

CHRISTMAS MASS REGISTRATION

Please find below the schedule for registering to attend mass in-person. Note that Christmas day and New Year's day will be limited to 25 people. On Christmas Eve, we will be able to accommodate up to 50 people - 25 in the church and 25 in the hall. You will be advised upon registration in which area you will be located. For those who will be in the hall, the mass will be broadcast live onto a large screen tv and you will be able to receive communion by the priest. An Usher will be available to assist with any questions or concerns.

It is important that you read and follow the ***Directives for Attending Mass*** as found on our website: <https://www.stalloysius-stcolumban.com/news-events>

Date	Registration Begins	Registration Ends
December 24 th	December 11 th @9 am	December 23 rd @3pm
December 25 th	December 11 th @9 am	December 23 rd @3pm
January 1 st	December 11 th @9 am	December 30 th @3pm

*Note: registration for regular Sunday mass must be done by 3pm Saturday

To register you must call the parish office or send an email including the names and phone numbers of all persons wishing to attend. You will receive confirmation if space is available. Priority seating in the church will be given to persons with limited mobility.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

CONFESSION

In preparation for Christmas, Fr. Albanus is available for individual confessions. Please call the office (819)663-5244 and book an appointment for confession.

Note: wearing of masks and other protocols are to be observed. Thanks.

The Joy and the Voice

Third Sunday of Advent is called **Gaudete Sunday** because the Mass for today in its original Latin text, begins with the opening antiphon: '**Gaudete in Domino semper**' - Rejoice in the Lord always. We have passed half-way point in Advent. This reminds us that the Lord is near and we are shifting our focus to a sense of joy for the coming of Christ. The Prophet Isaiah in the first reading announces happiness for all the broken-hearted. He encourages the Jewish exiles returning from Babylon to rejoice because their God, Yahweh, is their strong Guide, Provider and Protection. The Prophet exclaims: *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall exult in my God.* In the responsorial Psalm, Mary rejoices in the great blessing given to her: *My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour* (Lk. 1:46ff). St Paul too, in the second reading echoes the same theme of joy. He advises the Thessalonians to 'rejoice always' by leading blameless, holy and thankful lives guided by the Holy Spirit. Why? Because the second coming of Christ is near and He is faithful in His promise to reward them.

The Gospel speaks about John the Baptist. It tells us that John came to bear witness to Jesus as the Light of the world. John wants all the Jews to rejoice because the long-expected Messiah, the Light, will remove the darkness of sin from the world. The humility of the Baptist stands out in this Gospel. He tells the priests and Levites who challenge him that he is not the Messiah. John

calls himself the 'voice'. A voice is a combination of sounds that convey a message. A voice disappears once the message is passed and only the message remains. The sincerity and commitment of John are evident in his devotion to be just a voice witnessing to the coming of the Light into the world, and then, once his mission is accomplished, he disappears to avoid drawing the people to himself rather than to the Light. He expresses the same sentiment when he says *'He must grow greater, I must grow less'* (Jn. 3:30). His work is to prepare the people for the Messiah. We rejoice too because, like John, we are chosen to be bear witness to Christ, the Light of the world. Again, how can we recognize the 'voice' showing us the Light among so many voices? Are we ready to open our hearts and minds when we hear the 'voice' or are going to close them or allow them to be blinded as some did despite the voice of John the Baptist?

As brothers and sisters of Christ and members of His Church, our mission is to reflect Christ's light to others as the moon reflects the light of the sun. We should be the 'voice' proclaiming Christ to others. Do we at times have the tendency to proclaim ourselves rather than proclaim Christ? During this Advent, it is pertinent that we reflect Christ's sharing love and unconditional forgiveness. In communities, there are people who are in darkness and poverty; those who lack the real freedom because of their evil addictions and bad choices. We also have those who are deafened and blinded by the cheap attractions of the world. Others are lonely, unwanted, rejected and marginalized. Like John we are called to bring the true Light of Christ to illumine the lives of these people during this Advent season. They need our sharing love, overflowing mercy, unconditional forgiveness and humble service. But we can only do this by repenting of our sins and renewing our lives, by engaging ourselves daily in prayers and frequenting the sacrament of reconciliation and participating in the Eucharist and feeding on the Word of God and performing works of mercy. Happy Sunday!

POSTPONEMENT OF THE 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Normally in early December St-Al's holds its' Annual General Meeting for the election of churchwardens and to provide reports of each of the portfolios. However, we have been directed by the diocese to postpone the AGM as long as Gatineau is deemed a red zone.

If the situation improves before March 1, 2021 an announcement will be made at least six days in advance of the proposed AGM date. Note that the current churchwardens will remain in office until the election is held. Should we remain a red zone beyond March 1st, following the recommendation of the parish priest and the chairperson, the bishop will appoint new churchwardens to replace the outgoing churchwardens.

FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH

Please pray for the sick of our Parish: Atreyu Harvey, Rita Lacelle, Filipe Garrido, Adeline Gendron, Roger Seguin, Phyllis Seguin and Peter Simard.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE – St. Al's and St. Columban



The annual Christmas food drive has started. Please feel free to donate canned food, pickles, pasta, rice, toothpaste, laundry detergent, etc. We will be collecting specifically for the Christmas food baskets up to December 17, but please continue to donate throughout the year. Thank you for your cooperation in bringing a Merry Christmas to the less fortunate in our community.

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy to Nancy and Moe on the passing away of Nancy's mother, Laura Dolcini last week. May she rest in peace.

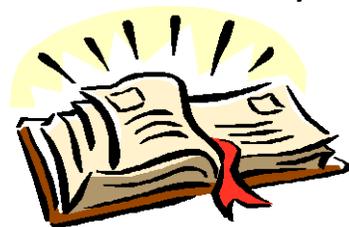
A HEALTHY WAY to spend a Thursday morning.



Diane Joanisse who is offering another way to join in on some exercising, good company and fun. She is hosting a Thursday morning exercise class at 10:00 am. She is offering her expertise to teach cardio exercises as well as body sculpting. Exercises are geared to all levels and everyone is welcome. A one-time registration on our web site at

NEWS EVENTS is all that is required.

A MIND-OPENING way to spend a Monday evening.



Pauline Leduc is hosting a Monday evening at 7:pm session on Reflection on Scriptures. The participants are asked to read over the scriptures for the up-coming Sunday. Everyone is asked to take a few minutes to really reflect on what is written. The discussions that follow are very heartfelt and mind opening.

We are finding that each participant, when celebrating the mass the following Sunday, listens to and understands the homily more meaningfully. Join us by Registering on our web site. <http://www.staloysius-stcolumban.com/newsevents>

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES IN DECEMBER

George Lemieux - 4th

Mike Groulx - 8th

Bradley Burke - 20th

Paul & Adeline Gendron , 28th - 55th

Bob Nadeau - 5th

Carol Léonard - 16th

Lina O'Brien - 23rd

