

ST. ANSELM'S PARISH

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PARISH STAFF

Fr. Thomas Moore, Pastor

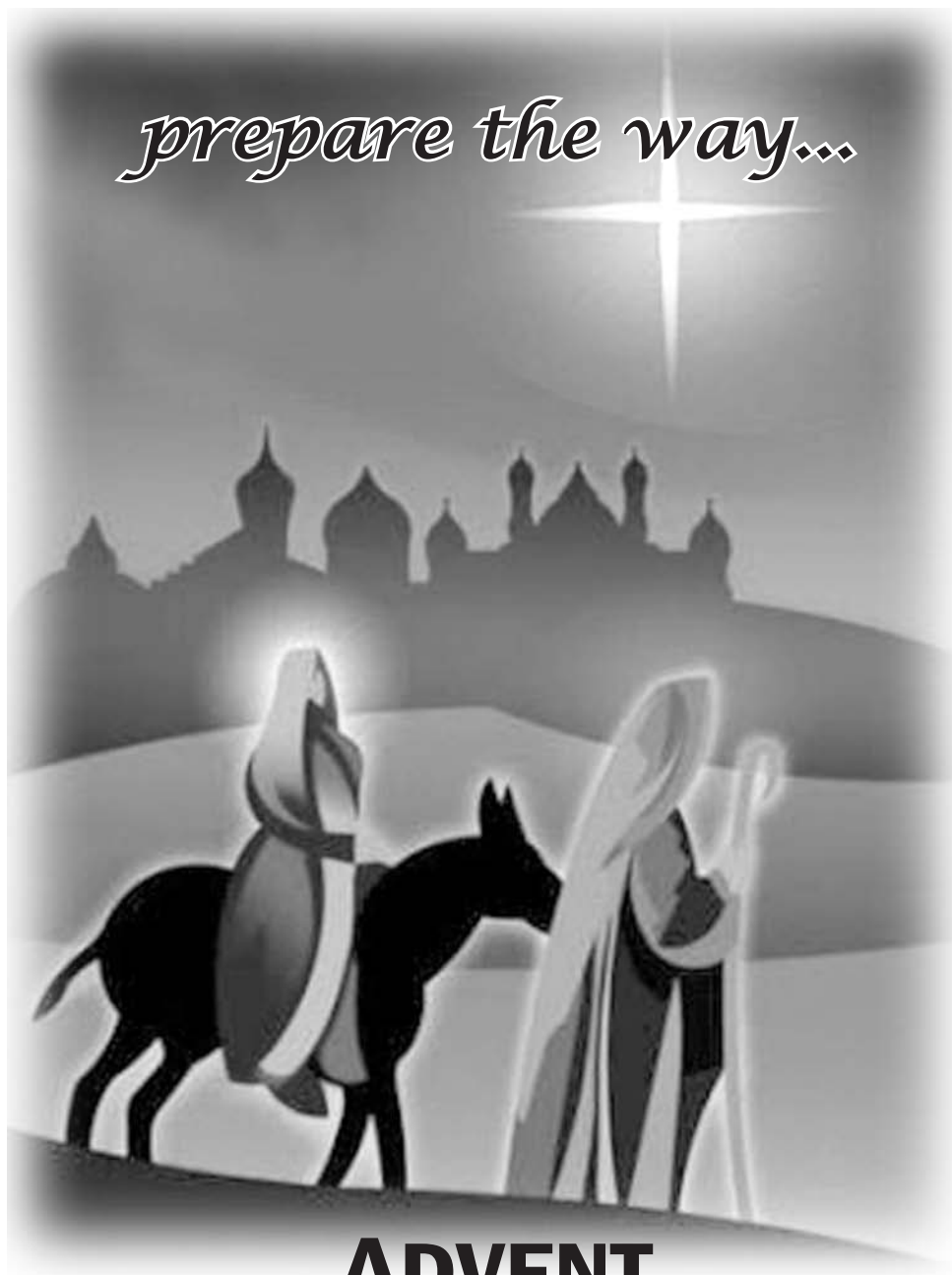
Deacon Daniel McPhee

Barrig Hayward, Administrative Assistant

Goody Cabral, Music Director & Cantor

Aloysius Chan, Organist

prepare the way...



ADVENT

Mass  for Intentions  Week
**** This is a TWO Week Bulletin ****

December 24, 25, 26 and 31, January 1
No 8:15am Mass

Friday, December 27th, 8:15 a.m.
Freeman D'Silva
Requested by Christopher, Aubrey & Melanie D'Silva

Thursday, January 2nd, 8:15 a.m.
Teodorico Abesamis
Requested by Claire Cadrin

Friday, January 3rd, 8:15 a.m.
Jennifer Pliska
Requested by the Family

2025 BOXED ENVELOPES AND PAG BUNDLES
Parishioners who had a box of offertory envelopes in 2024 can pick up their box for 2025 in the Millwood lobby. Your donor number will remain the same for the coming year.
Due to the Canada Post strike, and considering the backlog that will exist, PAG users may pick up their envelopes from the Millwood lobby. Unclaimed PAG envelopes will be mailed after Christmas.

HAVE YOU MOVED? LET US KNOW!
Accurate parish database records are important for record-keeping as well as for keeping in touch. If you have moved, changed email addresses or phone numbers, please take a moment before the end of the year and let us know so that we may update our records.
New to St. Anselm's Parish? We invite you to register with us by completing a green parish registration card from the glass table at the entrance to the church.

IMPORTANT TAX INFORMATION
** Any donations received up to 4pm on Tuesday, December 31st will be credited toward your 2024 tax receipt. Donations received after 4pm on December 31st, (including at the 5pm Vigil Mass that evening) will be considered 2025 donations. In accordance with CRA regulations, donations submitted by Canada Post must be postmarked by Canada Post by December 31, 2024 to be eligible for a 2024 tax receipt. Thank you for your support of the parish. **

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday, December 24th
4:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 25th
9:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.

Feast of the Holy Family
Saturday, December 28th
5:00pm

Sunday, December 29th
9:00am
11:00am

Mary, Mother of God
Tuesday, December 31st
5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 1st
11:00 a.m.

***** There is no 8:15am morning Mass on December 24th, 25th, 26th, 31st & January 1st***



GUIDE FOR A GREEN CHRISTMAS
"THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON"

Focusing on the true meaning of Christmas will help keep this festive season MERRY AND GREEN. Let's be mindful & intentional in our efforts to reduce our collective Christmas eco-footprint. Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle, Re-purpose, Re-think and REJOICE in the splendour of creation.

HAPPY AND SAFE NEW YEAR
"THINK ABOUT IT"

Impaired driving continues to be one of the leading *criminal causes* of death in Canada. Deaths and injuries causing bodily

harm occur DAILY (Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, July 2021. www150.statcan.gc.ca/)
For your party-goer, give the gift of a pre-party discussion along with a wallet-sized SAFE DRIVE COUPON for a taxi or for a 24-hour-no-questions-asked drive from you – should a safe drive home be needed.

ECOANSELM wishes you a joyous, peaceful, filled-with-gratitude-for-the-birth-of-Jesus-on-earth Christmas celebration and a happy and healthy 2025.

Mic 5:1-4

Psalms 80

Heb 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-45

THE BLESSED GIFT OF FAITH



For those without the gift of faith, the rich scriptural traditions that surround the season of Advent and the feast of Christmas are simply time-worn stories that have little impact on real life. For the unbelieving, Jesus' birth at Bethlehem may

be no more meaningful than the stories of Santa Claus, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Frosty the Snowman. His birth at Bethlehem would be of little consequence. It was just a little village about nine miles from Jerusalem where pilgrims could buy animals to offer as sacrifices in the temple. Bethlehem was a place where shepherds could make a decent living. Aside from that, Jesus' hometown had little else to earn it a place on the map. For those who go through life without any responsiveness to the grace of believing, Mary was just another unfortunate, unwed mother bringing a child into an unsympathetic world. Her story about her mysterious conception was so unbelievable that her intended had decided to divorce her quietly. Unbelievers would see the practicality in that decision. Elizabeth was no more than an older lady whose unexpected maternity surprised and shocked her husband and relatives. Mary's visit to Elizabeth was simply a matter of a younger woman reaching out to care for an older relative. The leaping of Elizabeth's child would have little significance for those without faith. Similarly, those who choose not to believe would not find much importance, if they heard it, in the recounting of the Christ-event as referenced in today's second reading from Hebrews. For those without faith, Jesus was someone whose radical

lifestyle and teachings challenged the religious and political leaders of his day. His suffering and death were merely the logical consequences of his choices. His was not a sacrifice but an execution by a Roman government that quickly put an end to any threat to its power or imposed peace. Without faith, Jesus appears as nothing more than a powerless pawn whose misfortune it was to clash with the powers that be. The world that once took some notice of him is so far off in the past that he has faded into insignificance.

However, we who live our lives under the blessing of believing will find ourselves most fortunate in celebrating this holy season. Our faith has given us eyes to see and appreciate Jesus and the Christ-event as the moment for which all of human history has prepared and from which every believer continues to find meaning, hope and purpose in life and in death. We who believe look to prophets like Micah and listen with eagerness as the now-familiar story of God's love for humankind is repeated in our hearing. Bethlehem, which means "House of Bread," in its seeming insignificance figures importantly in God's plan. There in that humble home of David would be born the Shepherd who would be peace for a fractured world and healing for wounded sinners. That peace would indeed be established, but only at a very precious cost. With a faith so profound that it calls forth a deepening of our own, the Hebrews author has described Jesus not as the victim of Jewish rejection or Roman tyranny but as one whose utter surrender to God and to God's will included the offering of himself, once for all. Because of Jesus' self-gift, the sacrificial offerings of the former covenant had faded into obsolescence. In Jesus' once-for-all perfect sacrifice, sinners are forgiven, and God and humankind are reconciled. Although it may seem inappropriate and "unseasonal" to speak of sacrifice and death just a few days before we celebrate the birth of the Lord of Life, the Hebrews author keeps us mindful that it is an adult Christ whose return we await. Good Friday's sighs of lament are always within earshot of Christmas' joyous Noels. With the blessed gift of faith to enlighten us, we look also to today's Lucan Gospel, where the meeting of the mothers of John and Jesus represents the coalescence of the two testaments. All that has been promised in the Hebrew scriptures finds its fulfillment in the Good News of Jesus. Leaping in his mother's womb, John expressed the joy of all who await the Christ and the redemption he will accomplish. In these two women, faith reaches out to faith, and the blessedness of their believing stirs and strengthens the faith of those who continue to await Jesus' return. Blessed are they, blessed are we, in our believing.

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