

# Saint Lawrence O'Toole Parish

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**Fr. John N. Burchat, Parish Priest**

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## Office Hours

*Tuesday & Friday*

*9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon*

*613-756-2037*



## ✠ Third Sunday of Advent ✠

*Gaudete Sunday*

December 14, 2025

**GAUDETE SUNDAY:** reminds Christians that Christian hope is joyful. Even amid darkness and disappointments, penance and preparation, believers are called to rejoice because the salvation of our God is always near, always arriving in our lives. On this Sunday, it is both a liturgical and spiritual encouragement: a foretaste of Christmas joy, and a reminder that Christ's coming — both at Bethlehem and at the end of time — is the cause of our gladness.

### **PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD WITH ADVENT CONFESSIONS:**

Holy Canadian Martyrs – Wednesday, December 17; 9:30 a.m.; 6:30 p.m.

St. Lawrence O'Toole – Sunday, December 21; 1:00 p.m.

*With visiting priest-confessors. Various Examination of Conscience to help in preparation are available on the entrance tables.*

**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 Wednesday, December 17 to have Loved Ones listed in the Christmas bulletin memorial page.

### **CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE:**

**December 24** 4:00 p.m. St. Lawrence O'Toole, Barry's Bay

6:00 p.m. St. Francis de Sales, Latchford Bridge

**December 25** 9:00 a.m. Holy Canadian Martyrs

10:30 a.m. St. Lawrence O'Toole, Barry's Bay

**Behold, the Lord will come and He will not delay!**

## Third Week of Advent

December 15 – December 20

**Tuesday** 9:00 a.m. + Paul Kuiack *by Charlotte & Family*  
**Friday** 9:00 a.m. + Marie Landon *by Janet O'Connor*

## + Fourth Sunday of Advent +

December 21, 2025

**Saturday** 4:00 p.m. + Veronica O'Reilly *by Loretta Murray*  
+ Alicia Coulas *by Friends*  
**Sunday** 10:30 a.m. Mass for the People  
1:00 p.m. *Advent Confessions*

Liturgical Appointments	December 20	December 21
Readings	<i>Martin Yakabuski</i>	<i>Paul Rivett-Carnac</i>
Communion	<i>Beverly Glofcheskie</i>	<i>Pierre-Paul Filion</i>
Offertory	<i>Bruce Sullivan</i>	<i>John Jeffrey</i>
	<i>Richard Luckasavitch</i>	<i>Jamie Prince</i>

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** Saturday 3:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. in sacristy.  
Weekdays – before weekday Masses in sacristy or by appointment during office hours.

### IN YOUR PRAYERS, PLEASE REMEMBER:

- for parishioners and friends who are sick, especially: *Rick Sauro, Diane Green, Jean-Paul Patenaude, Ray Vananburg, Carmel Rumleskie.*  
- for those who have died, especially: *Margaret Abbott, Helen Schutt, Teresa Chapeskie, Gertrude Cortens (MH), Alicia Coulas and Bonnie Coulas.*

**LATE ADVENT AND THE O ANTIPHONS:** In these final days of Advent (December 17–23), the Church shifts from general Advent themes of watchfulness, repentance, and joyful expectation to direct preparation for the Nativity of the Lord. The liturgical character of this period is marked by weekday liturgies that become more intense and focused on the mystery of the Incarnation. Central to this time are the ancient O Antiphons, prayed at Vespers and echoed in the Gospel acclamations at Mass. Each begins with “O” and invokes Christ under a biblical title: O Wisdom, O Lord, O Root of Jesse, O Key of David, O Rising Sun, O King of the Nations, O Emmanuel. These prayers give voice to our longing for the Savior, naming the ways humanity awaits His coming — for wisdom, freedom, light, kingship, and God-with-us. They build a crescendo of expectation that leads us directly to Christmas Eve, reminding us that the Child of Bethlehem is the fulfillment of every hope.

**REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS:** Holy Mass of the Third Sunday of Advent opens with these words of St Paul and is therefore called “gaudete” Sunday. The Apostle urges Christians to rejoice because the Lord’s coming, that is, his glorious return, is certain and will not be delayed. The Church makes this invitation her own while she prepares to celebrate Christmas and her gaze is focused ever more intently on Bethlehem. Indeed, we wait with hope, certain of Christ’s second coming because we have experienced his first. The mystery of Bethlehem reveals to us God-with-us, the God close to us and not merely in the spatial and temporal sense; he is close to us because he has, as it were, “espoused” our humanity; he has taken our condition upon himself, choosing to be like us in all things save sin in order to make us become like him. Christian joy thus springs from this certainty: God is close, he is with me, he is with us, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, as a friend and faithful spouse. And this joy endures, even in trials, in suffering itself. It does not remain only on the surface; it dwells in the depths of the person who entrusts himself to God and trusts in him.

Some people ask: but is this joy still possible today? Men and women of every age and social condition, happy to dedicate their existence to others, give us the answer with their lives! Was not Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta an unforgettable witness of true Gospel joy in our time? She lived in touch daily with wretchedness, human degradation and death. Her soul knew the trials of the dark night of faith, yet she gave everyone God’s smile. In one of her writings, we read: “We wait impatiently for paradise, where God is, but it is in our power to be in paradise even here on earth and from this moment. Being happy with God means loving like him, helping like him, giving like him, serving like him” (The Joy of Giving to Others, 1987, p. 143). Yes, joy enters the hearts of those who put themselves at the service of the lowly and poor. God abides in those who love like this and their souls rejoice. If, instead, people make an idol of happiness, they lose their way and it is truly hard for them to find the joy of which Jesus speaks. Unfortunately, this is what is proposed by cultures that replace God by individual happiness, mindsets that find their emblematic effect in seeking pleasure at all costs, in spreading drug use as an escape, a refuge in artificial paradises that later prove to be entirely deceptive.

Dear brothers and sisters, one can lose the way even at Christmas, one can exchange the true celebration for one that does not open the heart to Christ’s joy. May the Virgin Mary help all Christians and people in search of God to reach Bethlehem, to encounter the Child who was born for us, for salvation and for the happiness of all humanity.

**HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS:** Closed between Christmas & New Year’s. Emergencies or urgent requests, please leave a message in voice mail at St. Lawrence O’Toole or send an email to Fr. Burchat.

**SAVE THE DATE:** *Family of 3 Churches Lenten Day of Reflection* with Bishop Brehl on Saturday, March 21, 2026, in St. Lawrence O’Toole Parish Hall.

## **LAST WEEK'S SUNDAY OFFERINGS:**

Total: \$3,579.00 (Envelopes: \$2,957.00; Loose: \$127.00; Visitors: \$5.00;  
E-transfer: \$40.00; World Mission: \$20.00; Christmas Flowers: \$190.00;  
Christmas Offering: \$70.00; Building Fund: \$170.00).

**SUNDAY OFFERTORY ENVELOPES FOR 2026** are available on back table in alphabetic order. If I have missed anyone, please contact the office. Use church envelopes for a secure and personalized contribution.

**BIBLE STUDY: The Gospel of John** (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture by Fr. Francis Martin). Wednesdays from 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. in the St. Lawrence O'Toole Hall. For more information contact John Morris, 613-729-6647.

**EVENING OF PRAISE, WORSHIP AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER:** At St. Lawrence O'Toole Hall on Thursday evenings are CANCELLED for Dec. 25; Jan. 1

**KOLEDY CONCERT:** The Wilno Heritage Society Community Choir invites you to attend our KOLEDY concert Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in St. Mary's Church, Wilno. You will hear an uplifting collection of Traditional Polish Carols, sung in Polish and English. Free admission event. See you there!

**DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE PASTORAL PLANNG:** Parishioners of the Barry's Bay Deanery are invited to **save the date of Sunday, March 1**, to attend a meeting at St. John Bosco School, Barry's Bay - 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. - to attend a pastoral planning information meeting. Bishop Brehl and members of the diocesan steering committee will present relevant pastoral, statistical and financial data to help equip parishioners in ongoing dialogue and discernment on the future of the diocese.

**THE CRIB:** helps us contemplate the mystery of God's love that was revealed in the poverty and simplicity of the Bethlehem Grotto. St Francis of Assisi was so taken by the mystery of the Incarnation that he wanted to present it anew at Greccio in the living Nativity scene, thus beginning an old, popular tradition that still retains its value for evangelization today.

Indeed, the Crib can help us understand the secret of the true Christmas because it speaks of the humility and merciful goodness of Christ, who "though he was rich he made himself poor" for us (II Cor 8: 9).

His poverty enriches those who embrace it and Christmas brings joy and peace to those who, like the shepherds in Bethlehem, accept the Angel's words: "Let this be a sign to you: in a manger you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes" (Lk 2: 12). This is still the sign for us too, men and women of the third millennium. There is no other Christmas. ~ *Pope Benedict; December 11, 2005*