

# *A Season of Joy*

**December 13, 2020 BULLETIN**

**St. Stephen    Our Lady of Fatima    St. Anthony**

My dear friends, people of God, Rejoice in the Lord always! Today we celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday. "Gaudete" is a Latin word, meaning "rejoice." The Christian steward should be characterized by a spirit of rejoicing. Our First Reading, from Isaiah, expresses a fitting motto for us. "I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul." It is God who is the source of our joy and contentment — not things or achievements or comfort, but our relationship with God. This is why stewards can share so freely of their time, talents and material possessions — because ultimately, we are not attached to these things. We recognize them as good gifts from our loving Father, but we are attached to the Giver of the gifts, not the gifts themselves. This allows for great freedom in life and the capacity for great joy in the Lord.

As I turned 15 years in my priestly service and pastoral ministry last month, I found joy in priestly ministry especially those who are suffering around, the sick, the fainthearted, the needy and the insignificant in the eyes of the society. I rejoiced in the Lord who has called me to the priesthood and He has given me contentment and meaningful life. I rejoiced because I found heaven that begins here and now. I found the Divine Light at the end of this darkest tunnel brought by the pandemic. Light from Light, true God from true God, Begotten not made, Jesus Christ who once said: "I am the Light of the world."

As disciples and good stewards of the mysteries of faith, a light which we had received at Baptism, we are called to be the bearer of this torch. We are called to be the bearer of this light burning brightly so that those who are in the shadow of death and darkened by sin will set free in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We are called by God to be the witnesses to this Light. So, we can become like John the Baptist, in today's Gospel passage from the Book of John. We read this description of the prophet: "He came for testimony, to testify to the light... He was not the light but came to testify to the light." This is our calling too — to testify to the Light, our wonderful Savior — by the way we make use of the time, talent and treasure He has entrusted to our care. When God Himself is the source of our joy, it cannot be taken away from us. There is still time, this Advent season, to clear away any "clutter" in our lives that may take our focus away from Him. Let us strive to detach from any of these things so that we can be free to truly rejoice in God on Christmas Day.

May the smile of Christ and the joy which is the first fruit of the Holy Spirit fill your hearts despite of our constant struggle in this time of pandemic. May the joy in us, no one can snatch away, for the joy of the Lord is our strength. Amen

**FR. NILO MACAPINLAC**

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## **PASTORAL / OFFICE STAFF**

Pastor – Father Nilo Macapinlac  
Deacon – Charles Johnston – Retired  
Pastoral Ass't – Donna Litwin  
Office Admin – Mia MacDonald

## **Office Hours of Father Nilo**

(Parish)

Tues 9-5

Wed – 8-12 AM

Thurs – Trochu

Friday 9-5

## **MASS TIMES**

Saturday Evening – 5 PM

1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday – 11:15 AM

2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday – 9:00 AM

Daily Live stream – 6 PM

Friday Morning Mass – 9 am

Confession – Every Saturday 11am

Appt's for Confession are also available.

Father encourages you to find time for Confession during the upcoming Advent season. In place of our Advent Penitential Service, Father will continue to be available on Saturday mornings. In addition, he is available for Confession through private appointments.

*God Bless and Be Well*

## CONFIRMATION

June 6, 2021 is the date for our next celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation. It is our hope that Classes would begin in January and would be conducted via Zoom. We are also looking for individuals who would be interested in forming the Confirmation team to help implement our program. Please contact Donna in the Parish Office for more information and to register your child or to join the Team.

## FAMILY LIFE

Family Life has some suggestions if your family would like to go caroling.

1. Go caroling with your family to 3-5 houses. Stand on the sidewalk which is usually at least 20 feet from their door, and sing your heart out.
2. Call someone near or far and sing a song together. *Silent Night* is quiet but lovely with phone harmonies.
3. Send a Christmas musical e-card
4. Sing carols in your car with the windows down.

Don't forget to bring an international tree ornament for the tree in the foyer!

The Parish has a family that is moving forward as foster parents. If anyone in our congregation has any of the following items to help the family; a pressure mounted baby gate, a lockable file box/briefcase for confidential documents, lockable box to store medications, certificate frame, diapers – sz 1-4, formula as they figure out what they require

Celebrate feastdays this Advent by trying international foods!

You might like to try Mexican Lentil soup <https://catholicfoodie.com/mexican-lentil-soup-for-our-lady-of-guadalupe> for Our Lady of Guadalupe on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup>, or Buns <https://epicpew.com/feast-day-foods-advent/> for St. Lucy on Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> or Spanish food on [www.speakeasybcn.com](http://www.speakeasybcn.com) for St. John of the Cross on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>.

Wednesday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> will begin the nine days of *Journey to the Inn* based on a Knights of Columbus program for *Keeping Christ in Christmas*. Join us on St. Stephen's Facebook page for each day's journey.

## FORMED.ORG

### Advent with Formed.org

Follow this link: <https://watch.formed.org/the-road-to-bethlehem-advent-week-2>

The Road to Bethlehem – Week 3 will begin on Sunday. Watch for Action Items as your journey with them, small acts for you to do to bring you closer to God throughout this Advent Season. Join them on the Road to Bethlehem.

Refer to your Formed.org reference card that you received in the mail to help you log in.

We hope you enjoy IT.

## CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

If you would like to donate Christmas Flowers or Poinsettias for decorating the Church for Christmas, please drop them off to the office prior to Dec 20th, 2020.

## COMMUNITY

There is a Christmas Angels Collection Box in the foyer of the Church. You can find a tag in various locations around town and drop your item(s) off to be picked up from here. Thank you for your generous spirit of giving. Christmas Angels bring smiles to so many kids throughout our community because of people like you.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

SEASON FOR GIVING IS NOW: GIVING COMPASSION, LOVE, SUPPORT & HOPE TO THOSE IN NEED.

Our Social Justice Committee asks your help with our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Street Backpack project in partnership with The Mustard Seed. We had an overwhelming response last year which was received with such gratitude! Our Alberta winters can be freezing cold & harsh for those on the streets. This year with the pandemic the need for help and compassion is even greater. The items that are put in a special backpack for these folks are necessities that provide immediate comfort. This gift will ease the suffering of a homeless neighbour. It is a gift that will keep their hope & spirit alive. YOU have the power to make a difference!

Please pick an item or two from the list below & bring this item to place in the labelled boxes in the foyer. We will make sure it gets to those special backpacks! Thank- you so much for your generosity!

### Items needed include:

Backpacks	toothpastes, toothbrushes
Disposable razors	shaving gel & lotion
running shoes	travel size tissue,
hand sanitizer	deodorant,
travel size body wash	blankets
travel size shampoo & conditioner	sweaters, toques, scarfs, mittens ( adult and child)
toilet paper	socks, T-shirts, underwear(male & female all sizes)
combs & brushes	Q-tips
feminine hygiene products	ear plugs
nail clippers	trail mix/ granola bars
paperback book,	small flashlight
notebook & pen	small towel, reusable water bottle, sunglasses

*Thank You and God Bless*

## BOTTLE DRIVE FUNDRAISER

Members of our Filipino community have helped us set up an account/bin at the Bottle Depot. You can drop your bottles off and inform the staff that they are for St. Stephen's OR we have a wonderful Volunteer that is able to pick up your bottles for donation. Please contact Joseph at 403-586-4590 .Thank you to those who are contributing to this campaign

## OFFICE

- The Word Among Us – Advent edition is available in the foyer on the table.
- Envelopes are available. We encourage you to pop in during the week to pick up your box of envelopes rather than having to stop during the procession out after Mass.
- If you would like more information on setting up Automatic Contribution via Debit or Credit or E-transfers at this time, please contact Mia in the office.

## ST. STEPHEN'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Everyone is invited to attend the zoom meeting for St. Stephen's Annual General Meeting on Monday Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.. The zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84279376914?pwd=Q1JxSzE1c3ZiS2l1VIRjSWlyTkQ1QT09>

You would have received an email with the committee reports in preparation of the meeting earlier in the week. We welcome your suggestions during this unusual time!

## CHRISTMAS REQUEST – ITEMS FOR OUR FOOD BANK BOX

**CHRISTMAS REQUEST!** Thank you to all who have given so generously to our in-house Food Bank over the last several months. Your help with the donations of food and gift cards has made a difference to the lives of several of our parish families who are struggling with layoffs or job loss. Now Christmas is fast approaching and it is anticipated that our Food Bank Box is going to see even greater use in the coming days. If you can help with a donation of food, for example we could really use the following non-perishables. Please drop your donation off at the church Monday thru Thursday 8:30-3:30 or Friday 8:30-12:30 *Thank You!*

Canned fish or meat Boxed Mac n' Cheese Spaghetti Sauce Peanut Butter Canned Jam Canned Fruit Canned Vegetables Hamburger Helper Crackers Sugar Salt	Rice Juice Boxes Pudding/Jell-O Pancake Mix/Syrup Cereal Canned Soup Toilet Paper Laundry Detergent Toothpaste Christmas Candy	Boxed Stuffing Cranberry Sauce Gravy mix (canned or dry)  ***We would also accept grocery gift cards to help families purchase milk,
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