

Christmas: The Nativity of Our Lord

December 24/25, 2014

NAZARETH: WHERE "ALL HEAVEN" BROKE LOOSE

Growing up in a family of ten children, the expression "all hell is breaking loose" was frequently applicable to our chaotic household! In particular, the one day *not* to cross my mother was Christmas Eve: between last-minute shopping, gift-wrapping, *réveillon* and Christmas dinner to prepare, and most of us kids either serving Mass or singing in the choir, Christmas Eve was always stressful. The miracle is that each year, we all managed to survive intact! Today, I treasure fond memories of coming home after Midnight Mass, still singing the carols, opening gifts, enjoying our family time together. There was still Christmas dinner to prepare, but we were reassured that my mother's sanity had been preserved for at least another year. (Thankfully, Mum is 86 now, and still quite sane!)

We can all relate to those moments when "all hell is breaking loose." Our celebration of Christmas is about "***all heaven breaking loose***": in Jesus, God comes into our crazy, chaotic world. The veil dividing heaven and earth is parted. No earthquakes. No booming voices from heaven. A young girl from a poor family, in an obscure village called Nazareth, is expecting a child. Her fiancé, initially doubtful, eventually believes in her story of an Angel announcing the child's divine origin. Meanwhile, an Empire bent on honing the efficiency of its taxation system forces the young couple onto the road. Mary is forced to give birth not at home, with family and friends to help her, but among strangers, in a stable outside of Bethlehem. What was so special about Nazareth or Bethlehem? Even about Mary and Joseph? Nothing obvious or visible to the people around them. Yet because of their "yes", their willingness to cooperate with God's plan, eternity came bursting into time. Their "yes" changed the course of human history.

And everyone went
off to his own town
to register.

Luke 2:3



Like Mary and Joseph, we too are called to say "yes" to God, with courage and openness. How will we welcome Jesus into our hearts, our homes, our families, our broken world this Christmas? We all know, in one way or another, what it is to be busy, to be under pressure, to be anxious, to sense that "all hell is breaking loose" around us. But we celebrate a **heavenly** visitation: Jesus comes to dwell in us and among us. This is our wish and our prayer for you: may you know the peace and joy which come from welcoming Christ into your hearts and homes. May you experience – in shared gifts and meals, in love and laughter, and in compassionate outreach to the poor, hungry, sick and lonely – the indwelling presence of Christ: for he is *Emmanuel*, God-with-us.

On behalf of Fr. Bertoli, our deacons Richard and Dennis, our pastoral associates Anna and Jennie, the parish staff, the wardens and pastoral council, and all of us here at St. Monica's, we wish to each and every one of you a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with peace, joy, and good health. Thank you for the many ways in which you so generously support the mission of our Parish. Following the example of Pope Francis, a true prophet of divine mercy and love, may each of us be filled with the joy of proclaiming Christ: in our hearts, our families, and our society. God bless you all!



Father Raymond Lafontaine, Pastor

MASS INTENTIONS DECEMBER 20 TO 28, 2014

Saturday, December 20: Advent Saturday

8:00 In Loving Memory: Leonard & Terry Winslade, Natalina Donati Ceccucci, Mike Kilbertus, Deceased members of Charles J. McDonald Family, Luigina Ciciarelli, Alessandro Palladini, Lucille Wong.

Sunday, December 21: Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 Ettore Lanni By wife Virginia
Stella & John Brimo By Lisa Brimo
11:00 Deceased members of the Dagostino, By Anna Mascia
Grazia, Mascia & Mariani Family

Monday, Dec. 22: Advent Weekday Mass

8:00 Anna & Italo Mariani & Italo Falcone By Luisa & Angelo
Cruciano Nardinocchi By his Mother

Tuesday, December 23: St. John of Kanty

8:00 Giacomo Gucciardi By Vivian & Joseph
Angelo Tedeschi By the Family

Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Eve

7:30 p.m. – Family Mass & Pageant

10:00 p.m. – Midnight Mass

Thursday, December 25: Christmas Day

8:30 & 11:00 a.m. - Christmas Day Mass

Friday, December 26: St. Stephen

8:00 Angela Massaroti By the Children
Belardina Tedeschi By the Family

Saturday, December 27: St. John

4:00 Iola Falciani By Family & Friends
James McCadden By the Family
Rosa Guzzo Covelli and By the Children
Giovanni Guzzo

Sunday, December 28: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

8:30 In Loving Memory: Leona Clarke, Deceased members of the Cullen Family, Nizida Sala Verona Arbesu.
11:00 Maria Lonardo Aiello By Carmelo Aiello
Elmer Carroll & Bauer Family By Patrick & Family

Your Generosity...

Thank you for your on-going support of our parish...Collection for the weekend of December 13/14, 2014 totalled \$2,870.55

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE FOR 2014

Wednesday, December 24:

Family Mass with Pageant at 7:30 p.m.

"Midnight Mass" at 10:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 25:

Christmas Day Masses at 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.



NEW YEAR SCHEDULE FOR 2015

Wednesday, December 31:

New Year's Eve Mass at 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 1, 2015:

Mary the Holy Mother of God Mass at 11:00 a.m.

Merry Christmas

Christmas – New Year Holiday Office Hours

The parish office will be closed from Wednesday, December 23, 2014 to Sunday, January 4, 2015. The Office will reopen again on Monday, January 5, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. In Case of Emergencies, please call 514-481-0267, just leave a message and someone will call you back. Thank You.

2015 SUNDAY DONATION BOXES

Owners of Sunday Donation Boxes, please pick up your new box for 2015 at the front entrance of the church. Be sure to pick up only the box that has your name and number on it.

1) Those who wish to have a donation box, please fill out the registration form and hand it in to the office or place it in the Sunday collection basket on Sundays as soon as possible.

2) Owners of boxes who had box numbers above 380 in the past, now have new numbers. This is because less boxes were ordered for this year. Please refer to the alphabetic list provided.

New Boxes #23-57-76-91-102 - 122 recently picked up, please submit the BLUE registration form as soon as possible. Box #94, please call the office to supply us with your name and address. Thank you. 481-0267

TAX RECEIPTS FOR 2014

Please note that all donations must be in no later than December 28, in order to receive a tax receipt for 2014. Donations received after this date will be credited for 2015.

Thank you