

# St. Pius X Parish

2305 Bloor Street West, Toronto ON M6S 1P1

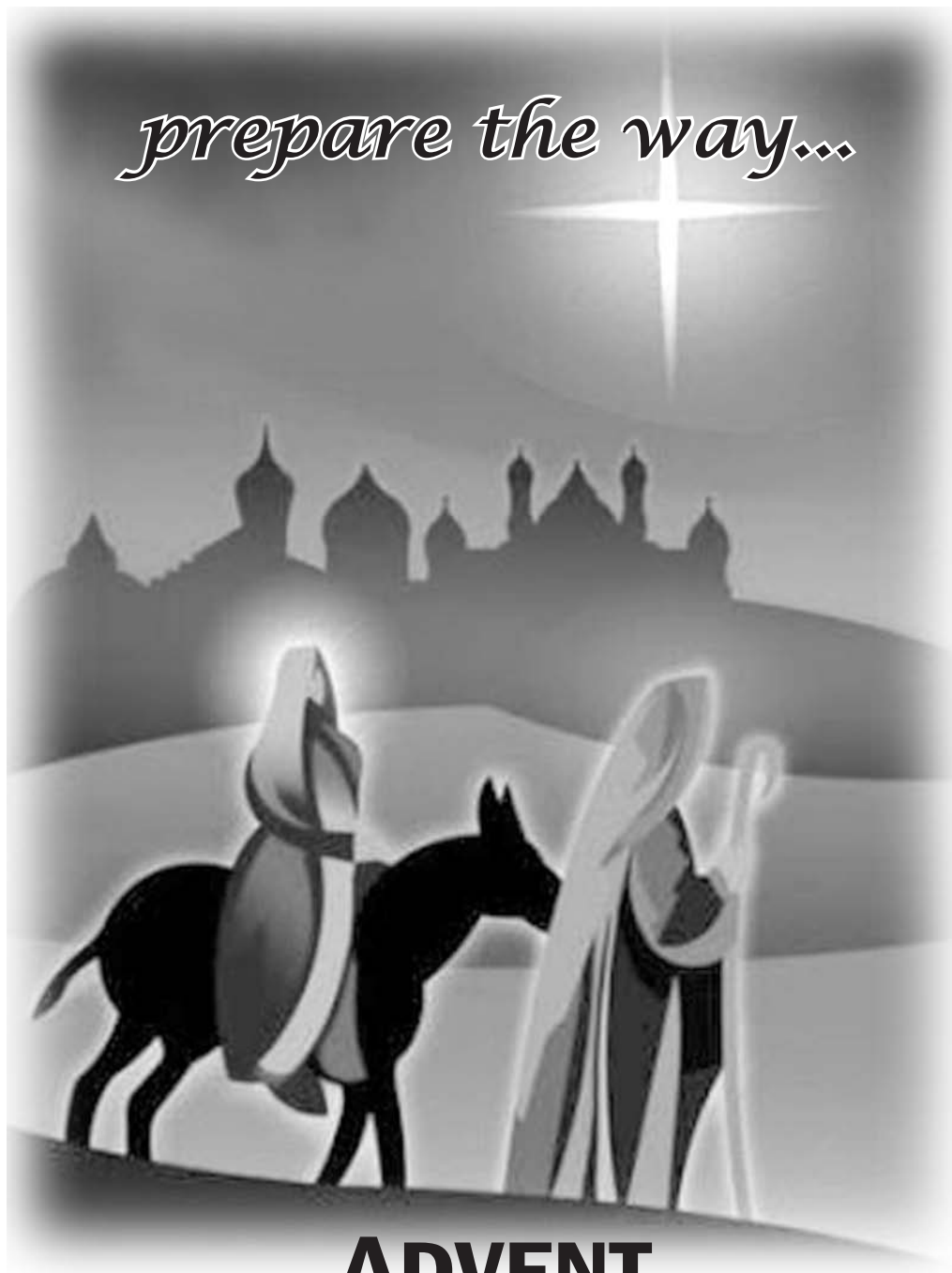
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## PASTORAL STAFF

Fr. Massillamani Zacharias (Fr. Mani), **Pastor**

Michelle Somers, **Parish Secretary**



*prepare the way...*

# ADVENT



## Mass Intentions

### Saturday, December 21

5 pm + Virginia Gaeto

### Sunday, December 22

9 am Parishioners  
11 am + Alfonsas Pivoriunas

### Tuesday, December 24

5 pm Parishioners  
8 pm Parishioners

### Wednesday, December 25

9 am Parishioners  
11 am Parishioners

### Friday, December 27

8:30 am + Maria Estorba

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

First Reading: Micah 5.2-5a  
Psalm: 80.1ab+2, 14-15, 17-18  
Second Reading: Hebrews 10.5-10  
Gospel: Luke 1.39-45

### Sponsoring the Sanctuary Lamp

The Sanctuary lamp signifies the Real Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It burns for the greater glory of God. Parishioners are invited to become monthly sponsors of the Sanctuary Lamp. Please contact the parish office if you wish to donate. Doing so becomes an opportunity for friends and families to pray at the Tabernacle knowing the Lamp burns for their intentions.

### The Sanctuary Lamp burns in December for the intentions of:

Marilyn Tremblay



## GOSPEL REFLECTION

*And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?*

The Gospel turns our attention from the ministry of John the Baptist to the events that preceded John the Baptist's birth. The story of John the Baptist and his parents, Elizabeth and Zechariah, are reported only in Luke's Gospel. Luke pairs the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus, establishing John's early connection to the Messiah.

On this last Sunday before Christmas, the Church's Liturgy reveals the true identity of our Redeemer: He is, as today's First Reading says, the "ruler . . . whose origin is from . . . ancient times." He will come from Bethlehem, where David was born of Jesse the Ephrathite and anointed king. This passage from the prophet Micah is famous for designating Bethlehem as the place of the Messiah's birth.

There are many things worth pondering in Luke's account of the visitation of our Blessed Mother. But focus on the humble wonder and awe expressed by Elizabeth. Elizabeth was clearly grateful for Mary's visit. But it appears that her reaction went even beyond gratitude. She was given the gift of wonder and awe. She knew that she was incredibly blessed by the fact that both the Mother of God and her Lord Himself were now in her presence in her home.

This gift of wonder and awe that Elizabeth experienced is one of the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is a gift that enters a humble heart, enabling it to first see the unworthiness of a special grace given. But then this humble soul receives the special grace and responds with overwhelming amazement. Thus, we experience not only gratitude but also a holy amazement that results in praise of God. In our own lives, there are so many incredible graces we have received from God. But too often we fail to see them for what they are. We fail to see, and therefore fail to experience, the amazement that should result from God's gifts.

Reflect today upon this holy gift of the Holy Spirit that Elizabeth experienced. Try to feel how she felt. Try to sense the praise that resulted. And try to open yourself more fully to receive this same gift of the Holy Spirit in your life. The Lord comes to you constantly by grace, especially every time you receive Him in Holy Communion. For that reason, we all strive to live a holy wonder and awe every day of our lives. (Excerpts from: *My Catholic Life*; Loyola Press.)

## **PARISH NEWS**

### **Christmas & New Year Masses**

#### **Christmas Eve:**

5 pm – Special Mass for Parents with Children

8 pm – Mass for Everyone

**Christmas Day:** 9 am & 11 am

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God & New**

**Year's Day:** 9 am & 11 am

**Please Note:** There will be no Mass on December 26 and January 2. The office will close at noon on December 24 and December 31 and will be closed on December 26 and January 2.

#### **Advent Reconciliation (Confession)**

Parishioners who wish to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation may do so by calling the Parish Office to make an appointment with Fr. Mani.

#### **Annual Pastor Vacation**

Fr. Mani will be away on vacation from January 4 to February 4, 2025. In his absence, Fr. Jubin Lawrence will be available to celebrate Masses and minister to your pastoral needs.

#### **Christmas Trees & Advent Wreath**

As part of the celebration of the Advent and Christmas season, our parish installs two evergreen trees near the altar. These trees have deep Christian significance. For a fascinating history of the symbolism of Christmas trees, see: <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/christmas-tree-legends-traditions-history-1763>. We have also placed an Advent wreath beside the altar. Any assistance with donations for the purchase of these trees or the wreath would be greatly appreciated.

#### **Furniture Donation Request**

If anyone has small side tables they are no longer keeping, we would be grateful to receive them for use in the rectory. A kind parishioner has delivered two beautiful ones, so we now need only two tables.

#### **Friars Student Writing Contest 2025**

**Theme:** "Do you believe this?" (John 11:26).

**Deadline:** January 13, 2025

High school students aged 13 to 19 from the Catholic School Boards in the Archdiocese of Toronto are invited to participate in this annual event, which honours the global Week of Prayer for Christian Unity taking place from January 18 to 25. To learn more and to submit your entry, go to <https://www.catholicregister.org/writingaward>.

Email [ecumenical@archtoronto.org](mailto:ecumenical@archtoronto.org) or call 416-934-3400 ext. 527 for more information.

#### **"Journey Through Advent"**

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) is presenting an online weekly video series. This year, the reflections will be led by Archbishop Leo and will offer meaningful reflections on the Gospel readings during each of the four Sundays of Advent. Visit <https://www.cccb.ca/evangelization-catechesis-catholic-education/video-resources/journey-through-advent/>.

#### **Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025**

The theme for this 2025 Jubilee Year is "Pilgrims of Hope". The solemn opening of the Year will take place with a Eucharistic Celebration at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica on Sunday, December 29, 2024, at 5:00 pm. All are welcome to join in this special Mass. Please see the letter from His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo here: <https://www.archtoronto.org/en/outreach/news/archdiocesan/invitation-from-archbishop-leo-to-launch-the-ordinary-year-of-jubilee--december-29-2024/>.

#### **Vocations**

Are you called to follow in the footsteps of Mary as a priest, deacon, brother, or religious to carry the Good News of God's great Love? Contact Fr. Matt McCarthy, Director of Vocations, Archdiocese of Toronto at 416-968-0997, or email [vocations@archtoronto.org](mailto:vocations@archtoronto.org). For information, go to [www.vocationstoronto.ca](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca).

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