

St. Lawrence Martyr Church

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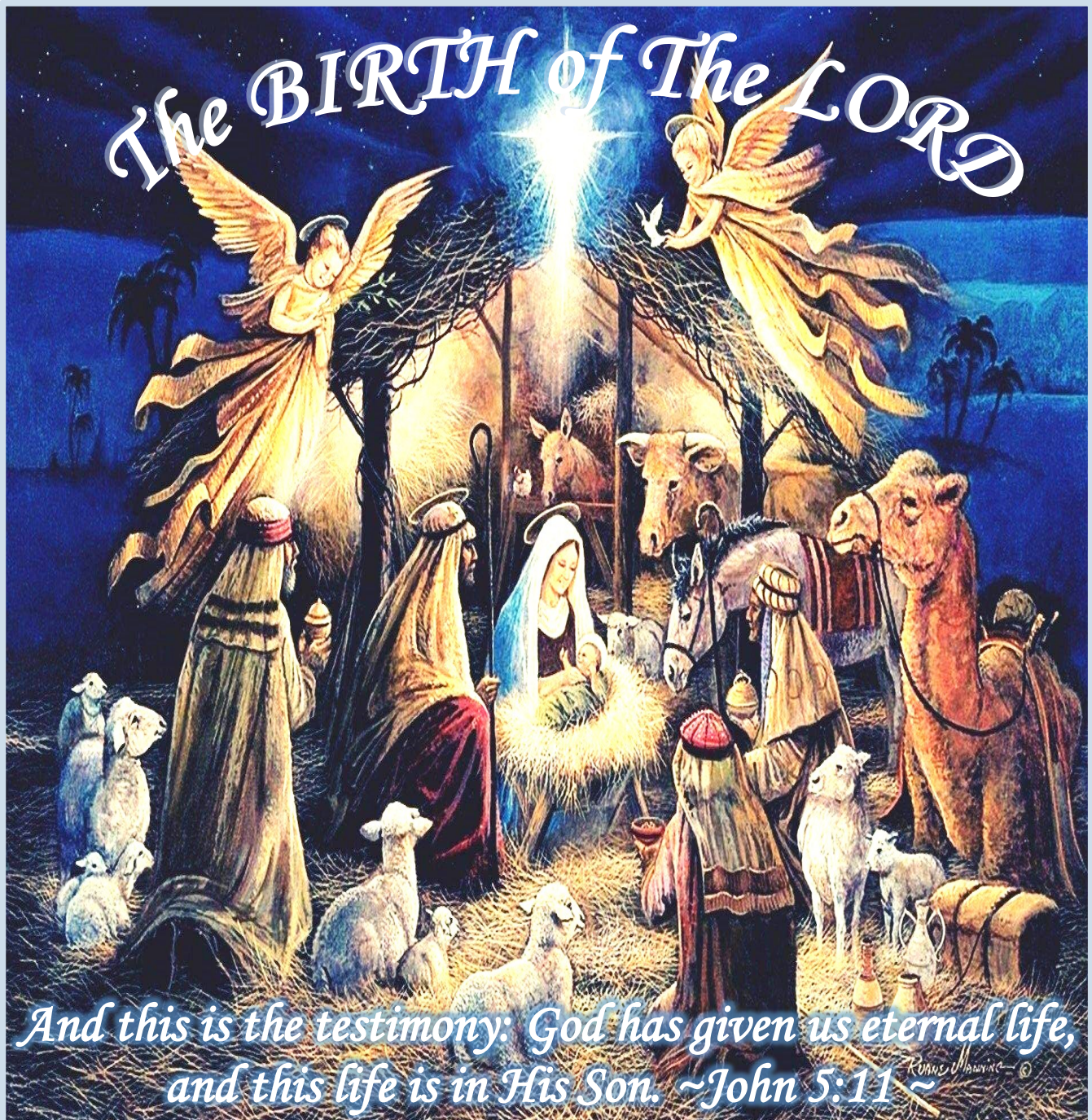
PASTORAL TEAM:

Rev. Fr. Thomas Lim, *Pastor*

Rev. Fr. Russell Asch, *Chaplain to the Faithful participating in the Extraordinary Rite of the Latin Mass*

Rev. Fr. Giuseppe Scollo, *In Residence*

Julia Di Paolo - *Secretary*



4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 24TH, 2023

Luke 1:26-38

“I AM THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD”



What was the young girl Mary doing when the message came? Kneeling piously? Feeding the sheep? Fetching water? Sweeping the mud floor? What was she thinking? Engaged to be married, surely about her approaching wedding to Joseph and about the children she would mother. Then came the message which she could accept or refuse, the message on which hung the future of the world: her child would be different from all others. How ‘different’? Her thoughts were turned back to the promise to David. It had been read to her so often in the Bible, and now the words were drummed into her mind, ‘his reign will have no end’. This would all be the work of the Spirit which she had so often heard read out in Isaiah; ‘the Holy Spirit will come upon you’, the Spirit which was to come upon the Servant of the Lord, the Spirit of Emmanuel, ‘God with us’. Her young body was to grow, nourish and develop this child. Then she would have the child in her arms to cherish and shape as both Son of God and her own son.

Dopo la testimonianza di Giovanni Battista, ecco la testimonianza di Maria, madre di Dio, che ha serbato preziosamente in cuor suo le grandi cose che il Signore aveva fatto per lei. Il concepimento verginale di Cristo, così chiaramente esposto nel vangelo di oggi (Lc 1,34-35), non è un fatto isolato, una grazia a sé.

Ma non ci è presentato nemmeno come il modo più adatto per la nascita del Messia. Ci è dato come sicurezza che il figlio, nato da Maria, “ sarà dunque santo e chiamato Figlio di Dio ”, perché “lo Spirito Santo scenderà su di te, su te stenderà la sua ombra la potenza dell’Altissimo ”.

La nascita di Gesù dalla Vergine Maria non è una verità aggiunta alla verità dell’Incarnazione; è parte integrante di questo stesso mistero. E la divina condiscendenza, per mezzo della quale viene richiesto il consenso di Maria, perché possa realizzarsi il progetto divino, è ciò che san Paolo chiama la “ rivelazione del mistero taciuto per secoli eterni, ma rivelato ora... a tutte le genti perché obbediscano alla fede ” (Rm 16,25-26).



Vocation Reflection From the angel Gabriel, Mary heard God’s plan for her life and she said “Yes!”...and so the Saviour came into the world. Pray to know God’s Will for your life, so as to help bring Jesus to our world. If you think God is calling you to the priesthood, diaconate or consecrated life, contact Fr. Matt McCarthy, Director of Vocations, Archdiocese of Toronto at 416-968-0997.

www.vocationstoronto.ca ~ Email vocations@archtoronto.org

Stewardship Reflection The Annunciation can be seen as the singular event that changed the world for it is during this episode that Mary consents to God’s will and Christ is conceived within her. Many times we seek to know God’s entire will for our lives but we can learn from Mary to readily and prayerfully say yes to the current step of the mission that He is calling us to. We can live out this mission by being stewards of our time and talents for our communities, our parish and the entire Church.



Eucharistic Adoration

Mon - Thur 9am - 12pm (Church)*
Every Friday 9am - 7pm (Church)*

*In the Chapel, when there is a funeral.

Come and spend some quiet time in prayer!

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

SATURDAY DECEMBER 23RD – SABATO

5:00 P.M. - Fr. Thomas Lim

SUNDAY DECEMBER 24TH – DOMENICA

8:30 A.M. - Francisco William

10:00 A.M. (Italian)

Susanna e Gianni Onisto

Pietro e Elvira Fugaccia - Biase Menna

Tony Lamanna - Rosario Vella

Agostino Battaglia e famiglia

Antonio DiStefano

11:30 A.M. - For All Our Parishioners

1:00 P.M. - Pro Popolo

SUNDAY DECEMBER 24TH – CHRISTMAS EVE

5:00 P.M. - Children’s Mass

7:00 P.M. - For All Our Parishioners

9:00 P.M. - Pro Popolo

12:00 A.M. - For All Our Parishioners

MONDAY DECEMBER 25TH – CHRISTMAS DAY

8:30 A.M. - For All Our Parishioners

10:00 A.M. - Per Tutti I Nostri Parrocchiani

11:30 A.M. - For All Our Parishioners

1:00 P.M. - Pro Popolo

*****NO 5PM MASS*****

TUESDAY DECEMBER 26TH – MARTEDI

8:30 A.M. + Geraldine Senewiratne

12:00 P.M. - Pro Popolo

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 27TH – MERCOLEDI

8:30 A.M. + Salvacion Bio & Deceased Family

+ Eldon Warner

- Emil Tumaliuan

12:00 P.M. - Pro Popolo

THURSDAY DECEMBER 28TH – GIOVEDI

7:00 A.M. - Pro Popolo

8:30 A.M. - Fr. Russell Asch & Family

FRIDAY DECEMBER 29TH – VENERDI

8:30 A.M. - The Ramzi Family

7:00 P.M. - Cedric & Lilian de Souza

SATURDAY DECEMBER 30TH – SABATO

8:30 A.M. + Geraldine Senewiratne

10:00 A.M. - Michael-Maeann-Beatrice de Souza



Last Weekend Offertory:
Regular Collection: \$7,342.30

thank you

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 24TH, 2023



Dear Friends of Christ, as we come to the conclusion of our Advent Season, allow me to offer a few thoughts on two Advent symbols that have accompanied us during these past few weeks - the Advent wreath and candles. Although they occupy an important part of our liturgies, their significances are often overlooked or unknown by many of the faithful.

The Advent wreath with its circular shape reminds us of eternity, as the circle has neither a beginning nor an end. The evergreen branches signify the boundless providential care that God bestows upon us. The lighting of the purple and pink candles, an additional one each week, symbolizes the growing anticipation and preparation for the birth of Christ. The candles also represent a gift or blessing that Christ offers to us.

The first candle represents hope. Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire and expect from God both eternal life and the grace we need to attain it. It is a confident expectation, or as the letter of Hebrews so wonderfully puts it: *“Let us hold the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful”* (Heb. 10:23).

The second candle signifies peace. We can all agree that there is so much conflict, war and division within our world, within our communities, within our families, and even within ourselves. Although many have tried to establish or manufacture peace through various means, true lasting peace however only comes from Jesus Christ. Or, as the Prince of Peace himself said: *“Peace I leave you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled; neither let them be afraid”* (Jn. 14:27).

The third candle represents joy. Many people often equate joy with happiness. But they are not the same. Happiness is a feeling that is often fleeting. It comes from the world and usually depends on different circumstances or other people. Joy, on the other hand, is not a feeling; it is a divine gift that comes from God. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angels brought *“good news of great joy, which shall be to all people”* (Lk. 2:10-11). This Good News, the birth of Christ, is still the tidings of great joy that we have today as we look forward to Christmas.

The fourth and final candle that we light this weekend represents love. Love is a word that is often used in society today to denotes how one might feel towards a person or a thing. A person might say, for example, “I love my dog”; “I love my desert”; “I love my friend.” But love properly understood always concerns seeking the greatest good of another, without asking anything in return. And the most perfect manifestation of this kind of love is the one that God offers to each of us. As St. John tells us: *“For God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life”* (Jn. 3:16).

With Christmas falling on a Monday this year, the transition from the 4th Sunday of Advent to the Solemnity of the Birth of Jesus Christ will be a quick one, literally occurring in a few hours. Despite the quick turnaround, I encourage you to remember the gifts that the infant Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, is offering to you - the gifts of hope, peace, joy, and above all, his perfect and unconditional love!

On behalf of Fr. Russell, Fr. Giuseppe, and Julia, I wish to extend a warm Christmas blessing to you and all your loved ones. Please be assured that all your intentions will be remembered in each Holy Mass celebrated during Christmas. May the Infant Child, Jesus, bless you! Pax Christi, *Fr. Thomas*



ST. LAWRENCE MARTYR SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

The Nativity of the Lord

December 24th~Sunday
(Christmas Eve)

4:30 pm Carols / 5:00 pm
Children’s Mass

6:30 pm Carols / 7:00 pm
(English)

8:45 pm Carols / 9:00 pm
(Latin)

11:30 pm Carols / 12 Midnight
(English)

December 25th~Monday
(Christmas Day)

8:30 am (English)

10:00 am (Italian)

11:30 am (English)

1:00 pm (Latin)

~No 5pm Mass~

Feast of the Holy Family

December 30th~Saturday

5:00 pm (English)

December 31st~Sunday

8:30 am (English)

10:00 am (Italian)

11:30 am (English)

1:00 pm (Latin)

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

December 31st~Sunday

(New Year’s Eve)

5:00 pm (English)

January 1st~Monday

(New Year’s Day)

8:30 am (English)

10:00 am (Italian)

11:30 am (English)

1:00 pm (Latin)

~No 5pm Mass~

**THE PARISH OFFICE
WILL BE CLOSED FROM
DEC 23rd to JAN 1st**

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 24TH, 2023

Collect Prayer...

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever...AMEN.

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(Year B)



ShareLife wishes you a Blessed Christmas

As we shelter from the winter cold, the ShareLife team thanks you for your faithful support. We wish you a warm and safe Christmas season, grateful for the enduring compassion you extend to those less fortunate. You are igniting hope for a better future.

If you wish to share your blessings this Christmas, your contribution will double in value. Your year-end gift to our parish's ShareLife campaign will be matched up to \$500,000. Please give at the parish using a ShareLife envelope or at sharelife.org/donate. Thank you and Merry Christmas!

I ♥ MY CHURCH 2024 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES ARE READY FOR PICK-UP!

Parishioners are asked to pick up their 2024 Offertory Envelopes at the back of the Church.

It is important that you discard all previous envelopes when the New Year commences.

Please enter your full name and address on the first few 2024 envelopes so that we may allocate your donations correctly for income tax purposes. *Thank you for your support!*



The St. Lawrence Martyr Craft Group... Thanks all who generously donated New Men's Socks, for the Good Shepherd Refuge Center. Your kindness has helped 225 people with warm socks. *Thank you for your generosity!*



PRAYER FOR THE SICK: We keep in our prayers the sick, the homebound, and the forgotten members in our community.

Dear Padre

December 24, 2023

The Bible talks about Jesus' brothers and sisters. Is there scriptural proof that Jesus was Mary's only child?

The Catholic Church's position is that Mary had only one child; her son called Jesus. Yet there are at least ten scriptural references to "the brothers of Jesus" or to his "sisters" (see Matthew 13:55-56, Mark 6:3, and Luke 8:19-21).

The difficulty is that the meaning of the term "brothers" (translated from the Greek *adelphos*) isn't restricted to the sharing of a parent. On the contrary, it may not only refer to other relatives, including cousins, but also to close relationships, such as disciples. This is not unlike how we might refer to "brothers in arms" as those who fought in a war together, or a religious order of brothers or sisters.

Recall, too, that Jesus and his disciples spoke Aramaic, and there is no equivalent for the meaning of "cousins" as we know it in that language. Instead, the word for brother or sister was used when referring to cousins. Thus, when St. Jerome (circa 340-420) translated the Bible from Hebrew into Church Latin, he considered "the brothers of Jesus" as cousins, not siblings. After all, it would have been the rightful responsibility of these male relatives of Jesus to take care of Mary when Jesus died. Yet Jesus entrusts his mother to the care of his beloved disciple John (John 19:26). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org



FATHER YOU CALLED

SAINT LAWRENCE TO SERVE YOU BY LOVE AND CROWNED HIS LIFE WITH GLORIOUS MARTYRDOM.

HELP US TO BE LIKE HIM IN LOVING YOU AND DOING YOUR WORK.

AMEN

"He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy. He, the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute."

~ St. Augustine of Hippo ~