



Holy Cross Catholic Parish

Twinning with St. Patrick's Parish

SUNDAY - December 15, 2024

Third Sunday of Advent

Today is “Gaudete” Sunday, from the first word of the entrance prayer at Mass, which means rejoice! That is what the pink candle on the Advent wreath that we light today signifies: “Be glad! Christmas is almost here. It’s not too late to prepare.” “Do not worry about anything,” Saint Paul tells us in today’s reading. Sorry Paul, but at Christmastime, your plea falls on deaf ears. And that prayer at Mass for God to “protect us from all anxiety”—that doesn’t seem to be working either, at least not for anyone I know. It’s impossible not to feel anxious when you try to cram 20 parties, 10 shopping trips, five concerts, three festivals, two cookie bakes, and very possibly finding a place to put a partridge in a pear tree all in the span of four weeks. Not to mention trying to sort through every family relationship, childhood memory, personal hope, and dream, all with the knowledge that another year is over, never to be relived. Anxiety thy name is Christmas, or so it would seem. But Paul and John say, no, Christmas thy name is joyful hope. Both sentiments convey the sense of unfulfilled wishes. But anxiety implies doubt; whereas hope implies confidence, and joyful hope carries with it a faith-filled certainty that all will be well, that our sins will be forgiven, that no one will go hungry, that our debts will be satisfied honestly, that God will gather us in and spread a banquet before us, and that no one will be mad if we forgot a present or two.

On this third Sunday of the season, Gaudete Sunday, we’re also encouraged to rejoice. Maybe “encouraged” isn’t strong enough, but “obliged” seems too heavy-handed. We are exhorted to shout and sing by the prophet Zephaniah, urged to exult, and give thanks by the psalmist, and practically begged to rejoice by Saint Paul, who insists on saying it twice. Why this imperative? Remember, it’s not an emotion that’s required of us nor a simple attitude adjustment either. What’s obliged is an acknowledgment that we believe as we say we do. If we believe judgment has been removed, sins forgiven, divine compassion offered, and love between God and us renewed—well, wouldn’t we crack a smile at least? Even God is so happy that we’re back together again that God sings joyfully over the idea, as heartily as one sings at festivals. If God’s happy about it, shouldn’t we be, too?

In our affluent society, the sin rarely referred to is avarice. We redefine it as ambition, upward mobility, or simply “doing well.” But the clutch of personal possessions is still the spiritual stranglehold it always was. The needle’s eye isn’t getting any bigger, and our modern camels still won’t pass through. John has some wonderful advice for us! “Master, what should we do?” our situation is very different, but the question is the same. Should we go along with the world, or refuse to be part of it? John’s answer is a wise answer. Don’t be a glutton or a Scrooge. Act justly and with honesty. Be generous. Protect and do not exploit the weak and those in need. Give with joy. This is a time when it is very easy to think only of our own wants and pleasure, but just as easy to give from full and joyous hearts to others: to the sick and the lonely, to the homeless poor, to the refugee and the seeker after asylum, to those who are abused and neglected. John’s answer is profound because it is so simple. Just do what you do and do it honestly and well. Just do what you already know to be right. Just do it. John the Baptist offers several key remedies. First, share what you have with those who don’t have. Second, don’t cheat, ever. Third, don’t keep striving for more. Finally, be humble. These remedies for avarice are countercultural. They also prepare the way of the One who is coming.

Joy,
Father William

OFFICE HOURS

Saturday, Sunday, Monday: Closed
Tuesday-Friday: 8:30am-3:30pm
4049 Gordon Head Road Victoria, BC
V8N 3X7
Phone: 250-477-5321 Fax: 250-721-1844
office@holycrossvictoria.org
www.holycrossvictoria.org

***We acknowledge and respect the
Lekwungen peoples on whose
traditional territory Holy Cross Parish
stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt
and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical
relationships with the land continue to
this day.***

Report Sexual Abuse

To report sexual abuse by a clergy member, religious, employee, or volunteer, visit RCDVictoria.org/Responsible-Ministry or call 1-800-968-3146
To report sexual abuse or cover-up by a Catholic Bishop, visit BishopReportingSystem.ca or call 1-866-892-3737

LIVESTREAM MASSES

Live Mass broadcast this weekend! Mass is livestreamed this week from Holy Cross Parish on Saturday at 4pm. Click the link here: <http://www.youtube.com/c/StPatricksHolyCrossChurch>



Donations for Christmas Florals

We invite all parishioners to help support the Christmas floral display in our church this season. You can contribute by picking up an envelope in the foyer, filling it out with the name of a loved one or family to be remembered, and returning it in the collections basket or at the office. The names will be honored on a card in the poinsettia displays.

African Aids Angels

African Aids Angels will be on sale this weekend, after both weekend masses. These angels are created by volunteers from donated fabric, ribbon and jewelry, some of which has been donated by Holy Cross parishioners. For this we thank you. Money collected goes directly to help support an orphanage in South African and one in Zambia.

Large standing angels are \$25 and smaller peg angels are \$10. Sales are cash or cheque only.

Thank-you for your support of these children who have been orphaned due to the HIV virus. Many blessings to you.

A MESSAGE FROM JOANIE

Attn: All Sacristans: We are looking for Sacristans for the following Christmas & New Year's Masses to assist Fr. Marc Parent, who will be presiding for us.

- **Tuesday, December 24th – Christmas Eve**
- **Wednesday, December 25th – Christmas Day**
- **Wednesday, January 1st – 2025 New Year's Day**

Your consideration would be greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance. Sign up sheets are in the foyer. You can also sign up by emailing or calling the office: officeassistant@holycrossvictoria.org / 250-477-5321)

In 2024 **The Soup Kitchen**, operating in the basement of St. Andrew's Cathedral in Victoria, served over 40,000 nutritious meals to seniors, low-income workers, those unhoused and anyone else living at risk in our community. As a volunteer-run organization, we rely upon donations from generous parishioners to fund our operation.

The Canada Post strike has seriously impacted our funding, so we graciously ask if you are able, please donate online at thesoupkitchen.ca/donation. Thank you for your compassion to those in need in Victoria. With gratitude and blessings during this most holy season.

Corinthians 9:11 You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us.



Children's Nativity Pageant

All are welcome to attend the Children's Nativity Pageant on December 24th at Our Lady Queen of Peace at 6:00pm. Christmas Mass to follow at 7:00pm. The children and volunteers have been working hard and it is coming together nicely!

Please find your collection envelopes for 2025 in the foyer, sorted alphabetically. If you do not have collection envelopes, contact the office to have a box assigned to you.

Please return your books from the **November Indigenous Book Fair** to the return box in the foyer.

Bishop's Appeal Update

These are the last few weeks to donate to the Bishop's Appeal, *Sharing God's Gifts* and receive a tax receipt for 2024. All donations received before December 31st will receive a tax receipt for 2024. All pledges received, with donations to follow in 2025, will count towards our parish goal! To donate online go www.rcdvictoria.org/bishops-appeal

Parish Goal: \$ 70,000

Actual to Date: \$48,560

Number of Gifts: 114

WORD OF THE WEEK:

O Antiphons

From Greek meaning “sounding against,” seven short scripture verses, sung or chanted at Vespers, often in divided choirs, during the week before Christmas, December 17 to 23. Each Antiphon invokes Christ by means of an Old Testament symbol: O Wisdom, O Sacred Lord, O Flower of Jesse's Stem, O Key of David, O Radiant Dawn, O King of All Nations, and O Emmanuel. The O Antiphons (also known as the Great Advent Antiphons or Great Os) are sung verses used in evening prayer during the last seven days of Advent (December 17-23) at the beginning and end of the Magnificat, a hymn of praise spoken by Mary. Rendered in order, in Latin and English, the O Antiphons are: *O Sapientia* (O Wisdom), *O Adonai* (O Lord), *O Radix Jesse* (O Root of Jesse), *O Clavis Davidica* (O Key of David), *O Oriens* (O Radiant Dawn), *O Rex Gentium* (O King of Nations), and *O Emmanuel* (O God-with-us). As an acrostic, the Latin version reads SARCORE, reversed as *ero cras* (“I will be tomorrow”). Since the Antiphons are traditionally chanted December 17-23, Jesus is literally born “tomorrow” at the chant's conclusion. The O Antiphons have been around at least since the eighth century, when monks would sing them. Even if you don't pray the Liturgy of the Hours, these Antiphons may sound familiar. This is because they were incorporated into one of the best-known hymns of the Advent season: “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.”

If we rest each evening with the O Antiphons, . . . Advent will be for us once again a time of God's great love and hope. It's tempting to treat the two Testaments of our Bible as the "before" and "after" of religious understanding for Christianity. In the contemplation of the great O Antiphons, we discover that the divine revelation we recognize as Jesus has been within the story of God's people from the beginning.

From *Learning from the O Antiphons* by C.C. Pecknold: The O Antiphons were certainly in regular use by the time of Charlemagne in the eighth century. “They prepare us for the great Vigil of Christmas, uniting Israel's hopes, and the desire of nations as a kind of prophetic *summa* in praise of divine providence. In the heart of winter's darkness, the O Antiphons call us to worship Jesus Christ as the center of salvation history wrote Madeleine L'Engle ” The O Antiphons proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but our present desires as well wrote Grace Hetzel. The O Antiphons accompany the Advent evening prayer of Mary's Magnificat. These short, sung phrases remind us of our need for salvation and our desire to embody the divine characteristics of our Savior. Today we pray for knowledge. This is not the knowledge that wins arguments around the dinner table, but the knowledge that shines a light on who we are, where we came from, and what we are called to do as followers of Christ.

**St. Andrew High School Advent Carol Concert and Raffle -
Dec.18th, 7pm**

Our **Advent Carol Concert** will be taking place on **Wed, Dec.18th at 7pm in the school gym**. Come celebrate the reason for the season with readings & music by St. Andrew's Singers, Concert Band, and Jazz Band students. We will also have our annual **Advent Raffle** featuring gift baskets of chocolate, spa items, board games, Lego, and foodie gift cards. Raffle tickets can be bought at the concert for your chance to win! All are welcome to join us on Dec.18th!

OUR LITURGICAL LIFE

SATURDAY, December 14, 2024

4PM MASS: Michael Mallett+

SUNDAY, December 15, 2024

9AM MASS: Hedvigés Pacheco+

MONDAY, December 16, 2024

NO MASS

TUESDAY, December 17, 2024

9 AM MASS: Mary Hann+

WEDNESDAY, December 18,

2024

NO MASS

THURSDAY, December 19, 2024

9AM MASS: Dora Torres+

FRIDAY, December 20, 2024

NO MASS

The Chapel will be open this week Tuesday to Friday 9 - 12

Reconciliation will be available at 3:30 on Saturday December 14, 2024

COLLECTIONS - December 8,

2024

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THESE GIFTS

Envelopes	\$	2,850.00
Loose	\$	240.00
Pre-Authorized Debit	\$	1,332.90
Catholic Missions	\$	10.00
Christmas Florals	\$	330.00
Total	\$	4,762.90

Please note: The office will be closed over the Christmas Holidays from December 21- January 1. The office will be opened on January 2nd.

Monthly Sunday Bridge in the Parish Hall will continue on January 5th. Please contact the office at office@holycrossvictoria.org to be connected to Tony Southwell for further information.

News from the Chancery

1) Over the weeks of Advent, the Diocese is sharing a series of blog posts that explore new ways to bring purpose, shelter, and hope to those in need. The posts for the Second and Third Sundays of Advent are now available to read: Second Sunday of Advent: Finding Room at the Inn: A New Vision for Long-Term Care This Advent (<https://www.rcdvictoria.org/diocesanblog/finding-room-at-the-inn-a-new-vision-for-long-term-care-this-advent>)

Third Sunday of Advent: Making Room for Joy: Supporting Children and Early Education (<https://www.rcdvictoria.org/diocesanblog/making-room-for-joy-supporting-children-and-early-education>)

2) Mass times at parishes across our Diocese for Christmas (Dec 24/25) and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Dec 31/Jan 1) are listed on the Diocesan website at <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/events/2024-christmas-mass-times>. More information will be added as it becomes available.

Supporting Anawim

We ask for your help with donations of new and gently used warm winter clothing – from socks and underwear to parkas and pants, our community is in desperate need. There will be a decorated donation box at the entrance to the church. ***Clothing for either Men or Women will be greatly appreciated!***

Advent Reconciliation Services

Sacred Heart Parish Thursday, Dec, 19th, 6:30pm

Holy Cross Parish's Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve	Tuesday December 24, at 6pm
Christmas Day	Wednesday, December 25, at 9am
New Year's Eve	Tuesday, December 31, at 4pm
New Year's Day	Wednesday, January 1, at 9am

Confession Times & Clergy Support

Confession Times:

St. Patrick's: Friday 11:30 – 12:00

St. Joseph's: 1/2 hour before Mass

Sacred Heart: Saturday 3:00 – 3:45

Our Lady of Fatima: Saturday 4:00

Clergy Consult: Call the Parish offices.

St. Patrick's: (250) 592-7391

St. Joseph's: (250) 479-7413

Sacred Heart: (250)-479-1611

Our Lady of Fatima: (250) 658-1587

Missing a Missal? 2024/2025 Sunday Missal are still be available for \$5 in the office.

Pastor: Vacant

Executive Team:

Catherine Davis, John Bartle-Clar, David Begg

Hospital Chaplain: 250-889-3761

Administrative Assistant: Sloane Secord
250-477-5321 / office@holycrossvictoria.org

Office Assistant: Joanie Bidlake
250-477-5321 / officeassistant@holycrossvictoria.org

Parish Council Chair: Catherine Davis

Sacramental Preparation: Michele Bristow
mbristow@rcdvictoria.org

Baptismal Preparation: Beverly Pulyk
hcsbpaptismalprep@rcdvictoria.org

Outreach Ministry Requests for Visits

If you or a person you know would like a visit from an Outreach Ministry Volunteer to bring Holy Communion to someone at home who is unable to get to Mass; or - someone in long-term care, please contact the Office at 250-477-5321, or email: office@holycrossvictoria.org

REGULAR MASS TIMES

Mass times - Holy Cross Parish:

4pm Saturday,

9am Sunday;

9am Tuesday and Thursday

Mass times - St. Patrick's Parish:

11am Sunday, 4pm Sunday;

12:10pm Tuesday-Friday

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CALLS:

If you or someone you love is admitted to hospital and would like a visit from our VGH/RJH hospital chaplain, please call the emergency pager **250-889-3761** and ask for **Fr. Sean Flynn** to make this request.