

St. Joseph's Parish: an inclusive community

Weekend Bulletin

A PARISH OF THE MISSIONARY
OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

151 Laurier Avenue East, Ottawa ON K1N 6N8 | 613.233.4095 | info@st-josephs.ca

**December 24, 2025 to
January 4, 2026**

Nativity, Holy Family, Mary the Holy
Mother, Epiphany

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Christmas Message from our Pastor

Christmas, the mystery that never ceases to amaze and to move us, is being celebrated tonight around the world. The Virgin Mary gives birth to Jesus, the Son of God, the Word made flesh who comes to live among us. It is through this mysterious event that the shepherds of Bethlehem are filled with joy as they greet the angels who sang: "Glory to God and peace to all".

This event that took place two thousand years ago is presented to us once again through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the fruit of love that God has planned from the beginning of time to say, "I love you, I forgive you, come back to me for my heart is opened to welcome you back to the Father's house. The doors of the Father's heart are always open. He awaits anxiously for your response.

As we continue to celebrate this Holy Year where we are called to be Pilgrims of Hope, we are encouraged to be witnesses of God's mercy in the midst of our world, and to help shape our history in merciful ways. Being steadfast in hope, we can return to Him like lost sheep, knowing that Jesus is at the door. Unfortunately, we often hesitate at the threshold of this door when seeing our own transgressions of the past; unsure if God is still willing to welcome a sinner like us.

On this feast day, we are called not to be afraid of coming to the stable of Bethlehem with our own humble gifts – not gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but an open heart ready to continue the journey of faith with courage. *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

– Fr. Robert Laroche, OMI; pastor at St. Joseph's Parish

Mass Times

We have a comprehensive schedule of our Advent and Christmas Masses available at the Welcome Desk, or online here:

<https://www.st-josephs.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Advent-and-Christmas-2025-DIGITAL-1.pdf>



Connect with us!



@st.josephs.parish



@stjosephlaurier



<https://www.st-josephs.ca/>

Music at the Masses

- Cantor with Piano/Instrumental Prel/Postlude - Dec 25, Dec 27, Dec 31, Jan 1, Jan 3
- Choir with Organ - Dec 24 (both Masses), Dec 28, Jan 4

Visitors are always welcome! We're glad you've planned to join us.

Parking is free in the church lot for our service times; and we encourage you to explore sustainable methods of transportation such as public transit, walking, and carpooling.

Information on getting here is found on our website under Visitors Welcome > Visiting Us.

Holiday Messages

Ministry Contacts

A Message from Parish Pastoral Council

Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) would like to wish you all a happy and healthy Christmas and new year. May the Joy and Peace of Jesus and the Holy Family be with you and your families.

At the AGM in June (2025) PPC welcomed three new members, Katelyn Adey, Michel Armani, and Myah Tomaski. In the fall we found ourselves in need of three additional members. When asked, Brian O'Shea, David Friday, and Edwin Okoduwa each agreed to join PPC. Together with returning members, Angela McCanny, Claire Cheesman, Luke Guimond, and Marwan Abou Diwan, plus ex-officio members Fr. Robert Laroche and Christopher Adam, this is your Parish Pastoral Council for 2025-2026. We acknowledge and thank Beth Smith, Joy Umoafia, Kathleen Strader, Roshene Lawson, Stephen Okoduwa, and Walter Hughes for all that they contributed during their term on Council.

You may have seen a request in the bulletin for volunteers to form a Social Events Committee. This initiative is in response to what we heard from you, the parishioners of St. Joe's, when we asked (last spring) "What would help you feel more connected to other parishioners". A desire to meet and socialize with fellow parishioners was expressed. Two people have come forward so far. More volunteers are needed for this to succeed, please give it some thought and contact Mikayla at frontdesk@st-josephs.ca if you would like to be involved.

Other ways that we are responding to feedback from the 'Conversation Starters' and the Synodal process, are to showcase parish ministries periodically after Mass, beginning in January, and to explore opportunities for faith sharing groups. You can contact me at clairecheesman@rogers.com Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! — **Claire Cheesman, Parish Pastoral Council Chair**

Festival of Lessons & Carols 2025

Many thanks to our dedicated and talented St. Joseph's Parish Choir and to Jamie Loback, Director of Music and Liturgy, for hosting the annual **Festival of Lessons and Carols** on Sunday, December 21, in support of the St. Joe's Supper Table community meal programme and food bank! The service, elevated by music that is among the best of any church in Ottawa, raised \$4,000 in support of the Supper Table. More than 160 parishioners and members of the broader Ottawa community joined our 30 choristers, and stayed for a reception and time of fellowship following the service.

The carols sung encapsulated the essence of Christmas: the light and the hope of universal redemption in the incarnate God — Jesus, the King of Kings, who is born on the most distant peripheries of a great empire, on the margins of society. Perhaps none encapsulated that hope of God with us more explicitly than the verse: "As with gladness men of old, Did the guiding star behold, As with joy they hailed its light, Leading onward, beaming bright. So most gracious God, may we Evermore be led to thee."

Thank you to all who attended the service and supported the St. Joe's Supper Table! Merry Christmas!

— **Christopher Adam, Executive Director**



History Committee:

Terry Byrne
tvb1643@gmail.com

Liturgical Environment

Ministry: Wayne Moyle
waynemoyle8@gmail.com

Refugee Outreach Committee (ROC):

Dona Bowers
donabowers22@gmail.com

Pastoral Visiting Contact:

Mikayla in the Office
613-233-4095 x251
info@st-josephs.ca

English Conversation

Group for newcomers:
Michaelrichard2008@hotmail.com

Christian Meditation:

Tom Grace: Mon @ 9:30am
tom.grace@sympatico.ca
Beth Smith: Fri @ 7pm
613-563-7091

Grocery Card Program (OMRA):

Donna Rietschlin
dbrietschlin@hotmail.com

Funeral Ministry:

Dianne Taylor
taylortd@bell.net

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada:

Joan O'Connell
joanoco@rogers.com

Hospitality Committee:

Kathleen Allan
kathleenallan1903@gmail.com

2SLGBTQ+

Accompaniment Ministry:
Andrew Pump
apump_82@hotmail.com

To add or update Ministry info on this sidebar, please contact Mikayla at info@st-josephs.ca or extension 251.

STAFF DIRECTORY

PASTORAL

Executive Director

Christopher Adam x223
cadam@st-josephs.ca

Pastor

Fr. Robert Laroche x222
rlaroche@omilacombe.ca

Parish Pastoral Council

Claire Cheesman, Chair
clairecheesman@rogers.com

Music & Liturgy Director (concert and rehearsal rentals)

Jamie Loback x228
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Coordinator of Young Adult Ministry & Faith Formation

Paul Dansereau x235
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MINISTRIES

Supper Table Manager

Kathleen Strader x221
supportable@st-josephs.ca

Women's Centre Director

Jennifer Clark x226
jclark@st-josephs.ca

ADMINISTRATION

Administrative Coordinator (general enquiries)

Mikayla Odut
613-233-4095 x251
info@st-josephs.ca

Finance Coordinator

Georgeta Mutu x229
gmutu@st-josephs.ca

FACILITIES

Maintenance/Custodial

Contact Mikayla in the Front Office.

LOCATION

Church & Hall
174 Wilbrod St.
Office & Mailing
151 Laurier Ave. E.
Ottawa, ON
K1N 6N8

Holiday Messages

2025 Holiday Recap

St. Joe's Women's Centre

Holiday Family Support Program:

Provided gifts and a meaningful experience to 84 families and 196 children in total.

SJWC Holiday Party:

Celebrated as a community and shared a delicious meal together with 100 people in attendance, including 25 children.

Thank you to each person who volunteered, made a donation, and spread the word to help support our community this holiday season and throughout the year!



Merry Christmas

to all the St. Joe's parishioners, who so generously support the Refugee Outreach Committee!



Left: a family the ROC supported and assisted moving to Canada before Covid

Right: a Syrian family the ROC has sponsored

Shoeboxes for the Presider's Assistants

Did you receive shoes for Christmas this year? Keep your shoeboxes and bring them to St. Joe's!

The Presider's Assistant Ministry is in need of some shoeboxes. They can be dropped off in the Sacristy before or after any Mass.



Christmas Giving Tree

Find a star on the Christmas Giving Tree and gift the listed item for those who rely on our poverty relief ministries. Items most in need include hygiene products (soap, feminine hygiene), canned meats, and canned fruits/vegetables. Please only bring non-perishable items over the Christmas break

Ensure all are remembered and receive the support they need this Christmas season.

Parish Announcements

Memorial Poinsettia Dedications

Each year, we invite our community to donate or dedicate a poinsettia to a friend or loved one who has passed. The names of those who have departed, to whom the poinsettias in our liturgical space are dedicated, are listed below.

We remember them in our prayers this Christmas season, and appreciate their symbolic presence as enhancement of our Liturgical space.

Anita Kensley Davie
Ann Vautour
Anne & Herb
Anne Myers
Anneliese Apholz
Archie & Helen
Arlene & Larry Gallant
Arsenio, Consuelo, & Ed Vistro
Art Davis
Bill Hughes
Bride Kavanagh
Brown & Carter families
Byrne Family
Carl Wilson
Caroline Landry
Cecilia and Elic D'Rozario
Chris Ferris
Christina Ballard
Chuck Lemire
Clair & Violet Gleddie
Claire Desabrais
Clyde and Margaret Collins
Dan Hanfield
Daniele Duini
Dave Binder
Dave Paget

David & Janice McLaren
Dipak Purification
Earl Wynands
Esther Leafloor
Eva Adam Wahba
Fagan Families
Gloria Waterhouse
Helen & Fred Morris
Helen McGregor McLaren
His Holiness, Pope Francis
Horan Family
Jean Paul & Kathleen Durocher
Jess, Resty, & Jozel Dela Paz
Jim, Doreen, & Kevin Gillen
Joan Roche
Joan Yerema
John Bak
John Martin Cummins
Kathleen Furlong & James Curran
Kelly Family
Lawrence Hegarty
Liz Henry
Margaret Oszlanszky
Maria Larumbe
Mary & Mason

Mary Frances Taylor
Mary Lou McCluskey
McMahon Family
Melanie McCoy
Mélina Brunet
Milan Ivanko
Molly Fraser
Murdoch Families
Murray & Kitty Crowe
O'Meara Family
Pamela Mérey
Patricia and Francis Purification
Paulette Bak
Pauline Lapensee
Peter Adam
Peter Gendron
Richard Tillmann
Robert Lamoureux
Ronald Alain
Stolarik Family
Theresa Odut (née Krassilowsky)
Tom Alexandroviwicz
Vaughne Hollar
Wayne Mackenzie
Wellie & Philip Thalmann
Yolande, John, Eric, Jean-Luc, & Claire

Christmas: Did you know...

Xmas is a common abbreviation for Christmas; where some incorrectly perceive as "crossing Christ out of Christmas".

In reality, the 'X' comes from the Greek letter Chi (X) – the first letter of Christ's name (Χριστός) in Greek, making it a traditional shorthand meaning "Christ's Mass". The suffix "-mas" comes from the Old English mæsse, meaning Mass or festival, so Xmas itself is derived from Greek and Old English to mean "Christ's Mass".



Secular holiday celebraters still enjoy Christmas; often with **candy canes**, children having a visit from **Santa Claus**, and putting up a **Christmas tree**. However, these celebrations are not as far removed from religion as most think! *Learn more about the symbols of each below.*



The big bearded, rosy-cheeked jolly old gift-giving man is known as Father Christmas; but have you wondered how he got the name Santa Claus? It's from *Sinterklaas*, which means Saint Nicholas in Dutch. St. Nicholas was a Christian bishop who lived in the 4th century – known for being kind and generous. He later became the patron saint of children.

Candy Canes emerged from Germany in the 1600's, where sugar sticks were bent into the shape of a shepherd's crook – allegedly to keep children quiet and occupied during nativity services. The shape symbolises Jesus as the Good Shepherd; and the colours white as purity, and red for Christ's blood.

The simple Christmas Tree represents hope and life through the winter, and decorated with lights (formerly candles) symbolising Christ as the "light of the world".

Advent Reflections and Upcoming Events

Advent Reflections – Available Online

At the point in each service where a priest's homily would normally be, we occasionally have lay reflectors take on this task through our Reflections Ministry. Their contributions help us dive deeper into the service's readings and broaden our spiritual understanding. This is also a part of our commitment so that all parishioners can partake in "full, conscious, and active participation in our liturgies".

The past two weekends, finishing Advent, featured two well-known parishioners giving reflections about the meaning of Advent. Read their contributions by clicking/typing the links below.

Third Sunday of Advent: John Rietschlin

<https://www.st-josephs.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/JRietschlin-3rd-Sunday-of-Advent-Reflection.pdf>

Fourth Sunday of Advent: Luke Guimond

<https://www.st-josephs.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/GUIMOND-4th-Sunday-of-Advent-Reflection.pdf>



Remembering Herman De Souza

Herman De Souza was a larger-than-life presence who filled the world with laughter, community, and joy. He passed away on December 17 after a year-long struggle with dementia. He is mourned by Sunita De Souza, Janet Mann, Katherine Pestieau, and all of his loving family which came to include most everyone he met. A funeral will be held on **Saturday, January 3 at noon**, here at St. Joseph's. All are welcome.

In Herman's memory, donations can be made to the Ottawa Regional Youth choir. Visit <https://oryc.ca/support-us/> for more information.

New Year's Dance Hosted by St. Joseph's Young Adults

Who: All parishioners, young and old(er)

When: 6-7:45pm, January 17th, 2026

Where: St. Joseph's Parish Hall

What: Community Dance including 45min Waltz lesson followed by 45min Cha Cha lesson. Light refreshments are provided

Dress code: semi-formal

Cost: Freewill contribution. Funds go toward the young adult retreat fund



ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH HOLIDAY HOURS AND CLOSURES

 **St. Joseph's Parish**
Front Office

 **St. Joe's**
SUPPER TABLE

 **ST. JOE'S**
Kitchen & Cafeteria

December 22
December 23
Christmas Eve
Dec 25-Jan 4
January 5

Dec 20-Jan 4
January 5

December 22
December 23
December 24
Dec 25-Jan 4
January 5

CLOSED
Open 1-4pm
Closed
Closed
Regular Hours

Closed
Regular Hours

9:30am-5pm
12-3:30pm
Open 9:30-2
Closed
Regular hours

Did you enjoy this publication, and want to stay informed about events in our parish and throughout the community?

Subscribe to our Parish Bulletin e-subscription! You'll get our weekly Bulletin – a Church newsletter – delivered right to your inbox, every Friday. Bulletin publications resume January 9.

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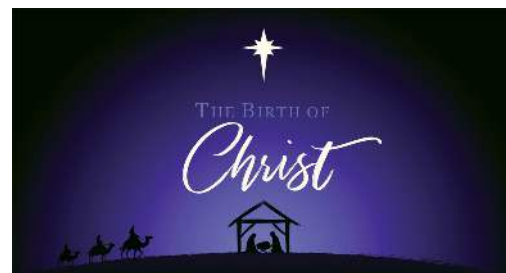


Either type the link/scan the QR code, then enter your email – it's that simple!

<https://forms.sendpulse.com/03e5aee083>

December 24
to January 10

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST. JOE'S?



See the Advent / Christmas Mass Schedules here:
<https://www.st-josephs.ca/about/mass-and-prayer-times/>

	Wednesday 24th	Thursday 25th	Friday 26th	Saturday 27th
This Week	Christmas Eve Services: 5pm - Children's Pageant 9pm - Candlelit with Choral Prelude	Christmas Day Service: 10:30am <i>Merry Christmas!</i>		- Saturday Mass, 5pm - Vibe Salsa 7pm, Parish Hall

	Sunday 28th	Monday 29th	Tuesday 30th	Wednesday 31st	Thursday 1st	Friday 2nd	Saturday 3rd
This Week	- Family Mass, 10:30am	- Parishioner wedding (private event)		- New Year's Eve service, 5pm	- New Year's Day service, 10:30am 		- Funeral: Herman De Souza, 12pm - Saturday Mass, 5pm

	Sunday 4th	Monday 5th	Tuesday 6th	Wednesday 7th	Thursday 8th	Friday 9th	Saturday 10th
Office Hours	CLOSED (today only)	9am-1pm	CLOSED	9am-1pm	2:30-6:30pm	9am-1pm	CLOSED
This Week	- Family Mass, 10:30am			- Weekday Mass, 12 noon	- Weekday Mass, 12 noon - ROC 1pm, Oblate Lounge - AA 7pm, Oblate Lounge - Vibe Salsa, 7pm	- Weekday Mass, 12 noon - Christian Meditation 7pm, Library Next Bulletin sent out	- Saturday Mass, 5pm



Financial Stewardship and Donations

Financial transparency and proper use of your donations is important to us. We post collection totals in our Bulletins: the services from December 20-January 4 will be shared in our January 9 publication.

To donate and receive a tax receipt, please **scan the QR** to the right or in each pew, use the **guest envelopes** in your pew (noting your details) to use the collection basket, or follow **Contribute > Donate on our website**.

Thank you for your generous contributions to the operations and social outreach programmes of St. Joe's!

Want to support our Parish? Donate one time or ongoing here:
<https://linktr.ee/st.josephs>



Weekday Noon Masses are suspended during the Christmas Break. They will resume Wednesday, January 7, 2026.

To add a name to the prayers for sick or those who have died during our holiday closure, please see a Parish staff member.

(Published list accurate as of December 24, 2025)



Prayers for those who are ill:

Mary Duggan, Eleanor Rabnett Kathy Jackson, B     Bernhardt, Rebecca Thoburn, Klaus Ruhland, Marie-Anne Burgess, Jim McDonald, & Heather Paterson.

Prayers for those who have died:

Henry and Patricia Moore, Carol Hare, Gary Tithecott, Frances Richardson, Bryan Harvey, Herman De Souza, & Fr. Eugene King OMI.