

Saint Anthony of Padua Parish

With the Eucharist at the centre, we are a community desiring to be saints, sent out to love like Jesus and proclaim Him in every circumstance.

CHRISTMAS DAY

DECEMBER 25, 2019

A Chance for Reconciliation

During the first World War, there was the famous Christmas Truce of 1914. Pope Benedict XV, on Dec. 7, called for a halt to fighting, “that the guns may fall silent at least upon the night the angels sang.” On Dec. 23, some German soldiers placed Christmas trees above their trenches and started singing ‘Silent Night.’ Allied soldiers responded with their own Christmas carols. Then soldiers on both sides emerged from the trenches unarmed, speaking to each other, even exchanging gifts, and playing soccer. Roughly 100,000 troops were engaged in this ceasefire. British soldiers wrote of this remarkable event: For a moment, one could treat one’s enemies with kindness and goodwill.



Every Christmas, God asks for peace among His children: in our families with those we’re fighting, and with the people we’ve hurt or who have hurt us. Ultimately, He wants us to stop fighting with Him and come home.

One German lieutenant at the Christmas Truce said that Christmas is the “celebration of Love.” But it’s more than that. Valentine’s Day is a celebration of love and never gives rise to truces. **Christmas is more specifically a celebration of three words: God became man.**

The Gospel of Christmas Day says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him... And the Word became flesh and lived among us” (Jn 1:1-3,14). The Word is the second person of the Trinity: He’s God; He’s eternal, meaning He exists outside of time and before anything was made; He’s omnipotent, and perfect; He’s happiness and goodness itself. Then He takes on a human nature and now He has limits, and can suffer and die.

Do you realize how big a jump that is? Archbishop Sheen says: Imagine if we were to become dogs out of love for them. We could speak, but now only bark. We’d have the ability to reason, but now could only use instinct. And we’d spend the rest of our days with dogs, knowing we’re a thousand times better. The distance between humans and animals is closer than humans and God, because God is infinite. That’s why Christmas is so powerful! The reality of God becoming man has touched the human mind and

heart, and people reflecting on this have composed thousands of songs lasting hundreds of years, along with thousands of artistic and cultural achievements. The power not only comes from God becoming man, but that He took the form of a baby in order to show us His humility and vulnerability. Pope Emeritus Benedict puts it this way: God’s always been reaching out to us, and this comes to completion in the incarnation (meaning God takes on human flesh) and He “has put Himself into our hands” (Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth*, Volume 1), meaning we can receive Him or hurt Him. [...] God’s reaching out to us and offering us peace. The Second Reading of Christmas Mass during

the night says, “The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety [that is, godless ways] and worldly passions, and... to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly” (Tit 2:11-12). The word ‘grace’ here translates of the Hebrew word *hesed*, meaning God’s steadfast love for us, and also refers to the favours an emperor would grant when coming to a city. When the text says ‘has appeared,’ in the original Greek it’s referring to one event: Jesus’ coming. So, Christmas is a time for truces not because we ‘have to’ in a moralistic sense, but because of what God’s done for us (George T. Montague, SM, *First and Second Timothy, Titus in Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture*).

For the past four weeks, we’ve been talking about Alpha as Culture, and tonight we focus on the centrality of Christ. Alpha, with its amazing videos, is focused on Christ. The more we know and encounter Him, the more we thrive. It might seem obvious that churches should focus on Jesus, but it’s not, and many don’t. Tonight, Jesus is offering us an opportunity to reconcile, and when we receive a gift, we’re happier and more open to giving it to others!

Here are four ways we can respond:

1) **Reach out to others and to God in humility.** Could we be more vulnerable with someone with whom we’re not on great terms? How about a ceasefire if we’re at war with someone? There’s a chance the other person won’t accept, and that’s part of the risk of Christmas, one Jesus took. But the possibility of better relationships is worth it! I’m not suggesting a false peace, that we ignore pains that

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 1:00 pm—3:00 pm
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 please call the office anytime.
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 Email: office@stanthonysvancouver.org

St. Anthony of Padua School

Kindergarten to Grade 7
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 Principal: Mr. Michael Perry
 Telephone: 604.261.4043
 Website: stanthonypaduaschool.ca
 School Email: office@stanthonypaduaschool.ca

Parish Registration

Our parish family warmly welcomes new parishioners.
 Please register by filling out a registration form located in the
 vestibule or the Parish Office. If you are registered and moving,
 please advise the parish office.

Sunday Masses

Saturday 5:00 pm
 Sunday 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm

Weekdays	Masses	Confessions
Monday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Tuesday	7:30 pm	
Wednesday & Thursday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Friday (school months)	8:00 am	7:45 to 7:55 am
Saturday	9:00 am	9:45 am

Confession

Saturday afternoon 3:45 pm to 4:45 pm
 1st Saturday each month 9:45 am to 1:00 pm;
 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm;
 7:00 pm to 9:45 pm

Eucharistic Adoration enter at 1365 West 73rd Avenue
 Daily: 6:00 am to Midnight

First Friday of each month: 8:45 am to 10:00 am in the church
 followed by **Benediction**.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA) Please call the parish office for more information on RCIA classes and other Sacraments.

Weekday Masses & Intentions

Monday, December 23	Ferial	Raffaele Salvino
Tuesday, December 24	Ferial	—
Wednesday, December 25	<i>Solemnity of Christmas</i> Nativity of the Lord	—
Thursday, December 26	<i>Feast</i> St. Stephen, Martyr	Thelma Chan †
Friday, December 27	<i>Feast</i> St. John, Apostle	Terrence Scully †
Saturday, December 28	<i>Feast</i> Holy Innocents	Frank Kim Sing †

Prayers for the Sick At Holy Mass we remember the sick including:
 Nita Carvajal, Nung Chum, Isobel Clancy, Nick De Vos, Elaine dos
 Remedios, Kathleen Francis, Feli Hempl, Cecile Hernandez, Yvonne
 Kharoubeh, Molly Loui-Ying, Mary Messere, Susan Panlican, Huguette
 Piché, Barney Rousseau, Therese Rozario, Christina Sayo, Teresa Tche,
 Cynthia Wing.

New Year's Mass Schedule

New Year's Eve
 Mass: Tuesday, December 31, 5:00 pm
 Holy Hour & Gaudeamus: 11:00 pm

New Year's Day
(Holy Day of Obligation)
 Wednesday, January 1, 2020
 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
 Masses: 10:00 am, 12:00 pm, 5:00 pm

Upcoming Homily Themes

December 28 & 29
Preacher: Fr. Pierre Leblond

December 31 & January 1:
Preacher: Fr. Pierre Leblond

January 4 & 5
The Best Time of Year to Grow

January 11 & 12
How to Realize You're Special

January 18 & 19
How to Have Spiritual Friends



ANNOUNCEMENTS

...continued from cover

haven't been healed, or allow ourselves to be taken advantage of. I'm suggesting that we put aside our own sinfulness: pride, resentment, unjust anger, lack of forgiveness, and a lack of listening.

2) In the same way, while God reaches out to us at Christmas, we may not be fully reconciled just yet. Full reconciliation means a choice of faith in Jesus, **going to Confession**, and changing our lives to obediently follow Him. Taking the Eucharist is a sign that that relationship is fully restored, so, tonight, **we should only take Communion if we're fully prepared.**

To help with that, just like last year, Fr. Pierre is hearing Confessions right now and will continue as long as is needed. The yellow examination of conscience brochure is on the wall. And, if we're not yet ready for this, then come up today for a blessing, and Deacon Andrew and I will specifically pray that you can eventually go to Confession.

3) One simple way to imitate Jesus' vulnerability is to **be more honest with other people.** You know how we all cover up difficult topics? My family never wanted to admit that my dad didn't have a job, no one wanted to talk about which cousins had bad marriages. No one wants to admit that they're struggling with life, depression or a mental illness. It's true we all deserve privacy, but, on the other hand, people want to help us and sometimes everyone already knows. A beautiful thing I want to see in our community here is a healthy vulnerability: When we ask each other how we're doing, we can be honest. For example, "How are you doing?" "Not too well." "What's going on?" "I don't really want to talk about it now. Could you pray for me?" "Sure!" It's that simple! Unhealthy vulnerability would be indiscriminately telling everyone details that don't help heal or grow.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in talking about the Christmas mystery, says that we need to become like children, that is, humble and little, in order to enter the kingdom of God (526). So, we need to be a bit more vulnerable and honest than normal.

4) **I'd like to invite everyone to Alpha on Thursday, January 9**, either at Gigi Blin Café or downstairs in our hall, in order to focus more on Jesus' gifts to us. Alpha has three parts: free dinner, a 25-minute world-class video about faith, and then a discussion. Alpha is world-famous for a reason, because of its hospitality, environment, and the opportunity to discuss faith and life in a non-judgmental setting.

This Christmas, I feel disarmed in my hesitations and am hopeful. We have an opportunity to reach out to others, right some wrongs, and rebuild relationships, all because God's become man and is offering peace through Jesus.

I'd now like to invite someone to share her testimony of reconciliation with God. *(Please see bulletin insert.)*

Merry Christmas!

- Excerpt from Fr. Justin's homily, December 25, 2019

A warm welcome to our visitors! Thank you for joining us at Sunday Mass! If you have any questions about St. Anthony's or would simply like to meet some of our parishioners or our pastor Fr. Justin, please let us know or stop by the **Welcome Booth** after any Sunday Mass. We would love to meet you!

MAKE YOUR FINAL TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT FOR 2019 TO OUR PARISH CENTRE



If you would like to help us build our Parish Centre please contact any one of our Fundraising (Brick) Committee members:

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4. Mars & Cathy Lo

5. Marilou Yodogawa

6. Adrienne Chan

7. Catherine Kriekenbeek-Lee

8. Sev & Edna Gotia Tan

9. Marline Kolterhoff

10. Gillian Miller

11. Annie Pancito

12. Kathy Kim Sing

Karaoke Open Mic Night with our Church Choirs!
Friday, December 27, 6:30 pm — 9:00 pm. We'll provide the food. You provide the entertainment!
For more information contact our Director of Music, Christopher Susanto, christopher.sapv@gmail.com.



Our Knights of Columbus & our Catholic Women's League members are hosting **FREE Pancake Breakfast on Sunday January 5, 2020** after all Masses. Enjoy fellowship with other parishioners, and show hospitality to our guests! Everyone is welcome!




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