

January 5th 2020
Epiphany of the Lord

OUR FAITH. OUR FOUNDATION.

SINCE 1911

Journeying in faith



For Matthew the story of the Magi becomes an anticipation of the fate of the Good News of salvation, a fate that he knew in the aftermath of the resurrection. God reveals himself to the Jews through the Scriptures, and to the

Gentiles through nature. Hence, Matthew shows the Magi (who were Gentiles) receiving a revelation through astrology. The story highlights the paradox: the Jews who have the Scriptures reject Jesus, while Gentiles come and, with the help of the Scriptures, find and adore him.

There is nothing to be gained by speculating where the Magi came from and what exactly the star was. The star was only the means by which a great mystery was revealed – the revelation of Christ as the Savior of the Gentiles too.

The second reading expresses the theological meaning of today's feast: God invites Jews and Gentiles to share on an equal footing the benefits of the salvation brought by Christ.

Liturgical celebrations:

Tuesday – St. Andre Bessette (memorial)

BESSETTE, ALFRED, named Brother André, lay brother of the Congregation of Holy Cross and charismatic figure; b. 9 Aug. 1845 in the parish of Saint-Grégoire (Mont-Saint-Grégoire), Lower Canada. Alfred Bessette was the ninth of 13 children (four of whom died in infancy). He was so frail when he was born that the Curé baptized him "conditionally" the following day, completing an emergency ritual performed at his birth. Alfred Bessette died on 6 Jan. 1937. His body lay in state in the oratory – which was kept open day and night – until 12 January. An initial funeral service was held in the Cathedral in Montreal, and a second one at St Joseph's Oratory. More than a million people came from all over to pay tribute to him, to weep for him, and to pray beside him.

Brother André was beatified by Pope John Paul II on 23 May 1982 and canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on 17 Oct. 2010.

Pope's Prayer Intention for January

Evangelization: *Promotion of World Peace* – We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

This Week

Monday, January 6

9:00am Meeting St Augustine's School Staff Retreat
7:00pm Mass +Gilby Carlos

Tuesday, January 7

8:00am Mass Int Alice Brewster
8:30am Event Annual 40 Hour Devotion begins
7:00pm Mass
7:30pm Meeting Bible Study Group

Wednesday, January 8

8:00am Mass
7:00pm Mass
7:30pm Meeting Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA)

Thursday, January 9

8:00am Mass
6:45pm Meeting Baptismal Preparation
7:00pm Mass +Anita & Teofilo Mendoza
10:00pm Event Annual 40 Hour Devotion ends

Friday, January 10

8:00am Mass
10:15am Meeting Circle of Friends/Lectio Divina
7:00pm Mass White Mass for all Health Care Workers

Saturday, January 11

8:00am Mass
3:30pm Meeting Legion of Mary Junior Praesidium
6:00pm Event Teacher's Appreciation Dinner (Private)
5:00pm Mass +Mary Finnegan

Sunday, January 12

8:30am Meeting Legion of Mary
9:00am Mass
10:00am Meeting Catholic Women's League General Meeting
11:00am Mass
5:00pm Mass +Ron Damedash

OFFERTORY

We are grateful for these gifts.

Sunday Envelopes: \$8,691.00

Loose: \$826.75

Christmas: \$22,995.00 New Year's: \$4,531.00

REST IN PEACE

+Michiyo Nishizawa

Pope's Message...

"Those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined" (*Is 9:1*). The prophecy we heard in the first reading was fulfilled in the Gospel: as shepherds kept watch over their flocks by night, "the glory of the Lord shone around them" (*Lk 2:9*). In the midst of our earthly night, a light appeared from heaven. What is the meaning of this light that shone in the darkness? Saint Paul tells us: "The grace of God has appeared". The grace of God, "bringing salvation to all" (*Tit 2:11*), has shone on our world this night.

But what is this grace? It is divine love, the love that changes lives, renews history, liberates from evil, fills hearts with peace and joy. Tonight the love of God has been revealed to us: it is Jesus. In Jesus, the Most High made himself tiny, so that we might love him. But we can still ask ourselves: why does Saint Paul describe the coming of God into our world as "grace"? To tell us that it is utterly free. Whereas on earth everything seems to be about giving in order to get, God comes down freely. His love is non-negotiable: we did nothing to deserve it and we will never be able to repay it.

The grace of God has appeared. Tonight we realize that, when we failed to measure up, God became small for our sake; while we were going about our own business, he came into our midst. Christmas reminds us that God continues to love us all, even the worst of us. To me, to you, to each of us, he says today: "I love you and I will always love you, for you are precious in my eyes".

God does not love you because you think and act the right way. He loves you, plain and simple. His love is unconditional; it does not depend on you. You may have mistaken ideas, you may have made a complete mess of things, but the Lord continues to love you. How often do we think that God is good if we are good and punishes us if we are bad. Yet that is not how he is. For all our sins, he continues to love us. His love does not change. It is not fickle; it is faithful. It is patient. This is the gift we find at Christmas. We discover to our amazement that the Lord is absolute gratuity, absolute tender love. His glory does not overwhelm us; his presence does not terrify us. He is born in utter poverty in order to win our hearts by the wealth of his love.

The grace of God has appeared. Grace is a synonym of beauty. Tonight, in the beauty of God's love, we also discover our own beauty, for we are beloved of God. For better or worse, in sickness and in health, whether happy or sad, in his eyes we are beautiful, not for what we do but for what we are. Deep within us, there is an indelible and intangible beauty, an irrepressible beauty, which is the core of our being. Today God reminds us of this. He lovingly takes upon himself our humanity and makes it his own, "espousing" it forever.

The "great joy" proclaimed tonight to the shepherds is indeed "for all the people". We too, with all our weaknesses and failures, are among those shepherds, who were certainly not saints. And just as God called the shepherds, so too he calls us, for he loves us. In the dark night of life, he says to us as he did to them, "Be not afraid!" (*Lk 2:10*). Take courage, do not lose confidence, do not lose hope, do not think that to love is a waste of time! Tonight love has conquered fear, new hope has arrived, God's kindly light has overcome the darkness of human arrogance. Mankind, God loves you; for your sake he became man. You are no longer alone!

Dear brothers and sisters, what are we to do with this grace? Only one thing: accept the gift. Before we go out to seek God, let us allow ourselves to be sought by him. He always seeks us first. Let us not begin with our own abilities but with his grace, for he, Jesus, is the Saviour. Let us contemplate the Child and let ourselves be caught up in his tender love. Then we have no further excuse for not letting ourselves be loved by him. Whatever goes wrong in our lives, whatever doesn't work in the Church, whatever problems there are in the world, will no longer serve as an excuse. It will become secondary, for faced with Jesus' extravagant love, a love of utter meekness and closeness, we have no excuse. At Christmas, the question is this: "Do I allow myself to be loved by God? Do I abandon myself to his love that comes to save me?"

A charming legend relates that at the birth of Jesus the shepherds hurried to the stable with different gifts. Each brought what he had; some brought the fruits of their labour, others some precious item. But as they were all presenting their gifts, there was one shepherd who had nothing to give. He was extremely poor; he had no gift to present. As the others were competing to offer their gifts, he stood apart, embarrassed. At a certain point, Saint Joseph and Our Lady found it hard to receive all those gifts, especially Mary, who had to hold the baby. Seeing that shepherd with empty hands, she asked him to draw near. And she put the baby Jesus in his arms. That shepherd, in accepting him, became aware of having received what he did not deserve, of holding in his arms the greatest gift of all time. He looked at his hands, those hands that seemed to him always empty; they had become the cradle of God. He felt himself loved and, overcoming his embarrassment, began to show Jesus to the others, for he could not keep for himself the gift of gifts.

Dear brother, dear sister, if your hands seem empty, if you think your heart is poor in love, this night is for you. The grace of God has appeared, to shine forth in your life. Accept it and the light of Christmas will shine forth in you.

WELCOME TO ST. AUGUSTINE'S PARISH

St. Augustine's Oblate Parish is a Catholic community centered in Christ and the Eucharist that has a shared mission to – welcome and invite all to participate – celebrate in Word and Sacrament – foster evangelization and spiritual formation – advocate for social justice – care for our common home.

Year 2020 Parish Envelopes

Personalized Year 2020 Envelope Donation Boxes are available for pick up outside the Parish Hall. Please do not take a box unless it has your name on it. If there is not a box with your name please pick up a box at the Parish Office during regular office hours. Do NOT use 2019 Envelopes in the year 2020 as your donation may be credited to another family.

What is the 40 Hours Devotion?



The Forty Hours Devotion is a special forty-hour period of continuous prayer made before the Blessed Sacrament in solemn exposition.

Affirming our belief in the real presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacra-

ment, the Vatican Council II taught that the Holy Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life" (Lumen Gentium, #11). While the Mass is the central act of worship for us Catholics, an act which participates in the eternal reality of our Lord's passion, death, and resurrection, Vatican Council II upheld and encouraged the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament outside of Mass. Of course such devotion derives from the sacrifice of the Mass and moves the faithful to both sacramental and spiritual communion with our Lord.

The number forty has always signified a sacred period of time: the rains during the time of Noah lasted 40 days and nights; the Jews wandered through the desert for 40 years, our Lord fasted and prayed for 40 days before beginning His public ministry. The 40 Hours Devotion remembers that traditional "forty-hour period" from our Lord's burial until the resurrection.

While the Forty Hours Devotion nurtures the love of the faithful for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, three special dimensions have also surrounded this devotion: the protection from evil and temptation; reparation for our own sins and for the Poor Souls in Purgatory; and deliverance from political, material, or spiritual calamities. Here the faithful implore our Lord to pour forth His abundant graces not only for themselves, but their neighbors, not only for their own personal needs, but for those of the world.

The Forty Hours Devotion provides a wonderful opportunity for the spiritual growth of each person and the parish as a whole. In a world where temptation and evil abound, where devotion to the Mass and our Lord in the Holy Eucharist have declined, where the practice of penance and confession have been forgotten, we need the Forty Hours Devotion more than ever.

Forty Hours Devotion begins at St. Augustine's on Tuesday January 7th at 8:30am and ends Thursday January 9th at 10:00pm. Sign up sheets are located in the Church foyer. Please consider spending some time with Our Lord.

Refugee Family Update – Phones

The Gatare family is quickly getting settled into their new home in Surrey. They have already met with the principal at Holy Cross high school for their youngest child and he will be entering classes in January (grade 10). A benefactor at Christ the Redeemer parish is covering his tuition, so we're grateful for the extra assistance. As well, job resumes are being prepared and members of the family are anxious to find work; the two parishes have a process in place to assist the employment search. If parishioners are interested in donating their surplus I Phones (models 6/7 or newer), these could be put to good use by the family. Phone data would need to be cleaned and then they could be used (for things like WhatsApp) where there is free Wi-Fi at home or places like Starbucks until members of the family get jobs and are able to afford data plans. Please call Lisa at 604-805-9475 if you can help out.



An opportunity to meet and greet the Gatare family is scheduled in the Parish Hall after the 11:00am Mass on Sunday January 12th.

Happy New Year! Parish Hall Dinner & Dance 2020



School News...

School Registration 2020

If you or someone you know is interested in enrolling a child in Kindergarten at St. Augustine School for the 2020-2021 school year, please come to the general Open House on Thursday, January 9th, 2020 at 7:00pm at the School.

Please RSVP the School Office at (604) 731-8024

**FOOD COLLECTION
FOR THE POOR**

EVERY 1ST & 3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

"For I was hungry and you gave me food." Matthew 25:35



Oblate Corner



Devotion to the Most Holy Virgin has always been a hallmark of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. At many pilgrim shrines, in Europe as well as in America or Africa, the Oblates foster devotion to the Virgin while directing towards this kind Mother all the physical sufferings and the moral poverty that they encounter along their way. A goodly number of them bring to light edifying incidents that reveal the effectiveness of prayer to Mary.

Bishop Henri Joulain, O.M.I., Apostle of Mary

Among the many missionaries who served in Ceylon, today Sri Lanka, Father Henri Joulain was most outstanding. When this Oblate, originally from Poitiers, France, set foot in Colombo, in 1880, at the age of twenty-eight, he had already been a Priest for five years. Thirteen years later, he was chosen as Bishop of Jafna, succeeding Bishop

Christophe Bonjean, O.M.I. He was a powerful speaker. During his thirty-eight years in this country, his eloquence showed itself in an incalculable number of sermons, missions and retreats. His favorite location was the shrine of Our Lady of Madou. Just as at Lourdes, in France, a spring of pure water is the source of many physical healings, at Madou, Our Lady of the Rosary granted to the soil of this sanctuary the power to heal snake bites. Many times, Father Joulain had witnessed true miracles obtained through Mary.

Stronger than the serpent

Mr. Parker, a government inspector, Protestant, but very sympathetic, had come one day to examine the school in a small village. Father Joulain came there to accompany Father Alfred Jeandel, who was the Administrator of this establishment. The three of them were conversing about the many serpent bites that had occurred in that region. The Oblates were speaking with pride to the Agent about the power of the soil at Madou. They were saying that a slight application at the location of the bite, or swallowing a small amount of this soil, could obtain rapid healing. Father Joulain recounted that recently, a young man, bitten by a serpent, had taken some of that soil and found himself cured, while another, also bitten by a viper, had refused to take any, and died!

The healing of Soosaiappu

"To believe that," ventured the inspector, "I'd have to see it." At that very moment, a terrible cry resounded from the side of the church. The three immediately ran out. Soosaiappu, a teacher at the school, was rolling on the ground in terrible convulsions. He had just been bitten by one of the most dangerous snakes. He was carried, unconscious into the missionary's residence. He was laid on a bed and they tried all the medications at hand. Everyone was so preoccupied that the priests never thought of the soil of Madou, which they had been praising shortly before.

"It's all over," whispered a friend of the poor man... "he is dying, there's nothing that can be done." "Of course not" cried a villager who arrived on the scene, carrying soil from Madou which he had in reserve. "Hurry, Swami, we must give him soil from Madou." Hastily, a bit of this soil was mixed in water, and a few drops of that earthy potion were dispensed in the mouth of the dying man. Meanwhile, Father Joulain was reciting the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. A second time the sick man was made to drink, and the prayers continued.

Little by little, Soosaiappu opened his eyes, looked around, rose slowly, vomited a throat full of dark blood and asked for fresh water this time. One hour later, he was perfectly cured. The inspector, after witnessing this whole scene, admitted with sincerity in front of everyone: "I see that your Holy Virgin, as you call her, had answered my question. Now, I believe."

If you are new to our Parish Community or have an address or telephone change, please fill out the information below and submit it to the parish office or drop into the collection basket. please print in block letters.

New Parishioner Need Envelopes Information Change

First Name	First Name
Spouse First Name	Spouse Last Name
Children: Name(s) & Date of Birth	
Mailing Address	
City	Phone
Postal Code	Email
Comments	

Parish Information

PASTOR

Rev. Andrzej Stendzina, OMI 604.736.4455 x 227
astendzina@rcav.org

PARISH OFFICE

Monday & Friday 9:00am-12noon, 1:00pm-5:00pm
Tues/Wed/Thurs 10:00am-12noon, 1:00pm-5:00pm
Monday is the Priest's day off.

Email: parish.saug@rcav.org

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Linda Arnold 604.736.4455 x 229

PARISH SECRETARY

Jayne Le Vierge 604.736.4455 x 221

PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM—PREP

Ferial Khan 604.736.4455 x 224
prep@staugustineschurch.ca

FAITH AND FOUNDATION

Campaign Office 604.736.4455 x 231
donate@faithandfoundation.com

ST AUGUSTINE SCHOOL

2154 West 7th Avenue V6K 0E3 604.731.8024
office@staugschool.ca

BAPTISM - REGISTRATION REQUIRED

604.736.4455 x 221

MARRIAGES/WEDDINGS

604.736.4455 x 221 parish.saug@rcav.org

RECONCILIATION

Weekdays 15 minutes before weekday Mass
Saturday 4:00pm—4:30pm

PARISH MINISTRIES

RCIA (RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS)

Linda Arnold rcia@staugustineschurch.ca

MUSIC MINISTRY

Peter Allen 604.257.3525
Manfred & Suzanne Milbers 604.255.0567
Mary Ellen Turnbull 778.995.6423

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK

Nelson Cheung 604.328.3882

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

Sonny Harsono em@staugustineschurch.ca

PARISH COUNCIL

Peggy Ho Yuen 604.266.1803

CWL (CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE)

Samantha Strudwick 604.255.1662

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Roy Pimentel 778.330.6850

ADULT FAITH

Clara Lum faithformation@staugustineschurch.ca

LECTORS

Danny Camparmo lectors@staugustineschurch.ca

USHERS

Bill Borgen 604.224.2632

MOM'S N TOTS

Cat Leung momstots@staugustineschurch.ca

FOOD COLLECTION

Terry Murphy 604.736.5288

LEGION OF MARY

Mary Lou Barin 604.767.8087
maryl.barin@gmail.com