

ST. LAWRENCE O'TOOLE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

19450 Opeongo Line, Barry's Bay, ON K0J 1B0

Est. 1934



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PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday & Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

*For emergencies during the week also call Holy
Canadian Martyrs at 613-756-3606 during
Office Hours: Wednesday & Thursday,
9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.*

✠ Third Sunday of Advent ✠

Gaudete Sunday

December 17, 2023

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT is traditionally devoted to the celebration of Christian joy. The entrance antiphon begins with these words of St. Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord!" Christian joy is the very mystery of God in our life. Here is the extraordinary fact: We are all approaching our death; we are embarked on this pilgrimage from which no one returns. And we Christians affirm that we are going toward joy, that we are going there in joy. We dare to sing: "Rejoice, for the Lord is near!" We are not going to a tomb, but to a resurrection. Not to darkness, but to an eternal light. Not to solitude, but to a family, the immense family of the children of God who live in joy and in light next to the Father. The spiritual preparation of Advent is a reminder of how we get there. – *Fr. Lucien Deiss CSSp*

CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS: for the Glory of God and in Memory of loved ones can be made with the envelopes provided at the entrance of the church or in your Offering box. The Masses of Christmas will be offered for your intentions. Donations must be submitted by Monday, December 18th in order to have loved ones listed in the Christmas bulletin memorial page.

WILNO COMMUNITY CHOIR will be presenting **KOLEDY**, a collection of traditional Christmas Carols, on December 27th at 7:00 p.m., in St. Mary's Church Wilno.

Third Week of Advent

December 18 – 23

Tuesday	9:00 a.m.	+ Stanley Zilney by <i>Glenn Dombroskie</i> Intentions of Carl & Lorraine Leddy by <i>Monica Radey</i>
Friday	9:00 a.m.	+ Margaret Vice by <i>Karen Yakabuski</i> + Dowdall Murray by <i>Danny & Karen Shalla</i>

+ Fourth Sunday of Advent +

December 23 / 24

Saturday	4:00 p.m.	Mass for the People
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Christmas – The Nativity of the Lord

December 24 / 25

The Masses of Christmas are offered for your in memoriam flower donations (see next week's bulletin) and for the general intentions of all parishioners.

CHRISTMAS EVE	4:00 p.m.	St. Lawrence O'Toole, Barry's Bay
	6:00 p.m.	St. Francis de Sales, Latchford Bridge
	8:00 p.m.	Holy Canadian Martyrs, Combermere
CHRISTMAS DAY	10:30 a.m.	St. Lawrence O'Toole, Barry's Bay

IN YOUR PRAYERS, PLEASE REMEMBER:

- for parishioners and friends who are sick, especially: *Marg Abbott; Gerard O'Malley; Shaun O'Malley; Jacob Westen; Donna Helferty; Michael Sauro.*
- for those who have died, especially: *Thomas Cybulski; Sylvester Prince; Susan (Golka) Coulas; Barbara Lenius; Ambrose Stanley Luckovitch; Wendy Jessup; Bernard Prince.*
- that the Lord Jesus would anoint with the gift of the Holy Spirit the process of calling forth a new bishop to shepherd our diocese.

ROMAN CALENDAR:

Sunday	- Gaudete Sunday – <i>O Wisdom</i>
Monday	- Ferial – ordinary weekday – <i>O Adonai</i>
Tuesday	- Ferial – ordinary weekday – <i>O Flower of Jesse's Stem</i>
Wednesday	- Ferial – ordinary weekday – <i>O Key of David</i>
Thursday	- St. Peter Canisius, priest, doctor – <i>O Radiant Dawn</i>
Friday	- Ferial – ordinary weekday – <i>O King of All the Nations</i>
Saturday	- St. John of Kanty, priest – <i>O Emmanuel</i>

TRUE JOY

From an Angelus Address by Pope Benedict XVI; December 11, 2011

The liturgical texts for this Season of Advent renew the invitation to us to live in expectation of Jesus and not to stop looking forward to his coming so as to keep ourselves open and ready to encounter him. Heartfelt watchfulness, which Christians are always called to practise in their daily life, characterizes in particular this season in which we prepare joyfully for the mystery of Christmas (see Preface of Advent II).

The liturgy of this Sunday, known as “Gaudete” Sunday, is a special invitation to us to joyfulness, to a vigilance that is not sad but happy. “Gaudete in Domino semper”, St Paul wrote: “Rejoice in the Lord always” (Phil 4:4). True joy is not a fruit of “divertirsi” [having a good time] understood in the etymological sense of the word di-vertere (diversion), that is, shirking the commitments of life and one’s responsibilities.

True joy is linked to something deeper. Of course, in the all too often frenetic pace of daily life it is important to find time for rest and relaxation, but true joy is linked to our relationship with God. Those who have encountered Christ in their own lives feel a serenity and joy in their hearts that no one and no situation can take from them. St Augustine understood this very well; in his quest for truth, peace and joy, after seeking them in vain in many things he concluded with his famous words: “and our heart is restless until it rests in God” (see Confessions, I, 1, 1).

True joy is not merely a passing state of mind or something that can be achieved with the person’s own effort; rather it is a gift, born from the encounter with the living Person of Jesus and, making room within ourselves, from welcoming the Holy Spirit who guides our lives. It is the invitation of the Apostle Paul who says: “May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess 5:23).

In this Season of Advent let us reinforce our conviction that the Lord has come among us and ceaselessly renews his comforting, loving and joyful presence. We should trust in him; as St Augustine says further, in the light of his own experience: the Lord is closer to us than we are to ourselves: “interior intimo meo et superior summo meo” (“higher than my highest and more inward than my innermost self”) (Confessions III, 6, 11).

WORD AMONG US for 2024: These are available at the back of the church on a first come basis but if you wish to reserve a copy, please contact Maxine Smagliniski at 756 - 0194. Annual cost is \$25.00 for CWL members or \$30.00 for non-members.

2024 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES: are available on back table in Alphabetic order. If I have missed anyone, please contact the office.

LAST WEEK'S SUNDAY OFFERINGS:

Total: \$3,649.00; (Envelopes: \$2007.00; E-Transfers: \$910.00; Loose: \$190.00; Visitors: \$50.00; Christmas Flowers: \$225.00; Building Fund: \$287.00 [People at Mass: 4:00 p.m./77; 10:30 a.m./102])

SCRIPTURE STUDY: Get ready for the 2023-24 lectionary! We're learning The Gospel of Mark (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture by Mary Healy) on Tuesdays until December 19th, 7-8:45 p.m. in the St. Lawrence O'Toole Hall. Please bring a Bible. For information call John Morris, 613 729 6647.

EVENINGS OF PRAISE, WORSHIP AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER – Open to all – Join with the Spirit of the Living God Prayer Group on Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the St. Lawrence O'Toole parish hall. For info contact Greg or Mary 613-756-6643

REJOICE – THE LORD IS NEAR: Anyone can be happy, given the right set of circumstances; only the believer can rejoice. To rejoice is to have a joy that the world cannot take away. Sorrow cannot erode it; and time cannot carry it away. It is the joy of eternal life. While we may find ways to preserve some of the simple and respectable joys of life, true eternal joy outshines them all. For it is only in the humble birth of the Son of God that passing joys have some hope of not disappearing like shadows. Rejoice because the passing joys of human life do not have to disappear forever. This Child will show us how to see them all in the mystery of endless day. Most precious of all joys are those that come from love. More than all else we do not want to be separated forever from those we love. He came that we may be forever with Him – and with them. Rejoice! - *Fr. Benedict Groeschel CFR*

JOHN THE BAPTIST appears once again this Sunday of Advent and on the stage of salvation history. John's whole mission was a preparation for the Messiah's coming. When the time had come, John led his own disciples to Jesus and indicated to them the Messiah, the True Light, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. What's that strident saint of the desert doing here, on Rejoice Sunday? His stern call to repentance does not seem to fit. Believe it or not, St. John is the patron of spiritual joy. After all, at the presence of Jesus and Mary, he leapt for joy in his mother's womb (Lk 1:44). The Baptist shows us the true nature of this virtue: he was joyful because he was humble. Humility is not denying that you have any gifts, talents, or importance. John knew he had an important role that he played aggressively, with authority and confidence. The humble man does not look down on himself. Actually, he does not look at himself at all. He looks away from himself to the Lord. But what about John's stark call to repentance? How could this be Good News? Because repentance is all about humility and humility is all about freedom. And freedom leads to inner peace and joy, joy in the presence of the Bridegroom.