

Transfiguration of Our Lord Church

ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO

45 Ludstone Dr. Etobicoke, Ontario M9R 2J2 Tel. 416-247-0513 Fax 416-247-0292

www.transchurch.ca

E-mail: translord45@gmail.com

Parish Staff

Fr. Carlos Sierra Tobon, **Pastor**

Fr. Sami Farid Mikhail Bakhit, **Associate Pastor**

Msgr. Fady Bektor: **Pastor of Holy Family Coptic Catholic Church**

Mrs. Rhoda Marcoccia, **Administrative Assistant**



Advent

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GOSPEL REFLECTION

Searching for Bethlehem in the Soul - Nearly twenty years ago, the educator Allan Bloom wrote a very provocative book entitled, *The Closing of the American Mind*. As its title suggests, this isn't a book that flatters contemporary culture. He suggests that part of our mind is darkening. Our sophistication is making us smarter but less wise. Something inside of us is narrowing. What? What's narrowing inside of us? How are our minds closing?

His basic idea can be captured in one image in his autobiographical piece: It is equally important to eventually find a certain "second naivete."

When he was a young, undergraduate student in University, one of his professors walked into class on the first day and said this to the students: "You come here from your parochial backgrounds, full of your childish beliefs; well, I am going to bathe you in the great truths and set you free!"

You come here with a lot of experience, already having tasted life, having been to a lot of places, and seen a lot of things, so I'm going to try to teach you how to believe in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny again—then maybe you'll have a chance to be happy!

This invitation, to learn how to believe in Santa and the Easter Bunny again, is one of the many challenges of Christmas. And the challenge is not so much to come back to the innocence of a child (something we could never do even if we tried) but to see the knowledge and maturity that we've gained from all our years of learning and experience not as an end but as a stage, a necessary one, on the journey to a still deeper place, wisdom, fuller maturity. (Ron Rolheiser)

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK...

Dear Parishioners,

On behalf of Fr. Sami Bakhit., Msgr. Fady Boktor, the parish staff and myself; with a heart full of joy and gratitude to God and Blessed Mother Mary, we thank you for all that you have done for our church this year.

At the time of my arrival a year and a half ago, I asked you to accompany me to bring our church to a superior level and to keep dreaming for the parish we envision for our future generations. We have surpassed certain expectations, but the mission is not yet accomplished!

We all know the saying: "where there is a will, there is a way". So let us keep that dream alive and together with God's help we will succeed. Merry Christmas to all and a very Happy New Year. (Fr. Carlos Sierra Tobon)

NOVENA FOR CANCER

All are welcome to join us for Mass every Tuesday at 9:30 am. After the Mass, we will pray a novena to Saint Michael of the Saints: A Trinitarian mystic and patron saint of cancer patients. We will pray for all who are affected by cancer and pray for prevention of getting this illness.

NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 31st

7:45 am, 9:00 am Italian, 10:30 am & 12 Noon
4:00 pm: Family New Year's Day Mass
7:00 pm: Vigil Mass & Adoration

Monday, January 1st

7:45 am, 9:00 am Italian, 10:30 am, 12 Noon
7:00 pm Mass followed by Adoration

CHAPEL CLOSING

Our chapel will close at 4:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve, December 31st. The chapel will be open on New Year's Day with the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

The parish office will be closing at 12 Noon on December 29th and will re-open on Tuesday, January 2nd.

PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Please remember the following people in your prayers:

Theresa Burns, Noemy Pereira, Clint Viegas, Lisa Petriglia, Samuel Cordeiro, Arthur Ruston, Raphael Colaco, Gianfranco, Dana McGrath, Roman Joe Zakrajse, Enzo, Domenica, Teresa Pirrello, Margaret Speciale, Joe Simardone, Sergio Rea, Margaret Ramjattan, Rosa Natale, Christina Vitale, Jose Vaz, Karen Radecky, Carla Chiulli, John Stibler, Mario Reale, Graziella Marcoccia, Katherine Idzik, Angela D'Arcy, Domenico Loprevite, Maria Bellissimo, Melodee Purpura, Jane Delgado, Ramon Ortiz, Ines Granda

CHAPEL ADORATION

Our parish is honoured with an opportunity to have an adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 24 hours/day, 7 days/week exposed in our chapel for the last 21 years. If you would like to commit one hour a week or be a "backup", please leave your name and contact number in the parish office. All are welcome to come and pray.

SENIORS EXERCISE CLASS

The Seniors Exercise Group is looking for new members to join their class every Monday and Wednesday from 10:30 am to 11:30 am. Exercises include stretching, balancing and low-impact aerobics. Classes will resume on January 8th.

PARISH DONATION ENVELOPES 2024

Envelopes for the year 2024 are available in the parish hall. They are arranged numerically. Refer to the binder provided for your name or number. Please do not start using these envelopes until the new year.

THE OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Outreach program will be collecting men's new underwear, socks, jeans (all sizes), winter coats, toques, scarves, gloves, towels, toothpaste, toothbrushes, body lotion, bar soap/liquid body wash, shampoo, razors, shaving cream, Advil, Ensure/Boost and any non-perishable food items. Please place your donated items in the blue bin by the parish office.

ADVENT SEASON: FOURTH SUNDAY

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Savior. This final candle, the “Angel’s Candle,” symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: “Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men.” The white candle is placed in the middle of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is called the “Christ Candle” and represents the life of Christ.



FEAST OF SANTO NIÑO

Please join us for a special celebration of the Feast of Santo Niño to be held on Saturday, January 20th (Rosary at 11 am and Mass at 11:30 am). A pot-luck lunch will be held in the parish hall after Mass and procession. Everyone is invited.

CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE MASS

As part of Marriage Sunday 2024 celebrations, Archbishop Francis Leo will preside at a special Mass to honour married couples, with special recognition for those celebrating 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th and 60+ wedding anniversaries in 2024. The Mass will take place at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 11th at St. Michael’s Cathedral Basilica (65 Bond Street, Toronto). All married couples will have an opportunity to renew their marriage commitment during the Mass. All are welcome to attend. Couples celebrating a 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th or 60+ anniversary in 2024 may register for reserved seating. Reserved seating is limited, so please register early. All other seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Those who are unable to attend at the Cathedral are invited to join the celebration via livestream Mass. Registration and other important information can be found at www.archtoronto.org/marriage. For questions, please email formation@archtoronto.org or call 416-934-3400 ext. 523.

MEDITAZIONE SPIRITUALE

Porta, del Vangelo - In questa ultima domenica di Avvento vogliamo definire gli atteggiamenti giusti per poter ripensare il suo Natale. E non possiamo trovare strada migliore di quella di Maria: perché è la strada, che Dio stesso ha scelto per venire tra noi. Maria di Nazareth, infatti, è la creatura ideale davanti a Dio. Ella attende nel silenzio di Nazareth: Maria è una donna raccolta, attenta a leggere la vita in profondità, serena, aperta al mistero. E noi siamo attenti a leggere la vita in profondità? Siamo aperti al mistero? Oggi chi rivive il raccoglimento di Nazareth? Chi sa crearsi spazi di deserto per stare con Dio? Chi possiede un cuore in pace, serenamente aggrappato alla sicurezza della bontà di Dio? Chi è attento ai segni della volontà di Dio negli avvenimenti di ogni giorno? (don Lucio Dabbraccio)

INTENTIONS & LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Sunday December 24 Fourth Sunday of Advent

7:45 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 9:00 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 10:30 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 12:00 pm All living & deceased members of our Parish
 4:00 pm All living & deceased members of our Parish
 11:15 pm Christmas Carols with Choir Members
 12 Midnight All living & deceased members of our Parish

Monday December 25 The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

7:45 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 9:00 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 10:30 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 12:00 pm All living & deceased members of our Parish
 7:00 pm All living & deceased members of our Parish

Tuesday December 26 Saint Stephen, The First Martyr

9:30 am † Ronald Castelino, † Liliana & Angelo Franceschetti, † Domenico & Liberata Manco, † Fr. Vito Marziliano, † Lorenz Stachelscheid, Deceased Members of the Vumbaca Family

Wednesday December 27 Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist

9:30 am † Curtis Ye La, † Mary & Kenneth Falzon, † Natasha Raciopa, † Maria Minicucci, † Giovanni Minicucci, A Special Blessing for Anthony Falzon

Thursday December 28 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

9:30 am † Joseph Valador, † Pedro Rodriguez, † Ida Gabriele, † Francesco Ciarallo, † Domenic Bertucci & Family

Friday December 29 Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord

9:30 am † Mary & Kenneth Falzon, † Natasha Raciopa, † Gloria Cachola, A Special Blessing for Anthony Falzon

Saturday December 30 Sixth Day within the Octave of Nativity of the Lord

9:30 am Thanksgiving in Honour of the Holy Family, Special Blessings for Catena, Domenic, & Antonio
 Mass at Parkland Retirement Home
 3:30 pm Confession
 5:30 pm † Domenic Gravina, † Nathaniel & Ruth Maligro

Sunday December 31 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

7:45 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 9:00 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 10:30 am All living & deceased members of our Parish
 12:00 pm All living & deceased members of our Parish
 4:00 pm All living & deceased members of our Parish
 7:00 pm All living & deceased members of our Parish

INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION FUND UPDATE

On December 12th, the Archdiocese of Toronto announced the first phase of funding as part of our \$6 million commitment to the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund (IRF). Through the tremendous generosity of parishioners throughout the archdiocese, including our own parish, more than \$2.7 million has been directed through the IRF to organizations and projects committed to promoting healing and reconciliation for communities and families.

Recipients include **Aboriginal Legal Services** located in Toronto, that will receive \$538,000 to help fund their Indigenous family dispute resolution program called Giiwedin Anang.

Thank you for your continued prayers and ongoing support as we journey together on the path of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples of This Land. To learn more, visit www.archtoronto.org/healingandreconciliation

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