

Life is A Pilgrimage to Eternal Life

By Deacon Keith A. Fournier

Our Catholic liturgical year follows a rhythmic cycle which points us toward beginnings and ends. In doing so, it emphasizes important truths that can only be grasped through faith. This Sunday, the Feast of Christ the King, is the last Sunday in the Church year. Our Catholic faith and its Liturgical practices proclaim to a world hungry for meaning that Jesus Christ is the "Alpha", (the first letter of the Greek alphabet) and the "Omega" (the last letter), the beginning and the end. He is the Giver, the Governor and the fulfillment of all time. In Him the whole world is being made new and every end becomes a beginning, for those with the greatest treasure, living faith.

When we really enter into the Liturgical seasons of our Church, when they become granular and real, they offer a way to receive time as a continual gift and change the way we actually live our daily lives. Our choice to celebrate them helps us to grow in the life of grace as we say "yes" to their invitations. They invite us to walk in a new way of life which becomes infused with supernatural meaning; to enter into the mystery of living in the Church as the New World and thereby become leaven for an age which has lost its soul. Human beings have always marked time by significant events. The real question is not whether we will mark time, but how we will mark time? What events and what messages are we proclaiming in our scheduling? What are we saying with our lives in this increasingly barren age which needs the witness of God's loving plan?

For the Christian, time is not meant to be a tyrant, ruling over us. Nor is the passing of time to be experienced as an enemy, somehow stealing our youth and opportunity. Rather, time is meant to become a companion, a friend and a teacher, instructing us; offering us a series of invitations to allow the Lord to truly become our King by reigning in our daily lives. Our conscious awareness of time makes it a path along which the redemptive loving plan of a timeless God is revealed and received. In Christ, time is now given back to us as a gift. It offers us a field of choice and a path to holiness and human flourishing.

As we view time with this lens of faith, we discover that life is a pilgrimage to Life. The Lord invites us, beginning now, to participate in His loving plan through His Son Jesus to recreate the entire cosmos. Time becomes the road along which this loving plan of redemption proceeds.

Those Baptized into Jesus Christ continue His redemptive mission until he returns to establish His Reign. We do this by living in His Body, the Church, and drawing the whole world into the New World beginning now. The Church is, in one of the early father's favorite descriptions, that "New World". This new family of the Church was then sent on mission, when, after the Resurrection, Jesus breathed His Spirit into them at Pentecost.

In our celebration of a Church Year, we not only remember the great events of the life, ministry and mission of the Lord, we also celebrate the life and death of our family members and the Saints who have gone on before us. They are models and companions for the journey of life and are our great intercessors. As St. Paul reminded the Roman Christians, not even death separates us any longer. (Romans 8:38, 39) They will welcome us into eternity. However, from that eternal now, living in the Communion of love, they now help us along the daily path of time through both their example and their prayer.

As we progress through liturgical time we are invited to enter into the great events of faith. So, on this last week of the liturgical year, through our readings and prayer, we are invited to reflect on the "last things"- death, judgment, heaven and hell. We do so in order to change, to be converted; to enter more fully into the Divine plan. On this Feast of Christ the King we celebrate the full and final triumph and return of the One through whom the entire universe was created - and in whom it is being "recreated" - and by whom it will be completely reconstituted and handed back to the Father at the "end" of all time. That end will mark the beginning of a timeless new heaven and a new earth when "He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death." (Revelations 21:4).

As we move from one Church year to the next, we also move along in the timeline of the human life allotted to each one of us. We age. The certainty of our own death is meant to illuminate our life and the certainty of the end of all time is meant to illuminate its purpose and culmination in Christ. For both to be experienced by faith we must truly believe in Jesus Christ, the beginning and the end. When we do, death can become, as we move closer to it, a second birth. Francis of Assisi prayed these words in his most popular prayer "it is in dying that we are born to eternal life." He referred to death as a "sister" implying that he had a relationship with it. So too did all the great heroes our Church, the saints. So can we if we choose to walk the way of living faith, immersed in the life of grace. With a few exceptions, Christians celebrate the death of Saints because death is not an end but the beginning of an eternal life with God.

Our "use" of time is meant to bear good fruit. We are called to bear a harvest which will accompany us into eternity. It will - if we have an intimate relationship with the One who both gives and governs time. When time is perceived as a gift from God and welcomed as an opportunity for bearing the fruits of love and holiness, we learn to receive it in love and perceive it as a field of choice and an environment for holiness. We choose to fill our lives with love and pour ourselves out for the God of love. When we live this kind of life, Jesus can find a home within us from which He can continue His redemptive mission, in time. The ancients were fond of a Latin phrase "Carpe Diem", which literally means "seize the day." For we who are living in communion in Christ Jesus, that phrase can take on a whole new meaning. We always journey toward the "Day of the Lord", when He will return as King.

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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)
Children's Mass: 9am 1st
Sunday of the month Oct-June
Children's Liturgy: 11am
All Sundays except the 1st
Sunday from Sept- June
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.

In Residence

William Comerford, C.Ss.R.

Office Manager

Virginia Fong

Pastoral Coordinator

Bertilla Watanabe

Bookkeeper

Corinna Siy

Youth Ministry Coordinator

Theresa Barao

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OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

November 25, 2018

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Waiting in Beauty and Silence for the Coming of the Lord

Dear Parishioners,

It is an irony that on the feast of Christ the King when we ponder the events of Good Friday, redemption and the final coming of the Lord, all of North America is caught up in the craziness of Black Friday, the biggest retail event of the year which is, supposedly the smartest way to prepare for Christmas.

Not that there's anything wrong in picking up a bargain or two. I personally look forward to Cyber Monday to pick up deals in the tech department. But you know what I'm talking about. There has to be a place deep within us which says no to the commercial distractions and yes to the quiet stirrings of the soul which God is inviting us into at this time.

There are several Advent Retreats being organized at parishes in the Archdiocese. It looks like the one which our Redemptorist Associates are organizing, is one of the few Advent retreats that don't charge for admission. Now there's a bargain worth going after.

The Advent Concert next Saturday evening at 7pm is also going to be a beautiful evening of good music and prayer which will involve the participation of many young children and youth. The Choirs have prepared a beautiful selection of music and for the first time this year, I've been told, we have an impressive number of male basses and tenors as well as a mother and child on violins. The concert and prayers will be followed by the Christmas light-up with hot chocolate, apple cider and Christmas cookies. If it's a fine evening we might even have some music around the grotto. So, yes, there are many beautiful ways to prepare for the coming of the Lord outside of the commercially-driven events.

Let us ask our Blessed Mother to guide us in the ways of beauty and silence that mark the period of waiting for our Lord as Advent approaches.

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

PRAYER FOR PROJECT ADVANCE 2018

O God, the Father of every gift, all that we are and have comes from your hand. In Jesus Christ, your Son, you have given us the greatest of all gifts. Fill our hearts with his love so that we may be parish communities of faithful, caring people. Grant us the grace to be good stewards who in the name and spirit of Jesus, share our gifts of time, talent and treasure for the building up of your Kingdom in our Archdiocese and throughout the world. May we see Project Advance as our way to live gratefully and give generously for your honour and glory. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



NEWS & NOTICES

Weekly Collection: Sunday Mass Offering Nov 17 & 18: \$5,554.65. Home Missions: \$1,049.25. Food Bank: \$588.70. Peter's Pence: \$20. Initial Offering: \$50. Offering for the Needy: \$155. Jubilee Grotto: \$100. Thank you for your faith-filled generosity.

Project Advance Report: On Nov 4 pledges including recurring donations up to 31 Dec this year were at \$74,551 with participation from 142 donors. We have exceeded our archdiocesan goal of \$52,000. All funds raised now will be rebated to the parish. Our total goal is \$104,000 which will go toward the parish infrastructure renewal. Thank you for your prayerful support.

Christmas Fair Raffle: Thank you to the CWL and other volunteers who helped at this year's Christmas Fair. Raffle prize winners will be posted on the church bulletin board. Prizes include: Banquet for 10 and 2 Lunch certificates at Victoria Chinese Restaurant and 4 tickets to a Canucks game, 2 flex passes for 4 to attend Metro Live Theatre, Safeway Gift certificate, and 3 prizes of a book of 10 tickets for the Columbus Charities Lottery being sold now for a chance to win \$60,000 or a truck or car or motorcycle. The Columbus Charities Lottery tickets are now on sale to support Seniors Housing and Charitable activities of the Knights of Columbus of BC Yukon. For more information see us at www.KofCbc.org.

Prep Mass: PREP students will be collecting candy at all Masses this weekend. Candy collections will be donated to the Door Is Open and Missionaries of Charity. Thank you for your support.

Grade 2 Reconciliation: Grade 2 students and children in PREP will be receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time on Saturday Dec 1 at 10am. A reception will be held in the hall to mark this event.

Advent Penitential Service: Preparing our hearts and souls for the coming of Jesus is a very essential part of our Christmas preparation. A special Penitential Service will be held on Sunday Dec 16 at 2pm with visiting priests present to help with the sacrament of Reconciliation. Please set aside some time to be part of it.

OLPH Youth Christmas Cookie Sale: Look out for the lovely shortbread cookies OLPH Youth will be selling in another fundraising drive for their trip to Yellowknife. Cookies will go on sale next weekend.

Drivers Needed: On the Monday after the Giving Tree donations are made, we need drivers to help deliver the packaged items to Strathcona Elementary School. If you can help on Monday Dec 17 at 9am, please email Lara at olphchurchvolunteers@gmail.com.

Marian Meditations: Our 12-week series of Marian Meditations dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Help ends on Nov 29. This is a beautiful way to invoke the help of Our Blessed Mother for the spiritual and temporal needs of your family and friends for the coming year. Petitions written will be offered up at the evening Mass and Novena Devotions. Join us this Thursday 2:30pm-3pm as we end this series.

LFA Entrance Exam: Little Flower Academy is accepting applications from prospective Grade Eight candidates for the 2019-2020 school year. All students wishing to apply must sit the Entrance Exam on Saturday, December 8, 2018. To apply please fill out the online form on our school website www.lfab.org/apply or contact Kathi Wilson at 604-738-9016 ext 114.

Pro-life Mass and Prayer Vigil: Join us for a peaceful, prayerful vigil for unborn children and their parents on Saturday, Dec. 1. Mass is at 9 a.m. at St. Patrick's, Vancouver, followed by the Rosary. For upcoming dates visit <https://rcav.org/pro-life-mass-and-prayer-vigil>

Fiat: Women's Discernment Day of Recollection: Join us for an advent evening of recollection – Fiat of Women in the Old Testament on Saturday, Dec. 15, at 5 p.m. at the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist Convent, 2811 Venables Street, Vancouver. Fiat, the women's vocation discernment group for the Archdiocese of Vancouver, is getting ready for another year of events. Events are open to single, Catholic young women ages 18-35 who are open to discerning and responding to God's call in their life. Sign up now to receive emails of events throughout the year. Email womensvocations@rcav.org for more information. <https://rcav.org/event/fiat-day-of-recollection-2>

Stewardship Reflection

"Jesus answered, 'My kingdom does not belong to this world.'" JOHN 18:36

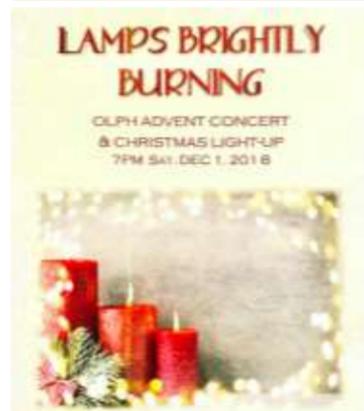
How often do we put all our time and energy into building a kingdom here on earth, forgetting that life here is short? The real kingdom is in the next life. Yet, how much time and energy do we invest in working for that eternal kingdom?

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

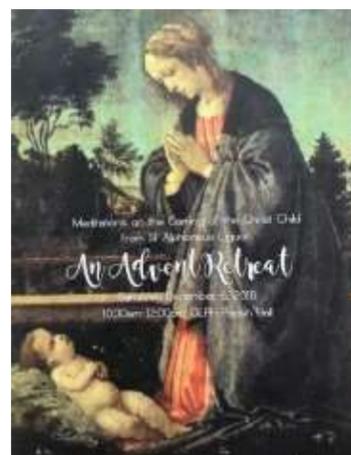
DECEMBER

Advent Concert & Light-up



Join us for beautiful music and Christmas meditations on Sat Dec 1 at 7pm followed by the light-up of the Grotto. Hot chocolate and Christmas cookies for all. Concert admission by donation. Proceeds go to Icon of Love Scholarship Fund for music lessons for students.

Advent Retreat



Come and join us for a beautiful Advent Retreat with Christmas meditations from the works of St Alphonsus to prepare your heart and mind for the coming of the Christ child. This Retreat is organized by the Redemptorist Associates of our parish. Join us for 9am Mass on Sat Dec 8. Coffee at 9:30am in the hall. Retreat 10am-12pm. Admission is free.

Giving Tree Donations

Donations for this year's Giving Tree Program will go to Strathcona Elementary School. Please pick up a tag from our Christmas tree next week and drop off your donations in the next two weeks. Volunteers who signed up for Santa's Workshop will help package your gifts on Sunday Dec 16 after the 11am Mass.

10 Great Reasons to Attend Daily Mass

By Lora Wilson

1) God is calling you to a deeper relationship. When I first started going to daily Mass, I felt a strong calling. The workings of divine providence helped to remove obstacles. Even after nine years, my prayer is the same: "Dear God, you know how much I need you to get through the day. If it is your will for me to attend Mass, make this possible for me." He usually does.

2) Seasons. The liturgical seasons add a new dimension to Mass with decorations, different colored vestments and particular themes in the readings. A good way to try out regular daily Mass attendance is to make a commitment to go during a particular season like Advent or Lent.

3) Quiet. Most parishes are open for a while before and after Mass. It's nice to have the opportunity for quiet time with the Lord, away from the distractions of home.

4) Example. I do not advertise the fact that I attend daily Mass, but some family and friends know. This opens the door to questions about faith. It also surprises and confuses people. "Why would you do that?" "How can you work Mass into your busy schedule?" I like to make them wonder.

5) Humility. Rather than feeling that I am holier than anyone else, daily Mass humbles me by reminding me that without God, I can do nothing. To keep my faith strong and deal with life's challenges, I need the extra graces of daily Mass.

6) The same and yet different. The essentials of the Mass are universal, but the readings, congregation and possibly the church you attend may be different. This helps me to remember that Catholic means universal. As the gospel has spread all over the world, it's likely that someone somewhere is celebrating Mass at any given moment.

7) The Saints. Daily Mass attendees learn more about the well-known saints (Anthony, Joseph, Therese of Liseux) and discover obscure ones from all times and places like the North American Martyrs, Jane Francis de Chantal, Paul Miki and companions, and St Januarius. Their stories show how God calls each of us to respond to His mercy and love in our own unique way.

8) Community. I am shy, so I don't necessarily know names of most of the people who attend daily Mass. I've struck up a few friendships with folks who obviously love the Lord and His Church. Attending Mass has become my first daily priority, and I sometimes go to other parishes to adapt to my work schedule. It's great to visit other parishes, to see their churches and liturgical customs, and to learn from other priests.

9) The Word of God. Hearing the Word of God proclaimed every day fosters a deeper understanding of scripture and the desire to know more. The Word becomes alive in your heart and you find yourself pondering something that you heard later in the day. I am often amazed at the way the lectionary readings provide the exact word that I need in difficult times.

10) Breakfast with Jesus. Daily Mass is like the time that the risen Lord cooked fish on a charcoal fire and served bread to the apostles on the beach. John 21:12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." He wants to feed you, too! He loves you so much, He wants to become a part of you, and to give you daily bread. What better way to start the day? www.catholic365.com

Vera Hill Celebrates 98th Birthday with Family & Friends



Happy Birthday, Vera! Vera Hill, a regular at Daily Mass until recently, celebrated her 98th birthday last week. Vera is known and loved in the daily morning Mass community. She was also a regular at the Thursday morning coffee club which gathers after Mass for breakfast and fellowship. Although Vera is not strong enough to attend Mass every day, she continues to receive Communion during the week through the help of members of the Pastoral Care group who visit her at home. Wishing you peace, blessings and many more great years ahead, Vera!

ADVENT PREPARATIONS

Redemptorist Pilgrimage: May 2-14

As part of our 150th Jubilee Icon of Love celebrations, the Redemptorists all over the world have organized several pilgrimages to visit the actual icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, places where St Alphonsus and St Gerard Majella lived and prayed as well as other places of interest in Italy.

The cost of the trip is \$4800. The early bird rate is \$4600. A deposit of \$500 must be made before Nov 30 for the early bird rate. Full payment is due by Jan 30, 2019. Arrangements can be made for pre-authorized payments as well. For more information about the pilgrimage, please contact Brian or Deon royaleorchid@shaw.ca or call Brian 778-999-4599 / 778-866-8118.



12-DAY ITINERARY

Day 01: May 02 2019 - Canada to Rome / Naples

Day 02 May 03 - Arrive in Rome – Marianella – Naples

Day 03: May 04 - Pompeii – Amalfi Coast

Day 04: May 05 - Excursion to Scala

Day 05: May 06 - Sites of St. Alphonsus and St. Gerard Majella

Day 06: May 07 - Amalfi – Montecassino – Rome

Day 7: May 08 - Papal Audience – Holy Doors of Rome – Relics of Jerusalem

Day 8: May 09 - Rome (Vatican)

Day 9: May 10 - Assisi – Sites of St. Francis and St. Clare

DAY 10: May 11 - Pisa – Padua

DAY 11: May 12 – Venice – St. Mark's Square - Murano Glass Factory

DAY 12: May 13 – Goodbye Italy