

Dates	Time	Mass Intentions and Celebrations	Prayer Calendar
MONDAY, December 17 Genesis 49.2, 8-10 Matthew 1.1-17	7:30 am	† Aquinaldo Elias	Rev. Sam Restivo
TUESDAY, December 18 Jeremiah 23.5-8 Matthew 1.18-24	7:30 am	† Paul & Anne Murray	Rev. Tim Uniac
WEDNESDAY, December 19 Judges 13.2-7, 24-25a Luke 1.5-25	7:30 am 6-6:45pm 7:00 pm	† Alvise, Rosa & Beraldo Family Sacrament of Reconciliation † Giovanni DiDiomedede † Frank Bozzo † Pierina Pin † Mario Passaro † Maria Spina † Giovanna Butera † Rafael Gonzalez Trillos † Domenic Nocita † Angelo Tirone † Anne Van Troost † Frank Della Maestra † Vincenzo & Maria Coccoaro † Saverio & Giovannina Fratipietro † Msgr. Harvey Roach	Missionaries
THURSDAY, December 20 Isaiah 7.10-14; 8.10d Luke 1.26-38	7:30 am 11:00 am	Special Intention of Louise & Frank Kunkel Mass at New Village Nursing Home - † Maria DiFrancesco	Rev. Stephen Murrin
FRIDAY, December 21 Zephaniah 3.14-18a Luke 1.39-45 St. Peter Canisius, (OM)	7:30 am 8 - 9 am 5 - 7 pm	† Achille Luison Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament , in the Church (Benediction at 9 am) Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament , in the Church (Benediction at 7 pm)	Rev. Timothy Higgins
SATURDAY, December 22 1 Samuel 1.24-28 Luke 1.46-56 Our Lady's Saturday , (Optional Memorial)	8:30 am 4 - 5 pm 5:30 pm	† Ippolito & Fontana Families Sacrament of Reconciliation † Martin Thien Phu Nguyen † Guerino & Iolanda Bosica † Agostino DiNunzio † Mario Marcoccia † Peterka & Joun Families † Isolina Fidanza † Mary McKerrall † Mario & Ilda Colilli † Nicolina Bolella † Joseph & Mary Mihajev † Agostino DiNunzio † Nicola Bacala † Maria Butera † Berto Dal Bello † Vincenzo Cino † Frank Battaglia † Giuseppe & Natalina Rotondo † Frank Figliola † Giulio Biagetti † Agro, Restivo & Milisenda Families	Rev. Romelito Guillen
SUNDAY, December 23 Micah 5.2-5a Hebrews 10.5-10 Luke 1.39-45 4th Sunday of Advent	9:00 am 11:00 am 4:00 pm	† Angelo Giglia † Joyce Innocente † Gioberti, Andrego & Zamprognia Families	



Christmas Fruit Cakes

Knights of Columbus Council 7969, will be selling Christmas Fruit Cakes after all Sunday Masses, **this weekend only**. Proceeds go to Campaign Life Coalition in support of Pro Life issues. To pre-order, please call **905-662-5304**. Cost will be Small (500 grs.) - \$20 Large (1 kg.) - \$27. Thank you for your support!!!

Year-end Donations

CRA regulations prevent us from accepting 2018 donations in 2019. If you would like to make a "year-end donation" please do so **before or by December 30, 2018**. Donations received after December 30th must be credited for 2019. Your co-operation and understanding is appreciated. As a registered Charitable Organization, the Parish must comply with these CRA regulations. Thank you for your understanding.

Holy Days of Obligation

In Canada, the holy days of obligation are the following: **every Sunday, Christmas Day** (December 25) and the **Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God** (January 1). On holy days of obligation, the faithful gather to express the fact that the Church is not self-generated but is always called to worship God. On that occasion, we come to hear the Word of God, take part in the Eucharist and give thanks to the Lord for having been incorporated into Christ. Therefore, one must take part in the celebration of Mass either on the same day or at the vigil Mass on the previous evening.

World Youth Day Retreat

World Youth Day is an event that takes place every 2 - 3 years in a different country and brings together mainly Catholic young adults from all over the world for 1 - 2

weeks of faith-formation events and cultural experiences. A group from our parish had the blessing of taking part in World Youth Day 2016 in Krakow, Poland. The next World Youth Day is taking place in Panama



in late January 2019. Our parish is not sending a group this time, but is starting to think about plans to attend the following World Youth Day (the date and location of which will be announced at the conclusion of the events in Panama on Sunday, January 27th). Do you think you might be interested in attending World Youth Day in the future, or experiencing a little bit of the events in Panama?

We will be having a retreat at the parish from the afternoon of Saturday, January 26th to the afternoon of Sunday, January 27th. The retreat will include the opportunity to watch coverage of the final World Youth Day events, as well as other activities on this World Youth Day's theme: "I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to Your Word." (Luke 1:38) The retreat will be geared to ages 16 and up. Teens, young adults, and adults are all invited to attend. A registration form with finalized details will be available on the youth ministry page of the parish website and in the letter trays in the Narthex starting in early December.

If you are visiting our community this Sunday, St. Francis Xavier Parish welcomes you!

Christmas Midnight Mass at the Basilica

His Excellency, Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, OMI, DD, Bishop of Hamilton will celebrate Christmas Midnight Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King. This is the 64th year that CHCH-TV has televised the Midnight Mass which is broadcast live and repeated at 8 am. Christmas morning. Salt and Light will also be broadcasting. A carol service will begin at 11:30 pm followed by Midnight Mass. The televising of this celebration is made possible by the Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton.

Questions of the Week

Theme: God's kingdom is close - it is Jesus.
Question for Children: Why is Christmas such a time of happiness for people?
Question for Youth: God speaks to you every day: Isaiah tells us our ears and eyes will be opened in Christ to hear God's voice. What do you hear God saying to you?
Question for Adults: What is there in this promise from the Prophet Isaiah that gives you hope?
 How have you seen this promise fulfilled in Christ?

Christmas Flowers

We all enjoy the beauty of the flowers in our church, how the sanctuary looks decorated. Christmas is not that far away, so we have begun the planning of the flowers for the Christmas Season! During this holy time of Advent consider helping to decorate our church by making donations to make the Holy Space look as beautiful and bright as it has in past years! If you would like to contribute, please kindly put your donation into a separate envelope during Advent and write "donation for Christmas Flowers" on the outside. Donations can also be made **in memory of a loved one**, whom you would like to remember on Christmas Day - please write "donation for Christmas flowers in memory of" and your loved one's name on a piece of paper in your envelope, **as well as the Christmas Mass that you are planning to attend.** Their name will be placed in the parish bulletin for Christmas and the Mass you indicate will be offered for the repose of their soul.



Advent: Rethinking the Season

Lighthouse Media CD of the Month! Advent is an odd season. Unlike most other seasons, it's a season that isn't about itself, but is instead about preparing for Christmas. But that reality often gets lost in the shuffle and stress of trying to find all the right gifts, decorations, and dinner ingredients. In this talk, Dr. Tim Gray uses storytelling and the readings of the Old Testament to explain that we need to live the 'pre-season' of Advent well, so we can be prepared to welcome and receive the greatest gift God the Father wants to give us at Christmas: His Son, Jesus. Please see our Lighthouse Media stand that is located in the lobby of the church for new Books and Advent CDs for your reading and listening pleasure!



The Children's Liturgy

The Children's Liturgy team is looking for new volunteers. Children's Liturgy is offered at the 9 and 11 am Sunday Masses from September - June. Volunteers are usually scheduled for one Mass every 3 - 4 weeks, and have a variety of roles including preparing short lesson plans, proclaiming readings, leading prayers, assisting with worksheets, and doing set-up and clean-up. This is a very rewarding ministry to be part of. We are looking for adults in particular at this time to join the team, but also welcome anyone who is in Grade 8 or older. If you would be interested, please contact Wes at the parish office by January 18.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve, Monday, December 24:
5 pm, 8 pm and 12 midnight
 Christmas pageant will take place before 5pm Christmas Eve Mass starting at 4:50 pm
Christmas Day, Tuesday, December 25:
8:30 am, 10:00 am, 11:30 am
 Note: please remember that there are no Masses anywhere in the Diocese of Hamilton on the afternoon of Christmas Day.
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, (Holy Day of Obligation in Canada)
Monday, December 31, 2018
at 5:00 pm
Tuesday, January 1, 2019 at:
9:00 am and 11:00 am



Share the Journey #sharejourney

"Share the Journey" walk for refugee assistance

In continuation of this year's campaign to assist refugees, our parish's Development and Peace group is planning a fundraiser walk which will take place on Sunday, June 2. The walk will include prayer, music, and the opportunity to hear real-life stories of refugees. The group is looking for

Advent Confessions

"Confession is an act of honesty and courage - an act of entrusting ourselves, beyond sin, to the mercy of a loving and forgiving God." Saint John Paul II
 All Saturdays: 4pm - 5pm
 All Wednesdays: 6pm - 6:45pm
 Monday, December 17, 8am - 9am and 5pm - 7pm
 Tuesday, December 18, 8am - 9am and 6pm - 8pm - In Italian & English
 Wednesday, December 19, 8am - 9am and 5pm - 7pm
 Thursday, December 20, 8am - 9am and 6pm - 8pm
 Friday, December 21, 8am - 9am and 5pm - 7pm
 Saturday, December 22, 9am - 10am and 3pm - 5pm
 Saturday, December 22, 10am - 12noon - In Italian & English
 Please take advantage of this sacrament in preparation for Christmas. Come early if you can to avoid the last minute rush!

2019 Offering Envelopes

2019 Offering Envelopes will be available in the Chapel Hall next Sunday. If you have used envelopes this past year, there will be a box for you in 2019. **Please do not use envelopes from previous years or envelopes from other Parishes.** This will result in posting errors to your account. For parishioners who do not have envelopes and would like to begin using them, please complete a Parish registration form and indicate at the bottom of the form that you would like to support the parish through the use of offertory envelopes. The envelopes will be available for you the following weekend. For parishioners who travel south for the winter, please call the office and we will be happy to hold on to your envelopes until you return home. **Another option for all to consider is signing up for automatic withdrawal donation option. Pamphlets with additional information and forms are located in the narthex of the church.**



Upcoming Events

Dec. 19 - 6:00 pm - Knights Executive Mtg. & Potluck - GH
 Dec. 20 - 7:00 pm - RCIA - Main RCR
 Dec. 21 - 7:00 pm - SFX Card Club - Great Hall & SMR
 Dec. 22 - Noon - Pageant Practice - Church & Party GH

Thank you to all who support our Parish with their financial offerings - your contributions assist in the spiritual, pastoral and practical work of the Parish and the upkeep of St. Francis Xavier Church.

"Gaudete" Sunday

Advent has a twofold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight.

The third Sunday of Advent is called "Gaudete" Sunday (coming from the first word of the Latin Entrance Antiphon for this day, meaning "Rejoice") and the liturgical color may be rose instead of purple. This is the Church's way of further heightening our expectation as we draw ever nearer the Solemnity of Christmas.

Bishop Crosby's Christmas Message

Christmas 2018

ONE BLESSED NIGHT!

Dear friends,

As we approach Christmas, I am usually invited to a variety of special events. Andrew Miller's Christmas Cantata, *The Birth of Christ*, sponsored by Salt & Light Media Foundation, was held at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King. It was an absorbing evening of music and song. The final words of the cantata summed up the experience: "One Blessed Night!" The story was told of that "Blessed Night" two thousand years ago, and in the musical recounting, we experienced yet another "blessed night". The story is familiar - we hear it every year; and every year we are moved by its simplicity and its significance. Every year this story touches our hearts and changes lives. I was invited to an annual dinner, dance, and visit by Santa, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and a family of means for the L'Arche communities in Hamilton. Core members of L'Arche and those who support them were present, including many family members. I watched a young woman care for her brother who has been with L'Arche for a good part of his life. Three words came to my mind: broken, beautiful, and loved! As with the members of L'Arche, so for us all - broken, beautiful and loved! The angels first announced the news of the birth of the Christ child to shepherds who lived outside of the village. At that time, they were held in some disdain. Yet they heard the world-changing news first! May we hear it again this year, with the awe and wonder felt by the shepherds. May we experience the beauty and love they must have felt when they first laid eyes on Him. May our lives be transformed by the experience, once again, of that "Blessed Night"!

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI

Bishop of Hamilton



Frequently Asked Questions, (Part 5). The Diocese of Hamilton is conducting the **One Heart, One Soul Campaign** to raise money for every parish in the Diocese and

for shared ministries. Answers to a set of Frequently Asked Questions appear in parish bulletins regularly. A compilation of all questions that have been published are available throughout the campaign at oneheartonesoul.ca.

What is the state of diocesan finances? Is this a desperate situation that requires a campaign? The diocesan financial picture is strong – the amount of assets has grown in recent years and investments are doing well. Meanwhile, the Diocese is generous with grants and loans to parishes and Catholic organizations within the Diocese. Parish assessments have been stable in recent years but have not kept up with increases in diocesan operating costs. Property sales have been used more frequently to keep the Diocese's operating budget balanced and strong, and many assets (such as the Care and Maintenance Fund for Cemeteries) are restricted and not at the Diocese's disposal. This is not an emergency situation. The Diocese is looking ahead and acting before any kind of emergency could develop. Overall, the campaign is a way to ensure that more parishes will be able to be self-sufficient over the long term, building up themselves and the Diocese at the same time.

I've heard the Diocese has a lot of assets. Can't those be used? At the end of 2017, the Diocese reported assets of \$322 million. However, the majority of the assets are restricted assets, such as the Care and Maintenance Fund for Cemeteries, money legally reserved for the maintenance of cemetery operations and funds held for pre-arranged funeral services and burials. Unrestricted assets are less than a third of the total capital. Of these unrestricted assets, more than 90 percent is used to generate investment income that – when combined with parish assessments – pays for annual diocesan operations (68 percent) and make funds available for grants and loans to help parishes and organizations within and outside the Diocese (32 percent).

Is there any chance that funds would be used to settle potential claims of abuse of children by clergy? The tragic stories recently in the news, thankfully, do not reflect the circumstances and history of our diocese. However, it should still be noted that funds raised during the campaign will be held in a segregated account, in trust for the parishes and ministries for which they were raised. Both civil and canon law require the diocese to use the gifts we receive for the stated purposes for which they were given – an obligation to which we are fully committed. Regarding how the Diocese handles abuse allegations, Bishop Crosby said in an August 2018 letter to all in the Diocese: "All allegations of sexual misconduct have been and will continue to be taken seriously and addressed immediately in accordance with our diocesan policy." For a link to the full letter, see our diocesan website, hamiltondiocese.com.

What kind of financial transparency can we expect during the campaign and beyond? Transparency is a top priority for the Diocese. Summaries of diocesan financial reports from 2012 through 2017 are on the diocesan website, and copies of the full reports are available from the Diocese's financial office. Regular updates of campaign goals, projects and fundraising will be communicated during the campaign through a number of avenues – the website, emails, social media, to name a few.

A Christmas Movie with A Message!

At this time of year when the Little Town of Bethlehem is on our minds, *Development & Peace – Caritas Canada* invites you to attend a screening of the critically acclaimed documentary, '*Open Bethlehem*'. Come and discover modern-day Bethlehem, and how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has disturbed the Peace of the world's most famous small town. This is a 'pay what you can' event, and all proceeds will go towards Development & Peace's International Development projects, including those in the Holy Land. **DETAILS: Wednesday, December 19th, 7-9pm; The Cotton Factory (270 Sherman Ave N).** For more info, contact D&P's Southwestern Ontario Animator, Rebecca Rathbone, at 905-521-5632 or rrathbone@devp.org