

## THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY IN BETHLEEM

No one makes a pilgrimage to the Holy land, without visiting the Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem. For those who have faith, a visit to this church, regardless of what time of the year, is always a very spiritual experience and a travel back in time. But, let's go back to history:

In 135, Christian places of worship in Holy Land were obliterated at the time of Emperor Adrian who ordered shrines dedicated to Roman gods to be erected in their place. Thus, a pagan shrine was constructed atop the grotto where Jesus was born. This seeming tragedy later proved a blessing in that these pagan temples helped Christians to locate and identify the exact locations of the revered sites after the anti-Christian persecutions subsided.

When Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, sent a delegation to the Holy Land, and more specifically to Bethlehem, the temple build under the orders of Adrian actually helped to locate the place where Jesus was born. So, Constantine ordered Adrian's temple removed and the cave was found intact below.

Directed by his mother, St. Helena, Constantine ordered a magnificent basilica constructed over the site in 325. Known as the Church of Nativity, it was richly decorated with marble mosaics and frescoes. No expense was spared in its construction. The original octagonal altar and the foundations can be seen to this day.

Over the centuries, however, the Church of the Nativity was looted and sacked on numerous occasions. In 529, it was badly damaged by the Samaritans who were revolting against the Byzantine Empire. Thankfully, it was immediately rebuilt by Emperor Justinian in 530, and that's the church still standing in Bethlehem today. In 614 when the Persians destroyed all churches in the area, the Church of the Nativity evaded destruction thanks to a mosaic representing the Wise Men in ancient Persian costumes.

This church of massive stone walls that appears as a fortress from the outside is now the oldest church in the Holy Land. To enter it one must bow in order to pass through the door of humility. Only children enter with ease.

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### Christmas Schedule

**Christmas Eve Masses** will be 9:00 p.m. in Portuguese and 11:30 p.m. in English.

**Christmas Day Masses** will be at 10:00 a.m. in Portuguese, 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in English

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### New Year's Schedule

**On Sunday, December 31st (New Year's Eve)**, besides our regular Sunday Masses, we will have Adoration at 5:00 p.m. followed by Te Deum and Mass at 6:00 p.m. in English and Portuguese.

**New Year's day** Masses will be at 10:00 a.m. in Portuguese, 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in English.

# St. Mary's Church

Rev. Msgr. Fernando Couto (Pastor)

Rev. Fr. Andre de Lima (Associate Pastor)

Parish Council

Parish Finance Council

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

First Friday of Every Month at 5:00 p.m.

English Choir

Susan Taylor 416-277-6291

Portuguese Choir

Ana da Silva 905-891-5444

Santo Cristo

Joey Teves 647-887-2804

Santo Cristo Band (Hall)

Paul Valerio (President) 416-703-2231  
647-998-5916

Santo Cristo Association

Please contact the parish 416-703-2326

Espirito Santo

Jose & Margarida Silva 905-873-1908

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

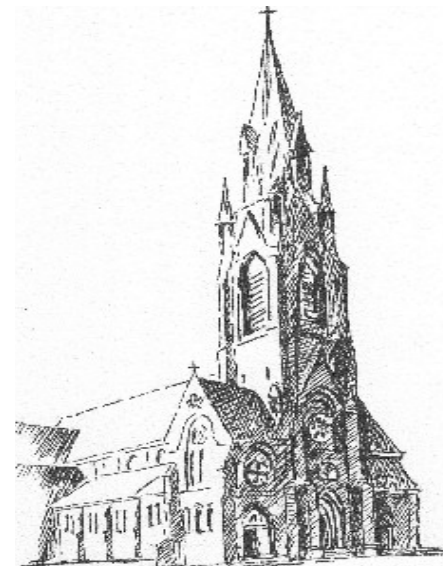
Confessions

Every day before Mass, except on Sunday

Schools

St. Mary Elementary 416-393-5205

Bishop Macdonell 416-393-5462



588 Adelaide St. W.

Toronto, On. M6J 3P8

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Website: [stmarysbathurst.archtoronto.org](http://stmarysbathurst.archtoronto.org)

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### OFFICE HOURS

Mon.—Fri. 8:30—12:00 and 1:00—4:00

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### Sunday Masses

8:30 am Portuguese

10:00 am Portuguese

11:30 am English

1:00 pm English

### Weekday Masses

Monday—Friday 9:00 am Portuguese

6:00 pm English

Saturday 5:00 pm English



**December 17, 2024**

**3rd Sunday of Advent**

***Responsorial Psalm: Lord, come and save us.***

The prophet Zephaniah, writing in the seventh century BC, bids Jerusalem to rejoice because salvation is near. God stands in her midst and will deliver her from her enemies. God is portrayed, not only as a king and warrior, but

also as a loving bridegroom, who steadfastly loves his unworthy and unfaithful bride. The theme of joy is even more emphatic in the Second Reading. Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice because the Lord is near. (Paul was thinking about the Second Coming, which he believed was near.) So there is no need to worry. If they need anything, they are to pray for it, and the peace of God will be with them.

The theme of the nearness of the Lord is also at the heart of the Gospel. John the Baptist tells the people what they must do in order to prepare for the Lord's coming and to escape his searching judgment. At the same time he makes it clear that he is subordinate to Jesus.

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**Christmas Bake Sale**

Today, we have a Christmas bake sale with a variety of holiday treats in our parish hall. Take the opportunity to buy your baked goods for Christmas.

**People Look East**

People, look east. The time is near  
Of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
Trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the guest, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim  
One more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather,  
Bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast,  
Him who cometh from the east,  
Set every peak and valley humming  
With the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.  
O Come Divine Messiah



**Wait for the Lord**

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near  
Wait for the Lord, keep watch, take heart!

**O Come, O Come Emmanuel**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell Thy people save,  
And give them victory o'er the grave.

O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.

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**O Come Divine Messiah**

O come, divine Messiah!  
The world in silence waits the day  
When hope shall sing its triumph,  
And sadness flee away.

**Sweet Savior haste;  
Come, come to earth,  
Dispel the night, and show Thy face,  
And bid us hail the dawn of grace.  
O come, divine Messiah!  
The world in silence waits the day  
When hope shall sing its triumph,  
And sadness flee away.**

O Thou, whom nations sigh for,  
Whom priest and prophet long foretold,  
Come break the captive fetters;  
Redeem the long-lost fold.

**Mass Intentions for the Week**

**Saturday, December 16**

**5:00 pm.** José Manuel Oliveira Correia, intention of Lucia Correia—João Rodrigues—Irena, Lorenzo & Mariannina Mariconda—Intention of Adelaida Guerra

**Sunday, December 17**

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

**10:00 am.** Community—Santo Cristo Association—Maria de Fátima Melo—Jaime de Sousa—Esperança Amaral & family — Irene Loureiro — António Pimentel—José Paulo Antunes dos Santos

**11:30 am.** Arlindo, Ilda & Richard Vicente—Artur, Maria & Luisa Cabral — Angelo & José Medeiros — António Fernandes & family—Abel da Rocha, Vasco & Maria Afonso—Elizabeth Manding & Rogelio Sarigumba—Emilia Botelho—Virginia Arruda

**1:00 pm.** Intention of Maria Rosalinda De Miglio—Fernando Franco Matias, Franco & Genoveva De Miglio, Vera Denti—Manuel Calmeira, intention of Maria Calmeira, children, in-laws

**Monday, December 18**

**9:00 am.** Intention of Connie, Larry & Joshua Medeiros

**6:00 pm.** Alfredo da Ponte Garcia & children

**Tuesday, December 19**

**9:00 am.** Liberal Paul Silva

**6:00 pm.** Teresa Di Florio

**Wednesday, December 20**

**9:00 am.** Manuel de Amorim

**6:00 pm.** Manuel & Maria Couto & family

**Thursday, December 21**

**9:00 am.** Souls in purgatory

**6:00 pm.** Tomas Yntig

**Friday, December 22**

**9:00 am.** Manuela Amaral

**6:00 pm.** Nelson de Melo

**Saturday, December 23**

**5:00 pm.** Mariano Machado, in-laws, Lurdes Teixeira & Edna Grace Avery—Mary Celmira & Alida Rita Delgado—Manuel e António Faria—Melillo & Aurilia families — Leonel Moniz Cabral, parents, in-laws & family — Maria da Conceição Isidro Matela de Jesus Cavacas