

St. James the Greater Church

5504 - 20 St. S.W. Calgary, Alberta T3E 1R2
Ph: 403 243 2680 Fax: 403 287 1273 www.stjamescalgary.org

The Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

January 1, 2018

Regular Mass Schedule

Saturday

5:00pm

Sunday

8:30am, 10:00am, 12:00

Weekday Mass

Tuesday thru Friday

9:00am

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday 9:30am—10:30am

Reconciliation

Tuesday thru Friday 8:30am

Saturday 4:00pm-4:30pm

or by appointment

Office Hours

Monday thru Friday

9:00am—3:00pm

(Closed 12-12:30 for lunch.)

Pastor—Fr. Edmund Vargas efvargas@shaw.ca

Deacon—Bruce Jurgens bruce.jurgens@calgarydiocese.ca

Secretary—Brenda Lerner office@stjamescalgary.org

Music Director—Tom Linahan tglinahan@gmail.com

Parish Screening Coordinator—Lindsay Flynn

pvsc@stjamescalgary.org

Bookkeeper—Anna McKiernan



Pastoral Notes

By Fr. Edmund

What Makes a Family Holy?

The Christmas season is a time when families try to get together to renew and/or build the relationships of love and friendship through gift-giving, greetings or family visitation. As the Church celebrates this weekend the feast in honor of Jesus, Mary and Joseph as a family, we reflect on what makes a happy home or what it takes to be a holy family.

We reflect on the particular virtues of the Holy Family who also encountered problems and difficulties just like every human family has problems and challenges. We reflect on how Mary and Joseph felt about the tension as they found their son in the temple. There are many other gospel events that indicate the difficulties and challenges encountered by the Holy Family, including their frightful flight to Egypt. At the end of the gospel reading, it mentions about the obedience of Jesus to Mary and Joseph, making us reflect on what it means for us to follow God's will in the family context.

The integrity of the Holy Family hinges on the willingness of the all the members to follow the will of God in their own respective lives. For them, their relationship with God is the solid basis for the other relationships inside and outside the home. A Christian family or any Christian relationship in society has to be based on the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. It relies on each one's personal relationship with God who knows and loves us personally. Moral and spiritual strength can make us go through difficult moments in family life. To maintain an empty space for God in our lives provides quality and integrity to the complicated network of human relationships in the family.

In many Church documents, the family is described as the domestic Church or the microcosm Church for a reason. Family ministry requires that we proclaim the Good News within the inner circle of our families. We are also made aware of our authentic mission to evangelize other families in the wider community. Every Christian family is a family for other families.

On this feast of the Holy Family, let us pray that our families would work towards a holiness that would make us witnesses to Christ's love and presence in the world.

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Mass Intentions

Monday, January 1

8:30am S/Intention of Betty Fairhurst

10:00am—St. James Parish

12:00pm—Barbara Schmeekle—RIP

Tuesday, January 2

9:00am Nevan Dixon—RIP

Wednesday, January 3

9:00am S/I of Presentacion Kallansrude

Thursday, January 4

9:00am S/Intention of Tara Elsner

Friday, January 5

9:00am Angela Shegda—RIP

Saturday, January 6

5:00pm Sally Stotts—RIP

Sunday, January 7

8:30am Fred Phillips—RIP

10:00am St. James Parish

12:00pm Andre' - RIP



2018 Donation Envelopes—available now at the back of the church. Special collection boxes are also available for those who use pre -authorized withdrawal. If you do not have a box but would like one, please let the office know.

Starting in the new year, the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist will be combined as a two-fold celebrated as part of the new diocesan approach. The new program has been piloted in five different parishes. Details of the Preparation Classes will be announced accordingly.

Advent/Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve—5:00pm & 7:00pm
Christmas Day—8:30am, 10:00am, 12:00
New Year's Day— 8:30am, 10:00am, 12:00

Weekday Masses will continue as per our regular Mass schedule for Dec 26-29 & Jan 2-5 at 9:00am.

Do we go to Mass twice on Christmas Eve and New Year this year? YES - We go to the 4th Sunday of Advent Mass on Dec 23 (at 5pm) or Dec 24 (regular am Masses) for the Sunday Obligation. Then on Christmas Eve/Day for the Christmas Obligation. The same applies for New Year's weekend. We go to Mass on December 30 (at 5pm) or the morning of December 31 for the Sunday Obligation. Then either on New Year's Eve* or New Year's Day for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, a Holy Day of Obligation. (*No Mass at St James on New Year's Eve.)

Please pray for the sick:

Aidan Hanes, Harry Piet, Gabriel Serpas, Shirley Valentine, Betty Harrison, Rolande Parel, Laura Restrepo, Tony Doucette, Brian McAuley, Marjorie Lefaivre, John Otis, Darlene Otis, Marcelle Quaghebeur

And for those who have died:

Peter Kadong, Genevieve Smith, Peter Funke, William Acton

Thank you to all parishioners who helped with the Christmas hampers or contributed to them. We especially thank Vivian Moody for coordinating this project. We thank St James School, St. James Court, the Knights of Columbus the grade 9 students who packed the hampers, those who provided food, money or gifts for the children, and those who delivered the hampers on Monday evening. We provided 49 hampers to grateful individuals and families!

Pastoral Appeal

As your pastor, I express my sincere appreciation for your continuing support for St. James Church. Our financials are looking much better after our recent appeal for increased donations. We still also need to replenish our Maintenance Fund for eventual building repairs. As the year ends and a new year begins, please continue to be generous to our church, especially during this season of giving. Don't forget that you will receive a 50% tax credit for every dollar donated over \$200 per year. Please pick up your 2018 donation envelopes. You may consider our pre-authorized payment system as an option. Donation of stocks is also an option. Our 2017 target for Together in Action (TIA), formerly the Bishop's Appeal, is \$28655 and we are still short \$3865. May God continue to bless our church with love and generosity as we strive to become a more welcoming and caring community!

The **Parish Office** will be closed December 25, 26, 27 and January 1 & 2. For **emergencies** during the holidays, please call the parish and leave a message on Fr. Edmund's voicemail (ext 5). He will return your call promptly.

Food Bank Coordinator Needed—The volunteer role of Food Bank Coordinator will be vacant as of January. It is imperative that we find a new coordinator as soon as possible. Contact the office for more information.

Remembrance Tree—Families are encouraged to hang mementos of loved ones who have passed away. We have taken the liberty of putting the memorial cards of our loved ones whose funerals were held at this church or officiated by Fr Edmund in other places. We can remember them in our prayers this season! And may they rest in peace!

Save the Date! St. James 1st Annual Mardi Gras Dinner will be on Saturday February 10, 2018, 6-9pm at St. James Church Hall - Dinner, Refreshments, Entertainment, Community. Student musicians may contact Fr. Edmund if they would like to perform at the event. Also, Kyle Hagan of the Pastoral Council needs some help in the organizing. More details to come in the new year.

Christian Meditation resumes January 15.

Stained Glass Window Fundraiser Update

Our Wine & Cheese/Auction Fundraiser, hosted by Lisa Frehlich and her collaborators, last December 2 has raised enough money (\$11,755.00) to cover the first three windows above the altar. The goal is to replace our old windows with energy-efficient ones and enhance them with stained glass inserts. With the maintenance fund depleted by the last renovation, help is needed in financing this initiative. While new energy efficient windows will save us money on electricity, the stained glass will also improve the spiritual feel of the church for many years to come. Current pricing for stained glass before installation ranges from \$150/sq ft for abstract art to over \$400/sq ft. for detailed artwork. This does not include the cost of replacing the window with new energy efficient ones. This initiative may take months or years, depending on our fund availability. You certainly can help us enrich our faith experience by sponsoring a window (\$1000+) or donating funds towards a partial window. Dedications can be made to individuals, couples, families, or *in memoriam* of the deceased or the unborn. Tax receipts are available for donations.

Motherhood for All

Mary's distinctive role in the Christmas story is capsulized in the phrase *born of a woman*.

Theologians are quite right when they refer to Mary as the first follower of Christ, being with from Bethlehem to Calvary. Her challenge to understand the mystery of her Son's life reaches a high point when she listens to the story of the shepherds, narrated in today's gospel. Her response is acceptance. She does not ask for explanations. She decides to look forward to the fulfillment of the promise of God's messenger during the Annunciation. Her attitude is summarized in today's gospel: "*But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.*"

To celebrate the Solemnity of Mary as Mother of God on the first day of every year is an approach to see each year with the Marian sense of struggling for meaning in life's troubles and tribulations.

We are not to portray the motherhood of Mary and of all mothers as idealized in the Hallmark cards for Mother's Day. Behind the sweetness and serenity of most Marian portraits are the bitter moments and turbulent experiences she has to go through as a mother and as a believer.

As we focus on the admirable qualities of motherhood, we should see these virtues as something we all can develop and share with others. The responsibility of nurturing those around us is not exclusive to mothers. It is a responsibility which we can all assume as individuals and as community.

This does not diminish the unique role of motherhood. This avoids the trap of putting the burden on mothers of perpetuating long-held stereo-types that these are mother's special roles and excuse ourselves from the responsibility of sharing in the life-giving, nurturing, reconciling functions that we have come to expect from mothers. To truly respect the qualities of mother, we must maintain that they are equally valid for all of us.

The Church is oftentimes referred to as Mother Church. Becoming Church, as the Sacrament of Christ, is beyond gender or roles. As Church, we are called upon to acquire and exercise the qualities of God's love in our daily relationships, particularly in the family. To be Church is to combine all our gifts and talents in the pursuit of our common vision of a better world.

Sacraments

Baptism—If you are interested in having your child baptized, please contact Fr. Edmund to arrange a preliminary meeting. Attendance at a baptism workshop is required. A copy of the child's birth certificate is also needed. Registration forms for baptisms are available on our website. The candidate may have one or two godparents who are to be chosen by the parents, have the ability and intention to fulfill the role, be at least 16 years of age, be a confirmed Catholic who is leading life in harmony with the Catholic faith (including marriage), will be a good role model for the one being baptized, and be neither the father nor the mother of the child.

Marriage—To arrange a marriage, please contact Fr. Edmund several months in advance. A marriage preparation course is required prior to the marriage.

Anointing of the Sick—Contact Fr. Edmund at any time to arrange for the anointing of the seriously sick or dying. Messages left on his voice mail will be returned promptly.

Relic of St. Francis Xavier—The sacred first class relic of St. Francis Xavier's forearm is making a rare visit to Canada. It will be in Calgary for only a very short time on **January 21 & 22, 2018**, at 2 parishes in the Diocese. Presented by the Archdiocese of Ottawa, Catholic Christian Outreach, and the Jesuits of Canada. The relic pilgrimage is a gift for the Church in Canada at the close of the 150th anniversary year, bringing the famous relic of St. Francis Xavier to North America for the first time in generations. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to venerate the incorrupt first class relic of one of our greatest missionaries and evangelists since St. Paul the Apostle. More details at cco.ca/relic

Sacred Heart Church

1307 14 St SW

January 21, 2018 1:00pm—10:00pm with Mass at 5:00pm with Bishop McGrattan

St. Michael Catholic Community

800 85 St SW

January 22, 2018 7:00pm—10:00pm