

The Love of God In Being Born As An Infant

Christmas Novena for Dec 17

The Son of God, in becoming human for our sake, might have appeared in the world at the age of a grown man, the way Adam appeared when he was created. But since children usually attract greater love to themselves from those who take care of them, Jesus chose to appear on earth as an infant; and as the poorest and most miserable infant ever born.

Saint Peter Chrysologous wrote: “Our God chose to be born this way because he wanted to be loved.” The prophet Isaiah had already predicted that the Son of God was to be born an infant and give himself entirely to us through the love he bore for us: **A child is born to us, a son is given to us (Isaiah 9:6a).**

O my Jesus, almighty and true God, what else could possibly have attracted you to come from heaven and be born in a cave, if not your love for us?

What convinced you to leave the lap of your Father and lay yourself down in a manger?
 What drew you down from your throne above the stars to stretch yourself out on a little pile of straw?
 What, from the midst of the nine choirs of angels, has placed you between these sheep and oxen?
 You inflame the seraphim with holy fire, yet look, you tremble from the cold in this stable! You give the sun, the stars, and the planets their paths of movement, yet now you cannot move at all without being carried in someone’s arms!

You provide food for all creatures, and yet now you depend on a little milk to sustain your life. You are the delight of heaven, and yet how is it that I now hear you

whimper and cry? Tell me, who has reduced you to such lowliness? “Who has done this? Love has done it,” says Saint Bernard. Yes, the love that you have for us has done it.

Prayers & Reflections

O dearest Infant, tell me what you came on earth to do. Tell me whom you are seeking. Ah, yes, I now understand... you have come to die for me, a lost sheep, in order that I may no more hide from you, but love you. O Jesus, my treasure, my life, my love, my all, if I do not love you, then whom shall I love? Where can I find a mother or father, a friend, or a spouse more loving than you? And who has ever loved me more than you have? I am sorry that I have lived so many years in this world and yet still love you so little, even having offended you and sometimes forgotten you.

Forgive me, O my beloved Redeemer, for I regret that I have ever treated you so badly. I am sorry with all my heart. Forgive me, and give me your grace so that I may never again separate myself from you, and so that I may love you constantly for the rest of my life. O my love, I give myself to you entirely. Accept me, Lord, and do not reject me, even though I might deserve it.

O Mary, you are my advocate. You always obtain whatever you ask from your son. Beg him to forgive me, and to help me persevere until death.

St Alphonsus Meditations

If you are not attending daily Mass at OLPH this week but would like to pray the complete Novena, please check out the link below.

Meditation 1: December 16

The love that God has shown to us in becoming human.

Meditation 2: December 17

The love of God in being born as an infant.

Meditation 3: December 18

The life of poverty which Jesus lived, even from his birth.

Meditation 4: December 19

The life of humility which Jesus lived, even from his infancy.

Meditation 5: December 20

The life of sorrow which Jesus lived, even from his birth.

Meditation 6: December 21

The mercy of God in coming from heaven to save us by his death.

Meditation 7: December 22

The journey of the Infant Jesus to Egypt.

Meditation 8: December 23

The sojourn of the Infant Jesus in Egypt and Nazareth.

Meditation 9: December 24

The birth of the Infant Jesus in the cave of Bethlehem

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December 17, 2017

3rd Sunday of Advent

MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm
 (Anticipated Mass)
 Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm
 Monday – Wednesday 8am
 Thursday Mass/Novena:
 8am & 7pm
 Friday, Saturday, Holidays:
 9am
 (Fridays in July & August:
 8am)
 Reconciliation
 Saturday: 4-4:45pm
 Adoration
 Saturday 9:30-10am
 Library Hours
 Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

STAFF

Pastor

Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R.

Associate Pastor

Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.

Office Manager

Virginia Fong

Pastoral Coordinator

Bertilla Watanabe

Bookkeeper

Corinna Siy

Youth Ministry Coordinator

Theresa Barao

OLPH School Principal

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Ophchurchvancouver

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A Gloomy Disciple is a Disciple of Gloom

Dear Friends & Parishioners,

The 3rd Sunday of Advent is when priests wear rose... not pink, subtle difference! This is because we rejoice that the coming of the Lord is close at hand. This weekend we also begin St Alphonsus’ Christmas novena. St Alphonsus speaks of love for Jesus in such tender and expressive ways. His prayer of the Way of the Cross is probably one of the most frequently used in churches around the world because of his gift of awe and wonder at the great deeds God has done for us. You’ll see this love of the Lord in his Christmas novena as well. The second day of the Novena on the back page will be prayed at all Masses.

A couple of years ago, Fr Mike Brehl sent us a message during Advent with some thoughts which were so meaningful and speak to the times we live in. It is a reminder of the need to be joyful at all times.

Fr Brehl writes: “To believe in the Incarnation, to celebrate Christmas, is to proclaim in word and in action a deep respect for all life and for every human person. In a world that is darkened by the violence of hatred and prejudice, Christmas proclaims that every person is beloved of God. At a time when fundamentalists deny the value of those who do not agree with them, the Incarnation proclaims that no one can be dismissed or destroyed in God’s name.

“It is the joy of the Gospel which attracts others to live the values of the Gospel. We cannot be sad, dissatisfied, fault-finding missionaries, for as Pope Francis says, ‘a gloomy disciple is a disciple of gloom.’ In the darkness of suffering, injustice and disappointment, can we find the light of joy which reveals the face of Christ? Perhaps the Christmas star can lead us to the child, and finding him, may we find one another.

“Pope Francis calls us to “wake up the world,” to become experts in communion, to move out of our ‘comfort zone,’ to go out from petty squabbles and destructive gossip. Go out into the whole world – to the peripheries, to those who have lost hope, to families in difficulties, to young people and the elderly. As St. Alphonsus says, ‘If you wish to be loved, love.’”



May our Blessed Mother inspire us to be disciples of good cheer.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R



My soul shall exult in my God. – Luke 1

NEWS & NOTICES

Sunday Offering Envelopes: Your 2018 Sunday Offering Envelopes are available for pick-up this weekend in the church foyer. If your box of envelopes is not there or if you are new to the parish, please contact the office.

St. Alphonsus Christmas Novena: We start the Christmas Novena this weekend Dec 16. St Alphonsus' Novena will be prayed at Daily Mass till Dec 24. Please join us.

Seniors Christmas Concert & Tea: Tickets for this annual event put on by OLPH School are sold out. If seniors of the parish and grandparents of schoolchildren are still interested in attending the noon performance on Wednesday Dec 20, please contact the school office to be put on a wait list.

OLPH School Open House: Wednesday Jan 10, 2018 7pm-8pm. Application packages will be available that day.

OLPH School Christmas Break: December 23 – January 7, 2018.

World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018: Mass will be celebrated on Sunday, Jan. 21 at 2:30 p.m. at St. Patrick's Parish, Vancouver, by Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, for the 6th year in our Archdiocese. A celebration of different cultural traditions will follow Mass. Visit rcav.org/wdmr or send us an email at wdmr@rcav.org for more details.

Project Advance: Donations on December 8 were at \$79,762. We only have 2 weeks left to the end of the year to hit our target of \$102,000. Please make a prayerful consideration towards giving to this year's Appeal. Thank you!

Archbishop's Annual Mass for Life: "May we defend it and promote it from conception to its natural end." Join us as we celebrate life on Thursday, Dec. 28, at Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver. Rosary begins at 11:30 a.m. and Mass is at 12:10 p.m. Reception to follow in the Cathedral Hall. If you would like to donate finger foods for this reception, it would be much appreciated. Details at rcav.org/event/annual-mass-life-2017

Development & Peace Membership Drive: This year is the 50th anniversary of the formation of Development & Peace. To celebrate our jubilee, we are offering free membership!

Be at the heart of change, become a member to:

- Learn about injustice and what you can do about it.
- Take concrete actions in solidarity with the poorest and most vulnerable people of the Global South.
- Join a dynamic cross-Canada movement for global peace and justice.
- Speak out! When we act together, change is possible.

Sign up online at www.devp.org or email Deirdre Webster for more info, dmswebster@gmail.com.

NOVEMBER COLLECTIONS: THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

	NOVEMBER
Sunday Offerings	\$31,243.25
Collection for the Needy	\$1,606.60
Peter's Pence	\$1,479.80
Evangelization of the Nations	\$115.00
Home Missions	\$1,498.00
Food Bank	\$707.75
Hearts on Fire	\$407.00

Stewardship Reflection

"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" - 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18

This scripture reading sums up Stewardship. "Rejoice always" means place your trust in God; He will provide all that you need. "Pray constantly" means prayer should be a running conversation with God throughout the whole day, every day. "Give thanks in all circumstances" means even in bad situations, thank God. Suffering a little bit helps build empathy for others in similar situations.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Christmas & New Year

As Christmas falls on a Monday this year, some people have asked whether a Sunday evening Mass on Christmas Eve would fulfill both the obligation for a Sunday Mass and the obligation for a Christmas Day Mass. The short answer... no. The faithful should attend two Masses to fulfill their Sunday and Christmas Mass obligations.

4th Sunday of Advent Masses

Sat Dec 23 – 5pm
Sun Dec 24 – 9am, 11am

Christmas Masses

Sun Dec 24 - 5pm (Children's Mass),
7pm (Youth-led Mass)
12am Midnight Mass with carols from 11:45pm
Mon Dec 25 – 9am, 11am & 5pm

New Year's Weekend Masses

(Feast of the Holy Family)
Sat Dec 30 – 5pm
Sun Dec 31st – 9am, 11am & 5pm

New Year's Day Masses

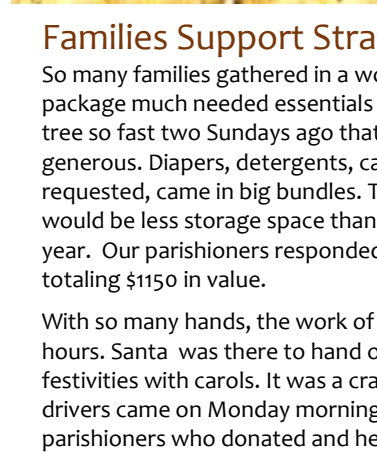
(Feast of Mary Holy Mother of God: Day of Obligation)
Mon Jan 1st – 9am & 11am

JANUARY

Snowshoeing for Youth



Want to get out and do something really fun in the cold, cold month of January? The OLPH Youth Ministry is organizing a snowshoeing trip for youth of our parish. All young people Grade 7 and up are invited to join us. If you're in your early 20s and want to play a leadership role, we look forward to having you join us as well! Parent drivers much appreciated!! Look out for more details in the coming weeks. For more info, contact Theresa olphyouthmin@gmail.com.



ADVENT: A TIME TO REACH OUT



Families Support Strathcona School at Santa's Workshop

So many families gathered in a wonderful show of support for the second year running, to donate and package much needed essentials for Strathcona Community School. Gift tags were flying off the Giving tree so fast two Sundays ago that we had to make more tags in a hurry. The returns were indeed generous. Diapers, detergents, canned foods, pasta, rice, and a whole lot of other things the school had requested, came in big bundles. The school had also specified that due to the seismic upgrade, there would be less storage space than last year. That's why they requested that more gift cards be given this year. Our parishioners responded most graciously. We received gift cards for several grocery stores totaling \$1150 in value.

With so many hands, the work of sorting and packaging by eager volunteers was done in less than two hours. Santa was there to hand out little candy canes to the good people gathered. Children added to the festivities with carols. It was a crazy, fun and productive gathering for a very good cause! Volunteer drivers came on Monday morning to deliver the boxes to Strathcona School. Thank you to all our parishioners who donated and helped with this effort!

