

Just What Exactly is the Immaculate Conception?

Many people mistakenly believe that the term “Immaculate Conception” refers to Mary’s sinless conception of Jesus, but it actually honours Mary’s unique position of being conceived without original sin. This means that unlike the rest of us, Mary was born with an absolute openness to God and God’s will in her life (Luke 1:38): “**Let it be with me according to your word**”.

According to the Catholic faith, God wanted someone sinless to be the mother of His Son. Catholics look at Luke 1:28 where the Archangel Gabriel appears to Mary in Nazareth and says “**Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.**” This greeting tells us Mary was in special grace with God.

But Mary still had free will, could be tempted, and she still said yes to God. This is one more reason to love Mary and try to model our lives after her. Mary is the perfect servant of God whom we should all strive to be more like her.

The Immaculate Conception of Mary was only defined as a dogma in 1854 by Pope Pius IX and is celebrated on December 8th. In some countries, this celebration is also a public holiday. As Catholics, we pray in thanksgiving for the way Mary accepted God’s will. We also ask her to pray for us, knowing that it will lead to her Son, Jesus.

Tens of thousands of churches around the world today bear her name. And some of the most beautiful cathedrals (just two outstanding examples being Chartres and Notre Dame de Paris) were dedicated to Mary. In Canada, we have the beautiful Notre Dame in Montreal and in the USA, there is the shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

As a curiosity, at the beginning, our church was known as the Church of the Immaculate Conception and our church bell has this inscription: Presented by Vicar General McCann, Blessed by Archbishop O’Connor, Jubilee Year of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, AD 1904.

Christmas Concert

You are invited to attend our Christmas concert next Saturday, December 14th at 6:30 p.m. It is free of charge and all are welcome.

Christmas Confessions

Our Christmas Confessions will be on Thursday, December 19th from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Church Offerings

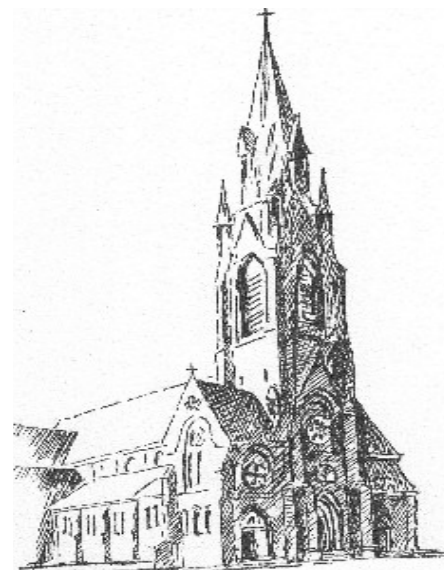
We ask that all your donations for this year, be made by December 31st. Donations made after this date will not reflect on your income tax receipt for 2024. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Remember the Poor

In keeping with the Christmas spirit, let us all remember those families who are far less fortunate. Please submit all monetary offerings in a personal envelopes labeled “**For the Poor**”. Thank you!

St. Mary's Church

Rev. Msgr. Fernando Couto (Pastor)
Rev. Fr. Benny Joseph (Associate Pastor)



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OFFICE HOURS

Mon.– Fri. 8:30—12:00 and 1:00—4:00

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

Parish Council

Parish Finance Council

English Choir

Susan Taylor 416-531-0503

Portuguese Choir

Ana da Silva 905-891-5444

Santo Cristo

Artur Rocha 647-624-7113

Santo Cristo Band (Hall)

Paul Valerio (President) 416-703-2231

647-998-5916

Santo Cristo Association

Contact the Parish 416-703-2326

Espirito Santo

João & Lilia Tavares 647-308-7556

St. Vincent de Paul

416-247-8868

Volunteer Co-Ordinator

Delia Medeiros (Please contact 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



Second Sunday of Advent

December 8, 2024

First Reading (Bar 5:1-9):

Jerusalem is told to forget the sufferings of the past because God is going to bring back her exiled children to her.

Second Reading (Phil 1:3-6, 8-11)

Paul urges his fellow Christians to prepare for the second coming of Christ by pure and blameless lives.

Psalm: *The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.*

Gospel (Lk 3:1-6). John the Baptist urges the people to prepare a way for the Lord through repentance. To underline the universality of salvation, Luke sets the event within the framework of world history. In the manner of an Old Testament prophet, John undertakes to prepare the people for the coming of the Saviour by calling them to repentance.

Christmas Eve (Dec. 24th)

9:00 pm in Portuguese

11:30 pm in English

Christmas Day (Dec. 25th)

10:00 am in Portuguese

11:30 am in English

1:00 pm in English



On Jordan's Bank

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh.
Awake and harken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin:
make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there.

Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
and make us rise to fall no more.
O let your face upon us shine
and fill the world with love divine.

All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Spirit, evermore.

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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 you, 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

Like A Shepherd

**Like a shepherd He feeds His flock
And gathers the lambs in His arms
Holding them carefully close to His heart
Leading them home.**

Say to the cities of Judah
"Prepare the way of the Lord"
Go to the mountain top, lift your voice
"Jerusalem, here is your God".

I myself will shepherd them
For others have led them astray
The lost I will rescue and heal their wounds
And pasture them, giving them rest.

Come unto me
If you are heavily burdened
And take my yoke upon your shoulders
I will give you rest.

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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 Saviour 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 this Week



Saturday, 7th of December

5:00 pm. Intention of Victoria Guerra—Souls in purgatory

Sunday, 8th of December

8:30am. Souls in purgatory, parents & in-laws of José & Margarida Silva

10:00 am. Community — José & Jesuina Camara— Ermelinda Arruda—Deodato & Leontina Medeiros—José Carlos Silva, Manuel Pereira — José Dias Faria, parents, siblings & in-laws—Francisco & Rosalina Brum—Abel Ferreira, Carlos & Olivia Sousa & family—Manuel de Melo

11:30 am. Stjepan Cicvaric—Estela Pardo—50th Wedding Anniversary of Olivério & Maria Conceição Gouveia

1:00 pm. Luis Augusto Ribeiro Raposo—Luis Alfonso Burgos—Souls in purgatory

Monday, 9th of December

9:00 am. Nossa Senhora da Conceição

6:00 pm. Immaculate Conception

Tuesday, 10th of December

9:00 am. Souls in purgatory

6:00 pm. Estela Pardo

Wednesday, 11th of December

9:00 am. Joe Gaspar, grandparents and uncles

6:00 pm. Souls in purgatory

Thursday, 12th of December

9:00 am. Intention of Filomena & Jamie Melo

6:00 pm. Nelson de Melo

Friday, 13th of December

9:00 am. St. Lucy, Irena Mariconda & family

6:00 pm. Ildeberto Camara

Saturday, 14th of December

5:00 pm. Intention of Adelaida Guerra—Maria Rosa & José Couto, parents, grandparents, family & souls in purgatory—Aditi Eid