

CHRISTMAS

What's the real date of Christmas?

To answer this question, we have to start with the fact that we do not know exactly when Jesus was born. St. Luke reminds us that the first Christmas, the day of Jesus' birth, wasn't a holiday, but a working day. The truth is, no one knows the real birthday of Jesus. Most likely Jesus was born in the Spring and not in the Winter.

The early Christians certainly had different opinions about when it should be celebrated. The Romans celebrated the "Dies Natalis Solis Invicti" meaning the birthday of the unconquered sun on December 25. It was a festival in which they worshipped the sun for winning over the darkness of winter (and that's where Sunday comes from).

By the 4th century, the Christians in Rome were so many, and many were slaves it made sense to choose a day that was already a holiday and people did not have to work. By taking over this pagan festival (Saturnalia) the Christians gave it a new meaning: Jesus is the Son of God and He is the Light of the World.

What is the other date for Christmas?

The first recorded date of Christmas being celebrated on December 25th was in 336, during the time of Emperor Constantine. After that, Pope Julius I, decided that everybody should celebrate Christmas on December 25th. But not everybody agreed. St. John Chrysostom, urged the Christians in the east to celebrate Christmas on December 25th. They chose not to go along and to this day, like the Armenian Apostolic Church, they celebrate Christmas on January 6th which is for the Christians in the west, the feast of the Epiphany. And because many Orthodox and Coptic Churches still use the Julian calendar they celebrate Christmas on January 7th.

Who started the First Nativity Representation?

In the catacomb of St. Sebastian in Rome, there is a fresco from the 4th century which depicts Mary, Joseph and Jesus, an ox and a donkey. (The first Christmas card).

Later in 1223, St. Francis of Assisi, re-enacted the whole story with live animals, people, and a Mass that lasted just about the whole night. (The first Nativity representation).

Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve (Dec. 24th)

9:00 pm in Portuguese
11:30 pm in English

Christmas Day (Dec. 25th)

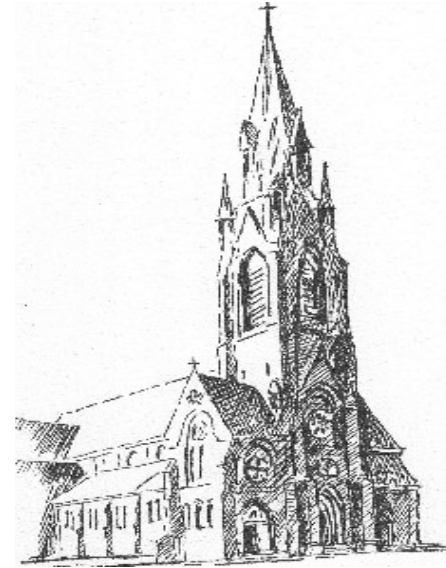
10:00 am in Portuguese
11:30 am in English
1:00 pm in English



*To all our parishioners and their families,
a very Merry Christmas with many Blessings from our Savior Jesus Christ!
For the parishioners that will be traveling to spend time with family,
we wish you a safe travel and extend Merry Christmas wishes
to you and all your loved ones.*

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



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024

First Reading (Mic. 5:2-5a). When Micah was writing (late eighth-century BC) Jerusalem was under siege and David's dynasty was in jeopardy. But salvation would come from a comparatively insignificant place—Bethlehem. From there a new leader would come to gather together the scattered exiles and unite the nation once more. Christians see this promise as foreshadowing the coming of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who was born in Bethlehem and descended from the line of David.

Psalm: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Second Reading (Heb 10:5-10). Jesus came, not to offer the sacrifices of the old law, but to do the will of God. His one perfect sacrifice replaced all the former sacrifices.

Gospel (Lk 1:39-45). The Gospel tells the story of Mary's visit to Elizabeth. Both are pregnant. Enlightened by the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth praises Mary and hints at the uniqueness of the child she has conceived.

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.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

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

**Rejoice, rejoice, O Israel,
To thee shall come Emmanuel.**

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.

Hail Mary, Gentle Woman

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women
and blest is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now
and at the hour of death. Amen.

**Gentle woman, quiet light,
morning star, so strong and bright,
gentle Mother, peaceful dove,
teach us wisdom; teach us love.**

You were chosen by the Father;
you were chosen for the Son.
You were chosen from all women
and for woman, shining one.

Blessed are you among women,
blest in turn all women, too.
Blessed they with peaceful spirits.
Blessed they with gentle hearts.

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.

Mass Intentions for this Week



Saturday, December 21

5:00 pm. Mariano Machado & in-laws, Lurdes Teixeira, Edna Avery — Melillo & Aurilia families — João & Angelina Rodrigues — Intention of Maria Rosalina De Miglio — Maria Armandina da Silva

Sunday, December 22

8:30 am. Esperança Amaral & family

10:00 am. Community—Maria de Fátima Melo—Jaime de Sousa—Maria da Conceição Isidro Cavacas—Manuel Resendes

11:30 am. Ana Carvalho—Arlindo, Ilda & Richard Vicente—José & Angelo Medeiros—Andrew Graham—Stjepan Cicvaric

1:00 pm. Luis Alfonso Burgos

Monday, December 23

9:00 am. Souls in purgatory

6:00 pm. Tomas Yntig

Tuesday, December 24

9:00 pm. Portuguese

11:30 pm. English

Wednesday, December 25

10:00 am. Portuguese

11:30 am. English

1:00 pm. English

Thursday, December 26

9:00 am. Rosária Ferreira

6:00 pm. No Mass

Friday, December 27

9:00 am. Souls in purgatory

6:00 pm. Odília Correia

Saturday, December 28

5:00 pm. Manuel & António Faria—José Medeiros