

Saint Lawrence O'Toole Parish

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Office Hours

Tuesday & Friday
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✠ Third Sunday in Ordinary Time ✠

Sunday of the Word of God

January 25, 2026

SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES CHURCH, in our family of parishes, celebrates its Patronal Feast this weekend on Saturday, January 24.

Saint Francis de Sales (1567–1622), bishop of Geneva and later declared a Doctor of the Church, stands as one of the great spiritual guides of the early modern period. Formed in both law and theology, he devoted his priestly ministry to patient pastoral care, gentle evangelization, and a deep respect for the dignity of every soul entrusted to him. His writings—especially **Introduction to the Devout Life** and **Treatise on the Love of God**—opened a path of holiness for ordinary Christians, teaching that devotion is possible in every state of life, not only in monasteries. He emphasized humility, interior peace, trust in God's providence, and the quiet power of small, consistent acts of charity. His hallmark message remains timeless: authentic holiness grows through love rather than severity, and the journey toward God is best walked with gentleness, perseverance, and a heart anchored in divine love.

From his **Introduction to the Devout Life**:

“Have patience with all things, but chiefly with yourself.” (Part III, ch. 9)

“Great opportunities to please God come seldom, but little ones surround us every hour.” (Part III, ch. 35)

“The measure of love is to love without measure.” (Part II)

**O gentle Saint Francis de Sales,
guide us in the way of humble trust and steadfast charity.
Teach us to seek God's will with peaceful hearts
and to serve Him faithfully in the duties of each day.
Pray for us, that we may grow in true devotion
and become instruments of God's tender love in the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD: is **TODAY** on the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time. This annual celebration was announced by Pope Francis in a Motu Proprio entitled *Aperuit illis*, published on September 30, 2019, the Feast of St Jerome. The Word of God Sunday, Pope Francis wrote in that Motu Proprio, “is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God”. Pope Francis desires that “the Church experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasure of his word and enable us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world.”

The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God’s word and of Christ’s body. ~*Vatican II, Dei Verbum 21*

I interpret as I should, following the command of Christ: Search the Scriptures, and seek and you shall find. As St. Paul says, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, and if the man who does not know Scripture does not know the power and wisdom of God, then ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ. ~ St. Jerome

HISTORY REDEEMED: Today's Liturgy gives us a lesson in ancient Israelite geography and history. Isaiah's prophecy in today's First Reading is quoted by Matthew in today's Gospel. Both intend to recall the apparent fall of the everlasting kingdom promised to David (see 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Psalm 89; Psalm 132:11-12). Eight centuries before Christ, that part of the kingdom where the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali lived was attacked by the Assyrians and the tribes were hauled off into captivity (see 2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chronicles 5:26). It marked the beginning of the kingdom's end. It finally crumbled in the sixth century B.C., when Jerusalem was seized by Babylon and the remaining tribes were driven into exile (see 2 Kings 24:14). Isaiah prophesied that Zebulun and Naphtali, the lands first to be degraded, would be the first to see the light of God's salvation.

Jesus today fulfills that prophecy—announcing the restoration of David's kingdom at precisely the spot where the kingdom began to fall. His gospel of the Kingdom includes not only the twelve tribes of Israel but all the nations—symbolized by the "Galilee of the Nations." Calling His first disciples, two fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, He appoints them to be "fishers of men"—gathering people from the ends of the earth. They are to preach the gospel, Paul says in today's Epistle, to unite all peoples in the same mind and in the same purpose—in a worldwide kingdom of God. By their preaching, Isaiah's promise has been delivered. A world in darkness has seen the light. The yoke of slavery and sin, borne by humanity since time began, has been smashed.

And we are able now, as we sing in today's Psalm, to dwell in the house of the Lord, to worship Him in the land of the living. ~ *Dr. Scott Hahn*

LAST WEEK'S SUNDAY OFFERINGS:

Total:\$2,826.10 (Envelopes: \$1,587.00; Loose: \$55.10; Visitors: \$25.00; Initial: \$20.00; New Year's Offering:\$26.00; Building Fund:\$20.00; Fuel:\$1,073.00; Needs of the Canadian Church: \$20.00).

2026 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES: As some assigned numbers have changed, please write your full name and complete mailing address on your envelope. Thank you!

2025 CHARITABLE DONATION RECEIPTS: will be issued early in February along with a Financial Report. Thank you for your faith-filled generosity and financial commitment to the parish.

DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE PASTORAL PLANNING: 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.

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.

BIBLE STUDY: The Gospel of John (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. Discussing pp. 325-335 this week involving Easter themes including the empty tomb.

EVENING OF PRAISE, WORSHIP AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER:

Thursdays at St. Lawrence O'Toole Parish Hall from 7:00 until 8:30 p.m. All are welcome.

2026 ANNUAL LIFT JESUS HIGHER RALLY Lift Jesus Higher Rally -- Saturday, March 14, 2026 This joyful day of renewal draws thousands each year and offers a profound opportunity to encounter the living Christ. For full details, registration, and promotional materials, visit: www.ljhr.ca

WOMEN'S RETREAT 2026: There will be two women's retreats lead by Madonna House member Shatzi Duffy this spring and sacraments being celebrated by Madonna House Priests, Fr. Brian Christi (@Elim) and Fr. Zachary Romanowsky (@Graphite). Registration will open at the end of January.

Elim Lodge, near Peterborough - Friday, March 13 to Sunday, March 15

Graphite Bible Camp, near Combermere - Friday, April 10 - Sunday, April 12