



OUR ADVERTISERS SUPPORT US – PLEASE SUPPORT THEM

<p>Never be afraid to ask for help </p> <p>For confidential assistance with food or other emergency situations please call our parish office or send us an email.</p> <p>(905) 468-7272 svpsociety@svpparishnotl.ca</p>  <p>Society of Saint Vincent de Paul St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish, Niagara-on-the-Lake</p>		
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Go to the poor; you will find God.

If God is the centre of your life, no words are necessary.


Your mere presence will touch hearts.

We should keep our hearts open to the sufferings of other people,

and pray continually that God may grant us

that spirit of compassion which is truly the spirit of God.

-- St. Vincent de Paul



Parish Priest / Pastor: Fr. Peter Rowe
(assisted by Fr. Ron Wiecek, C.PP.S.)

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<u>LORD'S DAY MASSES</u>	<u>WEEKDAY MASSES</u>	<u>CHURCH OFFICE HOURS</u>
Saturday 5:00 p.m. Sunday 9:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m. in Spanish, seasonally	Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. + First Saturday -- see bulletin for changes	Mon., Thu. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Tue. closed, Wed. noon – 3 p.m. Fri. 9 a.m. – noon

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THE PARISH

St. Michael School, Virgil 905/905-0151
Holy Cross High School, St.C. 905/937-6446

Monetary donations by e-transfer: svdp1826@outlook.com
Credit / Debit (TAP) donations now available at the church door.
We do not do church to make money. We need money, though, to do church.

You are invited, welcomed, accepted, loved, and respected here at St. Vincent de Paul – no matter what!

BAPTISM OF INFANTS: blessings on the birth of your child!
These take place bimonthly, at 1:00 p.m. (except in Lent). Those wishing to have their child baptized should contact the parish office at least two months in advance -- the parish website has a registration form. If you are able to do so, introduce yourself to the pastor.

ADULT INITIATION / RECEPTION
Adults (and older children) inquiring into Christian living or Catholic practices join together in a gradual process or journey (Catechumenate) bound for the sacraments.

FIRST COMMUNION / CONFESSION / CONFIRMATION
Children must register with the parish to receive these sacraments. Orientation sessions are held in the fall; Communion, Confirmation are celebrated in the spring.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION
A Holy Hour of Adoration occurs on the first Thursday of the month, following the Mass. Contemplate the supreme gesture of love contained in the consecrated Bread.

MARRIAGE: congratulations on your engagement!
Anyone wishing to be married at our church should contact the parish office at least one year prior: this is a popular wedding venue! Besides a series of meetings with a priest, a diocese-approved form of pre-marriage preparation is considered necessary.

RECONCILIATION
This is celebrated weekly for individuals wishing to experience sacramental forgiveness – Fridays 9:00-10:00 a.m., first Saturdays 7:30-8:30 a.m., more hours seasonally.

MINISTRY OF CARE TO THE SICK
Holy Communion and Sacrament of Anointing are available to any who are ill or housebound or seeking pastoral care. Notify the parish office to make arrangements. Advise the church office of hospital admissions or let the pastor know directly. Anointing should not be delayed until a person's final hours.

CATHOLIC FUNERAL RITES
Once you have contacted the funeral home of your choice to make arrangements, the parish will then be called. We have a Bereavement Ministry to assist you throughout.

PARISH REGISTRATION: Please fill in / clip out the form below and drop it in the collection basket or at the church office. As well, complete the Parish Profile / Confidential Registration Card found at the entrance to the church.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Residence (with Postal Code): _____

Town/City: _____ E-mail: _____

**2nd Sunday of Advent
December 8, 2024**



WORK IN CHRIST WITH HOPE AND JOY

Every high mountain to be made low. (*Baruch*)
The day of Jesus Christ. (*Philippians*)
Prepare the way. (*Luke*)

God has promised to finish that the work started in us. We need have no doubts. As we work in God to become more loving and increasingly perceptive we can be confident that, in spite of our sin, God is using us to help establish the everlasting kingdom of joy, love, and peace.
-- Susan Sayers



Jubilee 2025 Prayer

Father in heaven,
may the *faith* you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of *charity* enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
for the coming of your Kingdom.

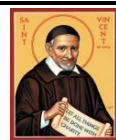
May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within
both humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.
To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

Francis

JUBILEE YEAR 2025

The opening Mass for the Jubilee will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Catherine on Sunday, December 29 (2:00 p.m.), with Bishop Gerard Bergie presiding. Please plan to attend this Mass as we begin our journey as "Pilgrims of Hope."



MAY GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP!

December 1 \$ 5,320.20

Credit / Debit **TAP** donations now available at the door.

*Instead of putting others in their place,
put yourself in their place.*

**Monday, December 9
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF B.V. MARY (solemnity)**

8:30 a.m. Mass † Gerald Mackay
[*St. Juan Diego (Cuauhtlatoatzin, "talking eagle"), peasant, hermit, Marian visionary*]
[*St. Pierre Fourier, priest, canon regular, religious founder*]

Tuesday, December 10

8:30 a.m. Mass † Jerry Sheehan / Albin Klaric
[*Our Lady of Loreto*]

Wednesday, December 11

8:30 a.m. Mass ♥ int. of Rita Steele and family
[*St. Damasus I, pope*]
[*St. Maria de la Maravillas de Jesús, Carmelite religious*]

**Thursday, December 12
OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, Mother of the Americas (La Virgen Morena), patron of the Philippines (feast)**

8:30 a.m. Mass † Matt Pavlovkovich
[*National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples*]
[*St. Finnian (Finian) of Clonard, abbot, teacher of the saints of Ireland*]

**Friday, December 13
St. Lucy, virgin martyr, patron of Sicily**

8:30 a.m. Mass † Jerry Sheehan
9:00-10:00 a.m. Reconciliation

**Saturday, December 14
St. John of the Cross (Juan de Yepes y Álvarez / Juan de la Cruz), Carmelite priest, mystic, doctor of the Church**

[*St. Nimatullah (Youssef) Kassab al-Hardini, Maronite monk, priest, scholar*]

5:00 p.m. Mass (for Sun.) † Jack Harmer

3rd Sunday of Advent, December 15 [Gaudete / Rejoice! Sunday]

9:00 a.m. Mass † Frances Piuanno / Peter Van de Laar
11:00 a.m. Mass ♥ people of the parish

ADVENT RECONCILIATION

In addition to the usual Friday morning time (9:00-10:00) for the sacrament, the following additional times are set during the lead-up to Christmas: Saturday, December 21 (2:00-3:00 p.m.) and Monday, December 23 (7:00-8:00 p.m.).

*Discussion is an exchange of knowledge.
Argument is an exchange of ignorance.*

UPCOMING HAPPENINGS (all in the hall unless otherwise indicated)

Finances Council: meets Thu., Dec. 12 (12:30 p.m.)
Catechumenate (OCIA): meets Thu., Dec. 12 (3:30 p.m.) (church)
Society of St. Vincent de Paul: meets Wed., Jan. 8 (4:00 p.m.)
Sunday Readers / Word Proclaimers: meet Sat., Jan. 18 (10:30 a.m.) (church)
Holy Name Society: meets Thu., Jan. 30 (6:30 p.m.)

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

The Christmas Mass continues to be the principal way for us to express our joy and gratitude for the mystery of the Incarnation.

Tuesday, December 24 (evening)

5:30 Mass. at night (twilight / sundown) (children's tableau 5:00)
8:00 Mass. at night (mid-evening) (readings, carol singing 7:30)
10:30 Mass. at night (pre-midnight) (readings, carol singing 10:00)

Wednesday, December 25 (morning)

9:00 Mass. at dawn
11:00 Mass. of daylight

MASSES AT NEW YEAR'S

Tuesday, December 31 5:00 p.m. Mass
Wednesday, January 1 10:00 a.m. Mass
Note: only one Mass in the morning of January 1.



A PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS



God our Father,
we thank you for calling men and women
to serve in your Son's Kingdom
as priests, deacons, and consecrated persons.
Send your Holy Spirit to help others
to respond generously and courageously to your call.
May our community of faith support vocations of sacrificial love
in our youth and young adults. Amen.

SEPARATED & DIVORCED HEALING MINISTRY

This support group meets every second and fourth Monday of the month (except holidays) from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Mt. Carmel Spiritual Centre, NF. Meetings will be held both in person and virtually via Zoom platform (pre-register for Zoom info by calling 905/356-4113 or 905/684-0154 or e-mailing separatedanddivorced@saintcd.com)
December 9 "Benefits of Waiting" / Advent Prayer Service (with Fr. Michael Wastag, o.carm.)
[no meeting Dec. 23; next meeting Jan. 13]

POPE'S DECEMBER PRAYER INTENTION: for pilgrims of hope



Let us pray that this Jubilee strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

STUDENTS IN NEED AT CHRISTMAS



Poverty is often associated with developing countries when, in fact, it exists right here at home. Every day in Niagara, a very large number of students goes to school hungry and waits in line for breakfast. The Niagara Region combined is just over the national average at 18%; however, when looking at the cities, that percentage increases to over 20% (that's one in every five children living in poverty and lacking proper nutrition). The Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education (NFCE) is a registered charitable foundation that assists students in need who attend our Catholic schools. Your donation to purchase food cards will help brighten Christmas! Receipts are issued for tax purposes (427 Rice Rd., Welland, ON L3C 7C1); phone 905/735-0247, x210 or donate on-line through PayPal on the NFCE website (www.nfce.org).

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

SECOND ADVENT (C)

Invitation: **Wrapped in God's robe of justice and praying with constant joy, let us offer intercession on behalf of people everywhere.**

response: *Lord, come to us!*

Intentions: **For the coming Jubilee to strengthen us in faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope -- December's intention, we pray...**

For the Lord of history to fill leaders with wisdom and humility, especially in Nicaragua, so they promote constant dialogue in pursuit of the common good -- and end ongoing turbulence, we pray...

As we anticipate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, may renewed efforts be undertaken within our own country to further reconciliation with its hurting Indigenous Peoples, we pray...

For the gravely ill and the dying to be comforted and have their fears calmed so that they are able to spend their days preparing themselves in restful stillness and expectant joy, we pray... [(5:00 Mass) intention of Mary Gleeson...]

For our families and friends to walk joyfully along the way of the Lord, expending their lives in his service; also, may any estranged within families forgive one another and be reconciled, we pray...

For our parish to hasten the Lord's coming through charity, we pray...

For those who have died to be with their Saviour in paradise,
especially: *[5:00 Mass]* Michael Gleeson... *[11:00 Mass]* Antonio & Elizabeth Rocca / Zvonko Polich... *[each Mass]* Ted Van de Laar / Jo Baranek / Bill Wong / former Bishop of Calgary Fred Henry...

we pray...

Conclusion: **Holy God, your people look to you with expectant hearts and we wait for an end to mourning and misery. Fill us with love and help us desire what is of value. Through Christ our Lord.**

Fr. Peter's Homily for the Second Sunday of Advent (C)

A little bit later in the Mass, in the Advent preface to the Eucharistic Prayer, you will hear these words, "the great promise in which we now dare to hope"

The passage from Baruch is marvellous, a vehicle for the joys and hopes of us Advent Christians -- his images support this "dare to hope" -- we find ourselves in the presence of the hope of the believing community in his day, the grieving city of Jerusalem experiencing a reversal of fortune: taking off her robe of sadness and misery, and her being wrapped like a royal cloak; her dispersed children gathering together and ascending on a pilgrimage towards a Jerusalem of joy: a resplendent return indeed!

Borrowing that sacred author's enthusiastic and poetic language, we should "look toward the east," toward the rising sun and "the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians) -- "for God will show your splendour everywhere under heaven" (Baruch).

The adventing of God, the great promise we're expecting, happens within the events of human life, our life, in the here and now .

The message of Baruch goes back to the first century before Christ; the Gothic jewel Notre-Dame Cathedral-Basilica in Paris goes back only 860 years but it was very nearly lost altogether in 2019, those orange flames spreading along the roof until the spire collapsed.

Not only was Paris a grieving city but there was genuine international emotion felt by those who saw it burn -- feeling that some-thing not only beautiful but spiritually powerful was being de-stroyed; following that came what seemed at the time like a rash promise to rebuild within five years, yet rapid mobilization combined with collective will-power made the restoration happen.

Now since it symbolizes something universal, donors worldwide contributed to what it is today

The fire and closing was a sign of a difficult period for the Church -- a harbinger of further things to come, such as the closing of all churches during the global pandemic

and a tidal wave of reports on abuse and other misdeeds by Church leaders: if Notre-Dame proved to be fragile, might not our faith be broken, too, amid all the destructive fires of our times?

And what about the emotions of love and devotion for the Mother of God herself? After all, it is her cathedral, and we wept because of our love for Mary

A "shock of hope" (un choc d'espérance): this is how the French president described the reopening of Notre-Dame; a resplendent return, a "national wound" remedied, a much-needed relief from bad news

It was a unifying project; the catastrophe was transformed into an opportunity to come together; much has been said of the joy and commitment of the workers who removed the grime of the centuries -- but it's not about the French president or these engineers, masons, carpenters, roofers, art experts, sculptors (even though they saw a big increase in apprenticeships)

This is a gift from God and a gift for God: this is something really motivating for the whole Church, a big signal that hope is still there, that even in the darkest moments despair is not an option

It's not simply a successful architectural work but has a religious significance; with any restoration, there's always a risk of trans-forming a cathedral into a monument, just a historical landmark, avoiding what other architectural landmarks like the pyramids or the Parthenon have become: international tourist sites, a vacation stop between the Louvre and Versailles (the Jubilee Year pilgrim-age I'm involved with next May takes in Notre-Dame, so we too must be mindful of this)

True, it is a major site of international Parisian tourism and a kind of national heritage with which the French identify -- something that could obstruct Notre-Dame from being what it truly is, a cathedral of faith; it makes faith intelligible (someone compared it to St. Thomas Aquinas great "Summa Theologica" in architectural form) It's not about admiring magnificent stones; it's a place intended to help us understand something of faith through its very form, the statues, the paintings, the stained-glass windows: that's the spirituality visitors must be confronted with; the building has an immortal "soul" just like we humans do (after all, Notre-Dame is different from the Louvre or the Palace of Versailles)

It's all about spiritual elevation, an elevation towards spiritual beauty, not merely material beauty; the work on Notre-Dame has been done to enhance prayer; it has been the rebuilding of a place of faith, regaining something new spiritually

This must also entail the restoration of faith and Christian life --and that will involve missionary creativity or evangelization

Notre-Dame is a high place of faith, but so is our St. Vincent de Paul Church; over the past two days, we have welcomed a "sea" of visitors to our church and hall thanks to the Rotary House Tour

Not all were gawkers at the captivating and illuminating Advent decor: some visitors lit candles and prayed, and children experienced the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time

For you who are parishioners and you who are our guests, the spiritual dimension of this building ought to mean something to all who enter here; it has to fulfill a genuine religious function or else it increasingly becomes a tourist stop between the Shaw and the ice cream parlours, just a historical landmark (and I'm hearing that our church has been chosen as a pilgrimage site for the Jubilee)

Although we associate this space with the big events of our families' lives (my own included): Baptisms, first Communions, Confirmations, Marriages, Funerals, St. Vincent de Paul Church can't remain just a testament to something people once believed (even when we undertake our own material restoration)

According to Baruch, the authentic Church of Jesus is the one which takes off her robe of sadness and misery and puts on the royal cloak of God's justice; a doleful Church isn't the Church of my Jesus: do we, then, carry the joy of God in our hearts and on our faces?

The authentic Church of Jesus is the one which stands erect, looks to the east, and whose face is illuminated by the rising sun; a dormant Church isn't the Church of my Jesus: are our faces, then, radiant with the light of Christ?

The authentic Church of Jesus is the one which gathers her children together around the holy Word of God; a Church that puts up barriers of human words between her children isn't the Church of my Jesus: does love unite us as brothers and sisters around him?

The authentic Church of Jesus is the one that tears down the mountains of pride and the hills of bitterness, and fills in the valleys of despair; a Church that doesn't dare to hope isn't the Church of my Jesus: are we, then, a path of hope for our brothers and sisters?

Jesus clothes the Church in a cloak of light woven from glory and justice; mercy and joy escort her on the way to heaven; my friends: may ours be a community of love upon which the beauty of the Lord shines brightly, the smile of God in the midst of the world's tears!