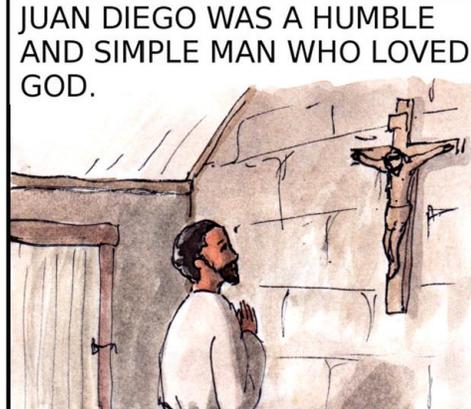
SAINT JUAN DIEGO

DECEMBER 9

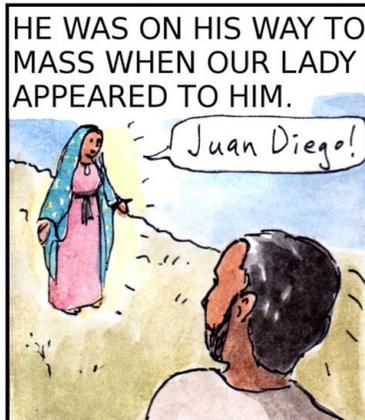
CUAUHTLATOHUAC WAS A NATIVE OF MEXICO, BORN IN THE 1400'S. WHEN HE BECAME A CHRISTIAN, HE TOOK THE NAME JUAN DIEGO, WHICH IS 'JOHN JAMES' IN ENGLISH.



JUAN DIEGO WAS A HUMBLE AND SIMPLE MAN WHO LOVED GOD.



HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO MASS WHEN OUR LADY APPEARED TO HIM.



She wants a church built there.

That's nice.

SHE TOLD HIM THAT SHE WANTED A CHURCH BUILT THERE, BUT THE BISHOP DIDN'T BELIEVE HIM.



HE WAS SUPPOSED TO MEET HER AGAIN, BUT HIS UNCLE WAS SICK...

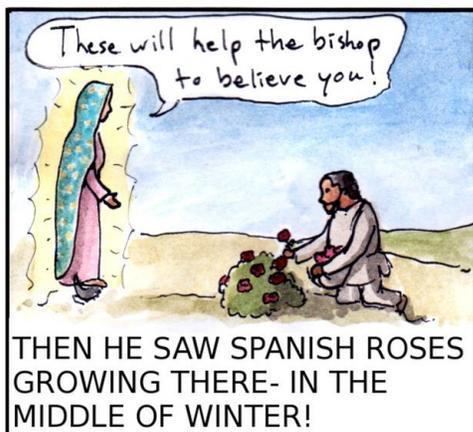
I can't stop now- my uncle needs a priest before he dies!

Your uncle is cured.



These will help the bishop to believe you!

THEN HE SAW SPANISH ROSES GROWING THERE- IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER!



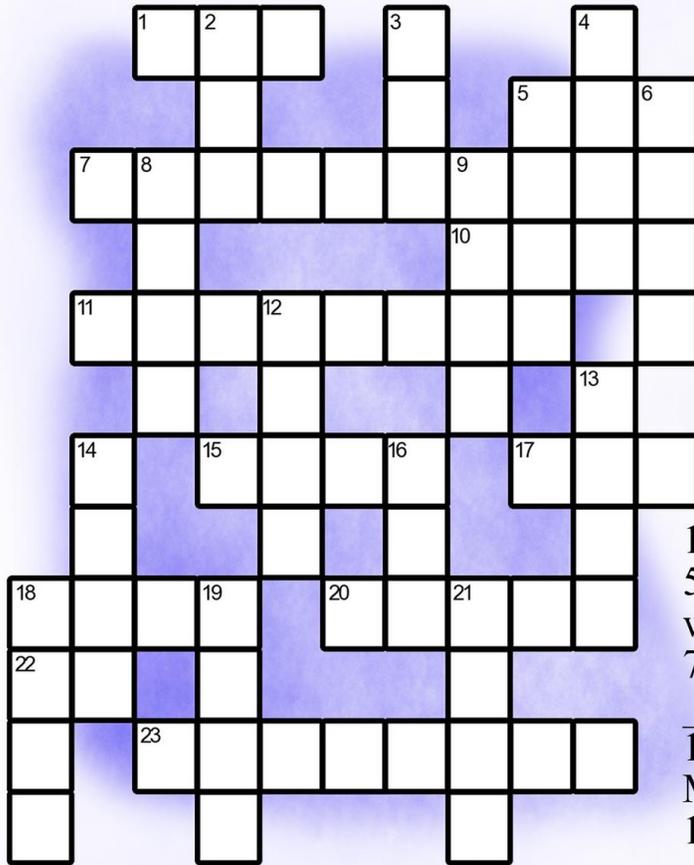
Look! Roses!

WHEN HE SHOWED THE FLOWERS IN HIS TILMA TO THE BISHOP, A PICTURE OF OUR LADY APPEARED ON IT. THE BISHOP BELIEVED HIM THEN AND HAD THE CHURCH BUILT.



SAINT JUAN DIEGO LIVED A LONG AND SIMPLE LIFE TEACHING THE FAITH. MARY CHOSE HIM, BECAUSE HE WAS HUMBLE, TO BRING HER MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT THAT TIME. WHEN THE NEW CHURCH WAS BUILT, MILLIONS OF THE PAGAN PEOPLE IN MEXICO BECAME CHRISTIANS. JUAN DIEGO DIED AT AGE 74.

Immaculate Conception Cross-Word



Fill in the blanks to do this puzzle about Our Lady.

ACROSS:

1. _____ was without sin.
5. God _____ that Mary would do His will.
7. She was the _____ Conception.
10. God watched _____ Mary.
11. God decided to _____ her from sin.
15. Mary's soul was not stained- it was _____.

17. God's Son become _____.
18. He is called the _____ of God.
20. When the time was _____, the angel came to Mary.
22. She said, "I _____ the handmaid of the Lord.
23. She had no _____ sin, so she was always ready to obey.

DOWN:

2. Whatever God wanted she would do for _____.
3. She brought the Saviour into the world for _____ and me.
4. She teaches us to love God and _____ sin, which offends Him.
5. God had decided to _____ Mary from all sin.
6. If you _____ God, how would you make your mother?
8. The name of God's mother is _____.
9. She did every single thing out of _____ for God.
12. He had preserved her _____ from every stain of sin.
13. Before she was even a little _____ she was chosen by God.
14. We all have original sin because of _____ ...
16. ... and his wife, _____, who committed the first sins.
18. They had chosen to disobey God's _____.
19. Since then, every other person* was _____ with original sin.
21. Mary was the daughter of the holy saints, _____ and Joachim.

* Except Saint John the Baptist, who, according to tradition, was freed from original sin - 'filled with the Holy Spirit' when his mother was greeted by Mary who was expecting Jesus.

Advent is Here!

Jesus is coming!



Advent is here! It's time to begin preparing for the coming of Jesus at Christmas.

Jesus came the first time long ago in Bethlehem. Now He comes to us every time we go to Mass, in Holy Communion. But we celebrate Jesus' coming in a special way at Christmas time.

Advent is the time to get ready for Christmas. We get our houses ready by cleaning and decorating. We get our souls ready by cleaning out our sins when we go to confession, and by learning and thinking about Jesus.



Here are some things that will help you get ready for Christmas:

~ Light a candle on an advent wreath when you say your prayers every day.

~ Read a book about Advent or Christmas.

~ Go to Confession before Christmas.



~ Do nice things for people. Remember that anything you do for someone else you do for Jesus!

Answers to Cross-word: Across: 1. she 5. saw 7. immaculate 10. over 11. preserve 15. pure 17. man 18. lamb 20. ready 22. am 23. original. Down: 2. him 3. you 4. hate 5. save 6. were 8. Mary 9. love 12. soul 13. baby 14. Adam 16. Eve 18. laws 19. born 21. Anne



Back for a second series, Fr. Tim Boyle will speak on The Art of Accompaniment, picking up on the theme from the Synod preparation document "Enlarge the Tent."

St. Martha's Parish, Lethbridge

Monday, January 22, 2024

"Zacchaeus... the first of Many Seekers... and why they don't want to join"

Monday, February 19, 2024

"Finding the Real Presence of God outside the church"

Monday, March 18, 2024

"Mother Maria of Russia... on uniting the Cross and the Sword"

Monday, April 15, 2024

"Flourishing... not just maintaining the Faith".

Gatherings begin at 10:15 am with 15 minutes of checking in with participants.

Mass follows at 11:15 am

St. Martha's parish, 355 Columbia Blvd W., Lethbridge – 403 381 8891



Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre
41160 Retreat Rd.

To Register:

mtfrancis@shaw.ca 403-932-2012



1. Advent Twilight Retreat
Long Time Ago in Greccio
November 30 Thursday @ 6:00 pm
\$30/person

2. Advent Weekend Retreat
Come to the Manger
December 1-3

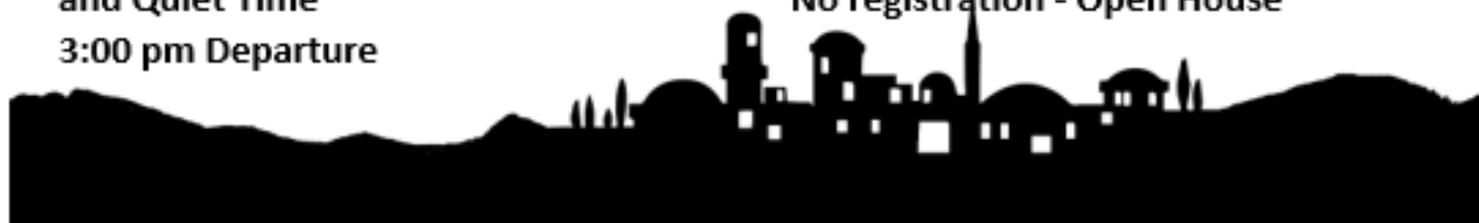
3. Blessing of Christmas Crèches
Sunday, December 3 @ 2:30 p.m.
St. Francis of Assisi created the
first crèche-nativity scene in 1223.
Celebrate the 800th Anniversary by
joining the Franciscans at Mount St.
Francis Retreat Centre for this special
blessing.
Bring your family nativity set to be
blessed.
Please register before December 1.
mtfrancis@shaw.ca 403-932-2021

4. The Bambino of Bethlehem
Day Away Retreat
Wednesday, December 6 @ 8:30 am
Registration with Coffee, and Muffins
Day includes presentation, Eucharist,
Sacrament of Reconciliation, Lunch
and Quiet Time
3:00 pm Departure

\$30/person (\$40 private room)

5. Winter Stillness Retreat
December 8 – 10
Individuals make their own silent
retreat.
Stay for one night or two.
No Presentations. Prayer Suggestions
Provided.
Join the Friars for Prayer and
Eucharist.
Registration begins Friday at 4 pm -
Supper at 6 pm
Concludes with Sunday Lunch.
\$215 suggested contribution

6. Christmas at Greccio
Christmas at The Mount St. Francis
Christmas Pageant
Sunday, December 10 @ 2:30 – 5:00
pm
Sleigh Rides (weather permitting)
Hot Chocolate and Snacks
Pageant at 3:45 pm
This is an outdoor pageant, please
dress for the weather.
Accepting donations for Cochrane
Food Bank.
No registration - Open House

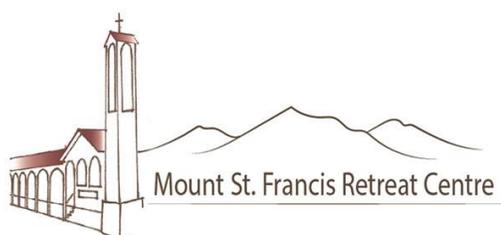


Retreat Centers in Southern Alberta

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.



Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre is nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains where we 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.



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 RESPOND to it, you can forward it to contact@holyfamilymh.ca so it can be sent to the diocese.