

ST. ANSELM'S PARISH

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PARISH STAFF

Fr. Thomas Moore, Pastor

Deacon Daniel McPhee

Barrig Hayward, Administrative Assistant

Goody Cabral, Music Director & Cantor

Aloysius Chan, Organist



Mass for Intentions Week

**** THIS IS A TWO-WEEK BULLETIN**

Tuesday, December 21st, 8:15 a.m.

Richard & Nora Ryan

Requested by Theresa Ryan

Wednesday, December 22nd, 8:15 a.m.

For the Deceased Members of the Aust Family

Thursday, December 23rd, 8:15 a.m.

Iona D'Silva

Requested by Chris, Aubrey & Melanie D'Silva

Tuesday, December 28th, 8:15 a.m.

Jo Kostovcik

Requested by Mel Kostovcik

Wednesday, December 29th, 8:15 a.m.

Peace and Care of Creation

Requested by EcoAnselm

Thursday, December 30th, 8:15 a.m.

Freeman D'Silva

Requested by Chris, Aubrey & Melanie D'Silva

There will be no morning Mass on Friday, December 24th and Friday, December 31st.

There will be no 5pm Vigil Mass on Saturday, December 25th and Saturday, January 1st.

MASS SCHEDULE

**** Reservation required ****

December 24th (Christmas Eve):

4:00pm or 7:00pm

**** Reservation required ****

December 25th (Christmas Day):

9:00am or 11:00am

December 31st (New Year's Eve)

5:00pm

January 1st (New Year's Day)

11:00am

(First-come seating December 31 & January 1)

HAVE YOU MOVED?

Please take a moment to ensure your contact information with the parish office is up-to-date including mailing address, phone number and current email address. This is especially important as we approach tax receipt time.

PRE-AUTHORIZED GIVING

The Archdiocese of Toronto has established a Pre-Authorized Giving plan (PAG) to help you support the parish's work through your regular offertory gift. To accomplish the mission entrusted to us by Christ, parishes depend entirely on the generosity of their parishioners. Pre-Authorized Giving allows you to donate to your parish through scheduled monthly transfers from your bank account or credit card in the amount of your choosing. These funds are then deposited directly into the parish's account.

There are various benefits of participating in pre-authorized giving, both for you and for your parish.

Advantages for You:

- The convenience of having your offering automatically contributed to the parish.
- Knowing you continue to support the parish even when you are away.
- Continual support of ministries and programs funded through the parish.

Advantages for the Parish:

- Regular, dependable contributions to the parish.
- Reduction of cash on hand.
- Reduction of paperwork.

For information on how to enrol, please contact your parish office or email development@archtoronto.org.

2022 DONATION ENVELOPE BOXES

For parishioners who have chosen to renew their boxed set of envelopes, we suggest that you write at least your surname on your current envelopes as we will have to reassign some numbers in 2022. Using your name for cash donations guarantees that your offering is credited to you and ensures proper receipting.

If you have any questions about donation envelopes, want to ensure that your number from a previous year is still assigned to you, or if you would prefer to not renew your envelopes and move to our pre-authorized giving program, please call the office and we will assist you. Thank you for your continued support!

Please remember – donations received after 4pm on December 31st (including at the 5pm Vigil Mass) will be credited to the 2022 tax year. If you wish to have a donation credited to 2021, please ensure we receive it in the parish office no later than 4pm on Friday, December 31st. Thank you!

FR. MOORE AND THE PARISH STAFF OFFER KIND THANKS FOR THE CARDS AND GIFTS, AND FOR REMEMBERING US AT THIS TIME OF YEAR. WE WISH ALL OUR PARISHIONERS A JOYOUS CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY, HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

Micah 5:2-5a

Heb 10:5-10

Psalms 80

Luke 1:39-45

Hail Mary, Full of Grace



This is the time of year for family stories, the well-worn, deeply loved lore that reminds us of who we are, the anecdotes that explain relationships within the family and where we think we fit in the world. With that image in mind, we might imagine that we are hearing today's Gospel story of the

Visitation from a group of elderly cousins remembering Mary, Elizabeth and Zachary years after the events took place. Like many families, they tell the tale by sharing more commentaries and comebacks than details.

"Remember Auntie Lizzie? She was so excited I don't even think she knew what she was saying!"

"Then Uncle Z, poor guy — all he could do was stand around and listen to the women telling their stories. We always said it would take an act of God to shut him up ... it's just that nobody thought it would ever happen!"

"What about Joey? Poor guy! Where did he think she ran off to?"

"Don't forget, it all happened while the family still lived like peasants in the countryside; they were bumpkins when they got to the bustle of the city and the Temple."

"Come on! Hadn't all of this been predicted for a long time? They should have understood it from the get-go!"

"Sure, but who ever believed it would really happen? It's one thing to talk about the great days to come. It's another to believe that it's actually coming true — especially in your own family."

"You got it! Nobody would have even remembered it all if we didn't know how the story turned out 30-some years down the line."

Of course, Luke presented his Gospel narrative in a more structured and restrained way, using carefully chosen words and details to set up everything that would follow. But today's Gospel is still a family story; in fact, it's our family story, a tale of the early days of our own religious clan. We can claim Elizabeth and Zechariah as our ancestors just as we've been taught that Mary is our mother. So, now is the time to hear the tale again and learn from it. It seems as if St. Elizabeth — Auntie Lizzie to some — was the theologian who got right to the heart of it all. While it took Thomas Aquinas multiple volumes to put together his *Summa Theologica*, he would probably agree that Elizabeth summed it up with her one pithy statement: "Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of

what was spoken to her by the Lord." Elizabeth understood what the prophets had been teaching for centuries and what Psalm 40 taught her when she prayed it: "Sacrifice and offering you did not want ... so I said ... I delight to do your will." Elizabeth realized that she herself had become another Sarah who could laugh in delight at what God was doing. She also understood that her young relative Mary was the living embodiment of that psalm's proclamation "Your law is in my inner being!" Elizabeth's great act of faith consisted in believing that God was indeed working mightily in and through lowly women from insignificant villages in a conquered, powerless nation. Before Zechariah sang his Benedictus, the mother of John the Baptist prophesied that God was indeed coming into the midst of the people.

Today's readings invite us to treasure fond memories of these two women who are our ancestors in faith, these two whose faith freed them enough to believe in what reason told them could never happen. These two knew they were only women. Not only that, but Elizabeth was too old and Mary too inexperienced; there could be no rational expectation that God's promises would be fulfilled through them. But that impossibility, their utter incapacity, was precisely their advantage. Because they knew they could not accomplish it by themselves, they did not limit God to their own abilities or expectations. They were empty enough to become full of grace. Today, as we prepare to celebrate the feast of the Nativity, we are invited to contemplate the example of Mary and Elizabeth. They offer us a model of friendship rooted in shared faith, a faith so deep that it risks everything and can even rejoice in the adventure of an unknown future. They show us what it means to offer ourselves as God's humble instruments, as each in her own way embodies Jesus' own prayer of consecration: "Thy will be done." Today, Elizabeth the prophet proclaims Mary's blessedness and calls each of us to follow her example. Elizabeth reminds us that the way to true beatitude, true happiness, is to join Mary in the faith that God's promises will come true. Both of them are present in the Word today to make us aware that we will see only what we are willing to believe.

Pope Francis has launched the **Synod on Synodality**: a 2-year global process of listening to the faithful that will help the Church reflect on how we can do God's will in the world today. The comments of the faithful will ultimately be discussed at a meeting of the bishops in the Vatican in 2023. To learn more, please visit: www.archtoronto.org/synodality

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