

PARISH DIRECTORY

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Parish Fundraising Committee

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Bertilla Watanabe

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Weddings

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Advent Is a Season of Hope

By Louise Merrie

Last Sunday, the Church began the season of Advent: a time of spiritual preparation for Christmas. While all around us, the culture has started to celebrate Christmas early—with Christmas decorations, parties, carols, and cookies—the Church waits and enters into this time of expectation, inviting Catholics to be ready for Jesus when He comes.

The word Advent derives from the Latin for coming, adventus, and this season is about Jesus' coming to us in the past, present, and future. In anticipation of Christmas, we remember the Incarnation of Jesus—His becoming man and dwelling among us. We also reflect on what Jesus' Incarnation means for us. He came to save us from our sins and give us eternal life through His death on the cross. Therefore, Advent is a season of gratitude for what Jesus did for us out of His great love.

The Old Testament readings at Mass and the hymns we sing during Advent, such as "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" remind us that for many years, the Jewish people waited for the Messiah who would be their Savior. Mary spoke of this in her Magnificat when she proclaimed about God: "He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever." (Lk 13:54-55) Zechariah prophesied about Jesus in his canticle: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, he has come to his people and set them free. He has raised up for us a mighty Savior, born of the house of his servant David." (Lk 1:68-69) He realized that his son, John the Baptist, would "go before the Lord to prepare his way," (Lk 1:76) and during Advent, we remember that St. John the Baptist preached repentance to prepare people for Jesus' coming.

During Advent we also consider the ways Jesus comes to us in the present time. When Jesus ascended into Heaven, He promised to remain with us always, "until the end of the age." (Matt 28:20) Jesus is with us now in the Church, in the Eucharist, in Sacred Scripture, and He is with us when we pray. Jesus is always near us. As Pope Benedict XVI said in an Advent homily: "Advent, this powerful liturgical season we are beginning, invites us to pause in silence to understand a presence. It is an invitation to understand that the individual events of the day are hints that God is giving us, signs of the attention He has for each one of us. How often does God give us a glimpse of His love!"

In the Advent season, we also prepare for Jesus' Second Coming in the future. We don't know when Jesus will return and so we must be ready. Jesus taught his disciples: "Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know which day your Lord will come." (Mt 24:42) Last Sunday, a priest in my parish gave a homily about preparing for Jesus' coming. He said we must be in a state of grace, follow the Commandments, pray, be of service to others, and practice self-denial. Advent is, like Lent, a time of renewal for Catholics, an opportunity to start over, and to experience conversion. The Advent season is a joyful time. We look forward to remembering Jesus' birth at Christmas, we are thankful for Jesus being present with us now, and we wait, with hope, for His Second Coming.

Some Suggestions to Spiritually Prepare for Christmas

1. Go to confession and receive Jesus' forgiveness of your sins.
2. Attend an extra Mass or two in addition to Sunday Mass.
3. Spend time with Jesus in front of the tabernacle.
4. Pray the Liturgy of the Hours.
5. Read and reflect on passages from the Bible, particularly the Infancy Narratives at the beginning of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. You could also read the daily Mass readings.
6. Make an act of sacrifice such as giving up dessert or social media.
7. Do one or more of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, such as visiting someone who is sick.



December 10, 2023

2nd Sunday of Advent

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH



Filling The Chalice of Our Lives

Dear Parishioners,

The upcoming OLPH Parish retreat on Saturday December 16th is an Advent gift that I am giving to myself. In a busy time of year with commitments and responsibilities galore – I want to step back, take a deep breath, and take the long view. Won't you join us!

Our retreat facilitator –Allan Forsberg and his wife Mindy are in Vancouver from Grande Prairie for a few days visiting family and friends. Allan is a trained spiritual director, a retired educator, and a retreat director with Peace Retreats in the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan. He is an avid reader with a great sense of humour. He has sent along a participants' retreat guidebook and it is exactly what I need to refocus and re-energize before Christmas.

In the quiet of any moment – we can remember that prophets waited, Mary pondered, Joseph listened, and that Jesus himself felt it necessary at times to leave the crowd behind –go to the other side of the lake and go on retreat. Listening is hard work, and it is something that produces great dividends. The goal of any retreat time is to stop and listen. What am I looking for this Christmas and where do I need the Lord to be born on the manger of my heart?

Bring a brown bag lunch, leave your cell phone home –get unplugged and spiritually fed. If we want to give of ourselves this Christmas –it is necessary to fill the chalice of our own lives. If you're online, please [use this link to register](#). Happy Advent.

Fr Leo

Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation. – Psalm 85

A Prayer For Advent For the Family

Heavenly Father,
your Son, Jesus, is your
greatest gift to us,
a great sign of your love.
Guide us as we strive to
walk in that love
together as a family
this Advent.

As we prepare our hearts
for Christmas,
bring us closer to each
other and to your Son.
Give us the grace
and strength we need
every day.

Help us to always
trust in you.
Come, Lord Jesus,
lead all people
closer to you.

Come and dispel the
darkness of our world
with the light
of your love.
Amen.

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MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday Anticipated Mass: 5pm
 Sunday Masses: 9am, 11am, 5pm
 Mon – Fri Masses: 8am
 Thurs OLPH Novena: After 8am Mass
 Sat & Holidays: 9am Mass
 Sat Adoration: 9:30am – 10am
 Reconciliation:
 Sat 4pm – 4:45pm
 Or by appointment: 604-224-4344

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday 9:30am-4pm
 Friday 9:30am – 1:30pm

CLERGY & STAFF

Pastor
 Fr. Leo English, CSsR
Associate Pastor
 Fr. Alfredo Medina Ramos, CSsR
In-Residence
 Fr. Mark Miller, CSsR
Pastoral Coordinator
 Bertilla Watanabe, MA PS
 Available Mon - Thurs
Reception
 Kathy Mok
 Available Mon/Wed-Fri
Office Manager
 Virginia Fong
 Available Tue - Thurs
Bookkeeper
 Corinna Siy
 Contact email: csiy.olph@rcav.org

OLPH School Principal

Deirdre O'Callaghan
Jr. Kindergarten Director
 Maria Cortese

CONTACT

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 OLPH School: 604-228-8811
 Jr. Kindergarten: jrkindergarten@olphbc.ca
 Facebook: olphchurchvancouver

OLPH Church, 2465 Crown Street,
 Vancouver BC, V6R3V9

NEWS & NOTICES

2024 Sunday Offering Donation Boxes For Pick-Up

Please pick up your 2024 Sunday Offering box in the church foyer before the Christmas break and **do not use it till January 2024**. Note, 2023 envelopes cannot be used in 2024 because box numbers change each year. Using envelopes from the past would result in your donation being credited to someone else.

Men's Jacket & Sock Collection

Please donate men new socks or gently used men's jackets for the Catholic Men's Shelter this weekend December 9/10 or next, Dec 16/17. A collection box will be in the church foyer. Thank you!

Volunteer Opportunity

Volunteers are needed to help with meal prep for Inner Hope Society on the second Saturday of each month. The sign-up for Jan – Apr 2024 is up. Please [use this link](#) to find out more and sign up.

Project Advance Update

Dear friends, we are drawing close to the end of this year's Project Advance appeal. Our pledges are currently at \$113,550. To all who've given thus far, thank you! If you have not donated yet, please pray about how you can support this year's appeal. Please submit your donation by 11am Friday Dec 29 to allow processing time for a 2023 tax receipt. Please submit online donations by Sat Dec 30.

Project Advance 2023 Video

If you are still thinking about making a donation to Project Advance, watch this last video release for this year's campaign and be inspired by how much Project Advance will continue to benefit parishes of our Archdiocese. If you're online, [watch the video](#) here.

Handel's Messiah

The CSO Baroque Ensemble, Belle Voci and professional soloists present Handel's Messiah, conducted by Paula De Wit, 2pm Saturday December 9 at Holy Rosary Cathedral. Tickets \$45 at beholdvancouver.org/events/messiah

Donate Used Religious Items

Francis Furlong, along with his wife, are leading a charitable initiative collecting religious items to support Canadian seminarians. Having raised over \$2000, they are reaching out to parishes in the Archdiocese of Vancouver seeking donations of surplus religious items such as vestments, candle holders, chalices, books and more. Items are distributed to parishes in need or to missionaries. Blessed articles like statues, medals or rosaries are donated. If you have any to contribute please contact lisaandfrancis@hotmail.com



PROJECT ADVANCE

Advent Concert & Light-Up

Beautiful music and reflections from Pope Francis came together in an evening of prayer and praise for the parish community last Saturday. 20 singers and instrumentalists led by Music Director Theresa Barao-Azucena provided the evening's music with reflections read by young parishioners. The OLPH Intermediate Choir led by Music teacher, Adam Handford was a welcome addition to this year's program. The impressive group of 32 students filled the sanctuary with their sweet and cheerful voices.

The theme for the evening *Waiting For the Light* was a natural fit for the light-up of the church and gardens in preparation for Christmas. Hot chocolate with marshmallows warmed up cold hands after the blessing outside and cookies and sweets were served to a very appreciative gathering of over 150 people. A freewill offering was taken up for the Music Ministry.

If you'd like to be involved in special events like this, please sign up to join the Music Ministry. It offers a wonderful opportunity to share your talents all-year round at Sunday Mass. If interested, please contact Theresa at theresabarao@gmail.com



PROJECT ADVANCE 2023

Archdiocesan Goal: \$49,800 | OLPH Parish Target: \$130,000

Proposed church upgrades for 2023

Repositioning of tabernacle with new furnishings | Reflooring |
 New lectern | Cladding of existing pillars | Improved lighting on side aisles |
 Seating for choir | Four stained-glass windows

UPCOMING EVENTS

Food Bank Donations	Every Weekend	Before and after Masses, Foyer
Socks & Jackets for Men's Shelter	Weekends of Dec 9/10 & 16/17	Before and after Masses, Foyer
Advent Retreat	Saturday Dec 16	9:30am – 3:30pm Church
4th Sunday of Advent Masses	Saturday Dec 23 Sunday Dec 24	5pm (Anticipated Mass) 9am & 11am
Christmas Eve Masses	Sunday Dec 24	4pm (Children's Mass) 11:45pm Caroling 12am Midnight Mass
Christmas Day Masses	Monday Dec 25	9am, 11am & 4pm
Christmas Week	Tues - Sat Dec 26 – Dec 31	9am Morning Mass
Feast of the Holy Family	Saturday Dec 30 Sunday Dec 31	5pm (Anticipated Mass) 9am, 11am & 5pm
New Year's Day Masses	Monday 1 January	9am & 4pm

OLPH Advent Retreat: Come As A Child

Advent is a time to clear our minds, our schedules, our calendars and reflect on the ways God is nudging us to holiness. To help us open our hearts and minds and see the world differently is retreat leader, Allan Forsberg. Allan is a trained spiritual director and retreat leader from Grande Prairie. He has an abiding interest in spirituality, the sacraments and Christian theology and is an active member of the Peace Retreats team. [Please use this link to register](#). Or call the parish office. No charge for admission.



Come as a Child:
 An Advent Retreat
 for Men and Women

Our Lady of Perpetual Help
 Catholic Church,
 2465 Crown St,
 Vancouver, BC V6R 3V9

December 16, 2023
 Approximately 9:30am – 3:30pm
 (we will begin after mass)

Registration Deadline: Dec. 14, 2023

Register at the parish office:
 Telephone: 604-224-4344
 Email: olph@rcav.org

Bring a bag lunch and a journal.

Coffee, tea and snacks provided.

Wear warm comfortable clothing. This will be a time of personal reflection, small group discussion, and prayer. Movement breaks provided.