

DEC 24TH, 2023

ST MARY'S PARISH

Weekly Bulletin



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, 956 GIBSONS WAY, GIBSONS, BC V0N 1V7



Welcome to St. Mary's.
Visitors are always
welcome. If you're looking for a
new parish to call home, we would
love to have you join
our family.

Pastor - Rev. Father Vincent Nyuyen email: fr.vincentnguyen@gmail.com
Deacon - Kenan MacKenzie email: kenan@kenanmackenzie.com
Parish - 604-886-2447 email: parish.stmarygibsons@rcav.org

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve - 10 pm
Christmas Day - 11:30 am
New Year's Eve - 6 pm
New Year's Day - 11:30 am

Please be aware that attending Mass on Sundays is a distinct obligation from attending Mass on Christmas or New Year's. It's important to note that one Mass cannot fulfill both the Sunday obligation and the obligation for Christmas or New Year's.

EXPOSITION OF THE EUCHARIST

Each Friday after the 11:30am Mass there will be an Exposition of the Eucharist as follows:
First Friday - 1 hour and Subsequent Fridays - 30 min

CONVENIENT E-TRANSFER DONATIONS FOR PARISHIONERS

Parishioners can now donate to St. Mary's by sending an e-transfer to "parish.stmarygibsons@rcav.org." Even though the recipient's name is displayed as "The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Vancouver (Sechelt)," the funds will be deposited into St. Mary's account.

SUNDAY COFFEE

Coffee Sundays will resume January 7th



Sunday Reflection by Fr. Vincent



Verbal communication is perhaps our most precious gift, and we've all experienced both success and failure in using it. At times, we express ourselves perfectly, while in other moments, we stumble and say the wrong things, even with our closest family and friends. Feeling frustrated in such moments is entirely normal. Now, consider the challenge God faces in communicating with a diverse range of people and cultures. Communication is fundamentally about shared experiences, and God's desire to connect with us goes beyond just through Jewish prophets. Christmas serves as a celebration of this deeper communication, using a universally understood and cherished event: the birth of a baby. In His infinite wisdom, God chose childbirth, a universally celebrated event, to reach out and speak to all of us.

Today, we celebrate Emmanuel, God with us, as God's Son took on human form. John was inspired to describe Jesus as "the Word," recognizing that words are the tools we use for communication and sharing ideas. Some words fade away, while others endure or evolve. However, the most powerful words gain meaning and permanence when they are lived out by individuals.

In the Gospel of John, it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and lived among us." Love became tangible when Jesus came into the world, living a life that embodied love. Today, we appreciate the gift God has given us, and His generosity inspires us to give heartfelt gifts, spreading love to Him and to one another, creating a wonderful cascade of neighborly love. John also wrote, "He came to his own, and his own did not receive him." Let's be courageous enough to welcome Jesus into our hearts and lives, following His example of love. May Jesus' love shine through us as we strive to live in His spirit every day, with joy and gratitude.

There is a story known as "The Luck of Roaring Camp," written in 1868 by Bret Harte. The story unfolds in Roaring Camp, inhabited by gruff, hard-drinking, and fierce gold diggers who would sooner take a life than ask for someone's name. However, one day, a pregnant and sick Indian woman stumbled into the camp. Two men, demonstrating decency, tried to assist her when she went into

labor. Unfortunately, she didn't survive the birth, but miraculously, the child, a boy, did. While deaths were common in Roaring Camp, a birth was an entirely new experience. The men in the camp assumed responsibility for the baby, building him a clean cabin with lace-curtained windows. He became their baby, and they were determined to provide him with a proper home. The men took turns caring for the child, considering it a privilege to hold him and sing to him. They imposed upon each other previously unheard-of standards like decent language, quiet, cleanliness, and moral order. Remarkably, the presence of the baby transformed this rough and crude mining community into one of generosity, tenderness, and compassion. The baby brought forth dignity, worth, beauty, wonder, and joy from these formerly reckless individuals and even criminals. – Babies have the power to inspire positive change. This is precisely what God has done for us through the birth of His Son at Christmas.

PASTOR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

As we celebrate the birth of our Savior this Christmas, I want to extend my warmest wishes to all of you. In the midst of a world filled with conflict and uncertainty, let us remember the timeless message of peace that Jesus Christ brought to humanity.

During this holy season, as we think of the angels proclaiming "peace on Earth, goodwill to men," let us not forget to pray for peace in our troubled world. Our hearts ache for the people of Ukraine and Russia and those affected by the ongoing conflict. We also remember the people of Israel and Gaza, who have endured so much strife. Let us pray earnestly for an end to violence and for the healing of all nations.

May the light of Christ's love shine brightly in our hearts, inspiring us to be peacemakers in our communities and to extend a hand of love and reconciliation to those in need. Together, as a parish family, let us strive for a world where peace and goodwill prevail.

I wish you all a blessed and joyous Christmas filled with the warmth of love, the comfort of faith, and the hope for a brighter and more peaceful future.

MASS SCHEDULE

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Sat Vigil Mass | 6:00PM |
| Sun | 11:30AM |
| Wed & Fri | 11:30AM |

CONFESSION - 30 minutes before every Mass

REMEMBER THE ELDERLY THIS CHRISTMAS

Pope Francis reminds us that our obligation to visit the elderly is more significant than ever as the number of elderly people grows. This Christmas consider visiting the seniors in our community who may be feeling lonely or isolated during this season. "Social isolation and loneliness are as bad for your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day," Jacques Lee, a Toronto-based emergency physician, told Global News.



SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

BAPTISM:

Contact parish office. A preparation class for parents is required.

THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

If you are interested in learning about or being initiated into the Roman Catholic Church, please contact Fr. Vincent or the parish office for information.

MARRIAGE

Please contact the priest at least 6 months before the date of marriage.

Premarriage course is mandatory.

VISITS TO THE SICK

If you cannot come to Mass because of illness, please notify us or have a family member contact us that we might minister to you either at home, in the hospital, or a nursing care facility. Confidentiality issues prevent us from contacting you so it is necessary that you personally request a visit.



Paula, Lucette and Delma, members of the Christian Life Community (an Ignatian Spirituality group) would like to invite you to attend an Advent Series offered



on four Wednesdays – November 29th, December 6th, 13th and 20th from 10 AM until 11:30 AM. Please join us to pray with scripture, reflect and share our reflections. A sign-up sheet will be available at the front of the church.



Please remember the sick in our parish....

Cory Fortier, Mary Nguyen, Grace Wilkinson, Amy Kashani, Mercedes Link, Josie Renaldis, Helen Gillis, Sharon Hofmann.

And pray for those who care for them.



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