

## *How Did the Early Christians Prepare for Initiation?*

From apostolic times to our own day, Christian initiation involved a journey in several stages. Though historically the process varied in the time it took to complete, the following elements were always present: proclamation of the Word, acceptance of the Gospel, conversion, profession of the faith, Baptism itself, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, and reception of the Eucharist.

Christianity was illegal in the first three centuries. Becoming a Christian was very serious business. It involved beginning a new life in Jesus Christ. It meant that a person had to renounce his or her former life. There was a possibility a convert would be *martyred*, or killed, for his or her faith either before or after being baptized.

Most converts to Christianity in the first century were adults. Thus it made sense to have a rather lengthy period of preparation—typically three years—before a person was fully initiated into the Church. To turn from a life of sin and embrace the life of love commanded by Jesus took sober thought, reflection, and formation. (When infant Baptism became the norm in later centuries, a post-baptismal **catechesis** was established.)

The period of preparation was called the *catechumenate*. During this time, the **catechumens** in partnership with sponsors learned about the Christian faith and became disciplined to the Christian way of life through prayer, fasting, and self-denial. The key emphasis was on conversion to Christ.

The Sacraments of Initiation themselves were celebrated at the Easter vigil after a forty-day period of prayer and formal instruction in the faith during Lent. In this proximate period of preparation, the candidate learned the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, the privileged prayer of Christians.

Those attending R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) are baptized during the Easter Vigil. At St. Mary's registrations are done during the months of October and November. Anyone interested can call the church office and arrange to speak with a priest.

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### **First Reconciliation**

All children receiving their First Communion, will have their Reconciliation (First Confession) on Wednesday, March 30th, at 7:30 p.m. All children must attend.

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### **Day of Confessions**

Thursday, March 31st, and Friday, April 1st, from 10:30 to 12:00 noon.

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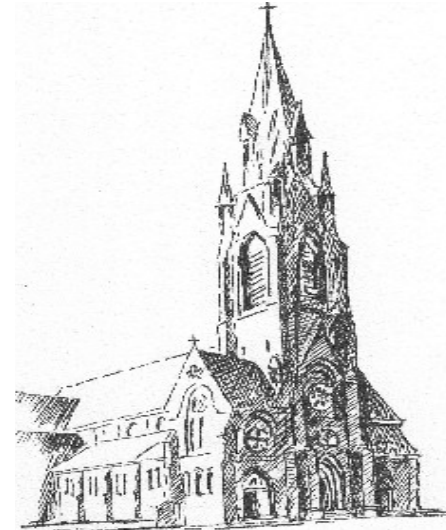
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### **Laus-Perene / Blessed Sacrament Adoration**

On April 11, 12, and 13th, we will have the Blessed Sacrament Adoration (Laus-Perene), from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. We need your help for the Easter flowers. All contributions are very much appreciated.

# St. Mary's Church

Rev. Msgr. Fernando Couto (Pastor)  
Rev. João Ferreira (Associate Pastor)



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### **OFFICE HOURS**

Mon.– Fri. 8:30—12:00 and 1:00—4:00 pm

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### **Sunday Masses**

8:30 am Portuguese

10:00 am Portuguese

11:30 am English

1:00 pm English

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### **Weekday Masses**

Monday—Friday 9:00 am Portuguese

6:00 pm English

Saturday 5:00 pm English

6:30 pm Portuguese

**Parish Council**

**Parish Finance Council**

**Legion of Mary**

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**  
First Friday of Every Month at 5:00 p.m.

**English Choir**

**Portuguese Choir**

Ana da Silva 905-891-5444

**Santo Cristo**

Joey Teves 647-887-2804

**Santo Cristo Band (Hall)**

416-703-2231

Marco Lima (President) 416-818-5462

**Santo Cristo Association**

Please contact parish 416-703-2326

**Espirito Santo**

John & Lucy Silva 905-890-4771

**Saint Vincent De Paul**

416-247-8868

**Volunteer Co-ordinator**

Delia Medeiros (contact the parish)

**Baptism—Sundays**

Baptisms will be booked by appointment only

**Marriages**

Please contact the priest 12 months in advance

**Confessions**

Every day before Mass, except on Sunday

**Schools**

St. Mary Elementary 416-393-5205

Bishop Macdonell 416-393-5462



## IV Sunday of Lent

March 27, 2022

A clear theme runs through all three readings: God's mercy to sinners. In the First Reading we have the beautiful words God spoke to his people: 'I have taken the shame of Egypt away from you'. The shame of sin and the darkness of slavery are behind them. The years of wandering in the desert are over; they have come home to the promised land. A new era was about to begin.

They mark their homecoming by celebrating anew the feast of Passover.

**Psalm: *The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want.***

This reminds us of the home-coming of the prodigal son. His shame also is behind him.

His years of wandering are over and he returns home to a warm welcome and a great feast. A new and bright future lies ahead of him. Jesus told the parable in response to the criticism of the Pharisees that he was too lenient towards sinners. They were meant to see themselves in the older son. For Luke the 'Pharisees' are righteous Christians, for whom God's mercy to sinners is unfair and scandalous.



### This Day God Gives Me

This day God gives me, strength of high heaven,  
Sun and moon shining, flame in my hearth;  
Flashing of lightning, wind in its swiftness,  
Deeps of the ocean, firmness of earth.

This day God sends me strength as my guardian,  
Might to uphold me, wisdom as guide.  
Your eyes are watchful, your ears are list'ning,  
Your lips are speaking, friend at my side.

God's way is my way, God's shield is round me,  
God's host defends me, saving from ill.  
Angels of heaven, drive from me always  
All that would harm me, stand by me still.

Rising, I thank you, mighty and strong One,  
King of creation, Giver of rest,  
Firmly confessing Threeness of Persons,  
Oneness of Godhead, Trinity blest.

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### Hosea

Come back to me with all your heart  
Don't let fear keep us apart  
Trees do bend, though straight and tall;  
so must we to others' call.

**Long have I waited for  
your coming home to me  
and living deeply our new life**

The wilderness will lead you  
to your heart where I will speak  
Integrity and Justice  
With tenderness you shall know

You shall sleep secure with peace;  
faithfulness will be your joy

### Father I Have Sinned

Father I have sinned help me find my way  
Remember not my sin just let me hear you say:

**I forgive you, I love you  
You are mine, take my hand  
Go in peace, sin no more beloved one.**

Father I have turned my back and walked away  
Depended on my strong  
and lived life my own way.

Father I have closed my heart to those in need  
Though only for myself avictim of my greed.

Father I have loved if love's the word to use  
I've played so many games  
They left me so confused.

Father I've returned I'm home with you to stay  
Standing by your door knowing that you'll say:

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### Glory and Praise to Our God

**Glory and praise to our God  
Who alone gives light to our days  
Many are the blessings He bears  
To those who trust in His ways**

We the daughters and sons of Him  
Who built the valleys and plains  
Praise the wonders our God has done  
In every heart that sings

In His wisdom He strengthens us  
Like gold that's tested in fire  
Though the power of sin prevails  
Our God is there to save

### Mass Intentions For This Week

#### Saturday, March 26

**5:00 pm.** Manuel Caetano Medeiros & Marta Medeiros—  
António & Manuel Faria

**6:30 pm.** João Rodrigues & in-laws—João Manuel Pereira  
de Estrela—Joaquim Ferreira, esposa e filhos—Judy da Silva

#### Sunday, March 27

**8:30 am.** Raimundo Soares, parents, in-laws & family

**10:00 am.** Community—Santo Cristo Association—Gil  
Maiato—Afonso Pereira de Medeiros, parents & in-laws—  
Souls in purgatory

**11:30 am.** Ana Carvalho—Intention of Laura McCoy

**1:00 pm.**

#### Monday, March 28

**9:00 am.** Dr. Joana Molla, Fátima Medeiros, souls in  
purgatory

**6:00 pm.**

#### Tuesday, March 29

**9:00 am.** Ildeberto Pimentel

**6:00 pm.** Danny, Rufina & Jordão de Andrade

#### Wednesday, March 30

**9:00 am.** Miranda Bava

**6:00 pm.** Dinis do Couto & souls in purgatory

#### Thursday, March 31

**9:00 am.** Manuel Medeiros, parents, in-laws, siblings &  
souls in purgatory

**6:00 pm.**

#### Friday, April 1

**9:00 am.** Artur Cordeiro Amarelo

**6:00 pm.** Raimundo Soares & Maria Ramos

#### Saturday, April 2

**5:00 pm.** António Rodrigues Marcos—Maria dos Anjos  
Cabral da Silva

**6:30 pm.** António Aguiar & Eduarda Maria da Ponte Aguiar