The Roman Catholic Parish of St. Gerard

Parish Office: 125 Third Avenue North, Yorkton, SK S3N 1C4

Phone: 306.782.2449 Fax: 306.782.8566

www.stgerard.ca office@stgerard.ca

Parish Office Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8-12/1-4

Rectory: 122 Fourth Avenue North, Yorkton, SK S3N 1A7

Phone: 306.782.0323

Parish Hall: 125 Third Avenue North, Yorkton, SK S3N 1C4

Phone: 306.783.4255 hall@stgerard.ca

Pastor: Father Francis Hengen

Parish Hall Manager: Jeff Krasowski Caretaker: Mario Guerra

Parish Office Administrator: Sandra Archer Office Clerk (casual): Mary Bybliw

SUNDAY MASS TIMES: Saturday 7:00 pm; Sunday 9:00 am & 11:00 am Sacrament of Reconciliation every Saturday at 6:30 pm & by appointment

First Sunday of Advent - November 27, 2016

Liturgical/Mass Schedule

Tues.	(29 th):	9:00 am- +Romeo Odsigue
Wed.	(30 th):	2:00 pm- Divine Mercy Devotions
		5:30 pm- +John Loster
Fri.	(2 nd):	9:00 am- Rosella Wanner

9:30 am- Adoration of the

Blessed Sacrament

10:30 am- Benediction

Sat. (3rd): 9:30 am- Sacrament of Reconciliation

10:00 am- Frances Mroczko

6:30 pm- Sacrament of Reconciliation 7:00 pm- +Elizabeth (Bettie) Alberts

Sun. (4th): Second Sunday of Advent

9:00 am- Mass for the People 11:00 am- +Edward Yeroschak

COMMUNION TO THE SICK & HOMEBOUND

Aspen Villa: Jean Kulcsar Hospital: Miles Shuya

Nursing Home: Rosemarie Todos & Bernadette Kormos

Triplex: Alfred Labas

Crossing: Marion Ockochinksi & Lloyd Ockochinski

Please remember the sick in your prayers:

Art Scherr, MaryAnn Scherr, Fran Semchuk

The 2016-2017 **Sunday Missals** are located on the tables in the Welcome Area. Please pick up a copy today while quantities last! Also available are **Advent Reflections** (blue).

COFFEE AFTER EACH MASS TODAY!!!

Non-liturgical Schedule

Mon. (28th): 4:00 pm- Youth Choir rehearsal

Tues. (29th): 9:30 am- CWL Comfort Cushion Project

7:00 pm- Choir rehearsal for 9am choir 7:00 pm- Parish Finance Council Mtg.

7:30 pm- Pivotal Players

Wed. (30th): 9:30 am- CWL Comfort Cushion Project

6:00 pm- Parish Pastoral Council & Finance Council Supper Mtg.

Fri. (2nd): 4:00 pm- Youth Choir rehearsal

Sat. (3rd): 6:15 pm- Choir rehearsal for 7pm Mass

Sun. (4th): 3:30 pm- CJUT Planning Meeting

O house of Jacob, come,



let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Isaiah 2.5

Today is the First Sunday of Advent!!!

Advent comes from a Latin word and means "coming."

But what is Advent, really?

Advent is the beginning of a new liturgical year for the Roman Catholic Church.

On the first day of Advent, the Church celebrates its own kind of New Year's Day.

Advent begins each year on the Sunday closest to November 30th, which is the feast day of Saint Andrew the Apostle.

Is Advent the same as Christmas?

Sometimes people mistakenly think that Advent is part of the Christmas celebration.

But actually, Advent is a time of preparation all its own. For the Catholic Church, Christmas doesn't begin until the first Mass is celebrated on Christmas Eve. The Twelve Days of Christmas continue until the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord (January 8th, 2017).

Advent is given to us as a time to prepare our souls for the coming of the Lord.

In our current culture, we are tempted to skip over the penitential aspects of Advent and focus on the joy of Christmas. This is a great tragedy. Focusing on the joy alone denies a crucially important truth: that the Christ child is Our Lord and Saviour, who will suffer and die for our salvation.

At Christie's Funeral Home we understand that following the death of a loved one, each day is difficult and when the pressure of the Christmas season is added those days can be even harder. We invite you to join us for our Christmas Service of Remembrance and Healing on Thursday, December 1, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel of Christie's Funeral Home. This non-denominational service is open to anyone who has suffered the loss of loved one through death, and will offer words of comfort, music and some suggestions for continuing your grief journey during the holiday season. For more information, call Christie's Funeral Home at 306-782-2312.

Bailey's Funeral Home Continuing Care Services invites you to attend our Christmas Service of Remembrance Sunday, December 4 at 2:00pm Yorkton Memorial Gardens Family Centre (Hwy #10 E). This is a non-denominational candle-lighting service to remember loved ones who have passed on. The service will include special music, words of comfort, time for reflection and suggestions for experiencing peace and hope during the holidays. All are welcome. Contact Crystal Bailey for more information (306) 783-7552 BAILEY'S



Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools News November 28 - December 2, 2016



	Sacred Heart	St. Alphonsus	St. Mary	St. Michael	St. Paul	St. Theodore
Mon.	•Fall Sports Banquet	•Advent Celebration @ 10:45am	•Gr. 4 receive Good News Bibles @ 9:30 am, followed by First Advent Celebration	•Advent Celebration @ 12:30pm	•Week One Advent Celebration @ 9am	
Tues.	•Europe Trip Meeting					
Wed.	•Gr. 11 Spiritual Retreat			•SCC Hot Lunch •Gr. 2 Celebrate Christmas Past @ WDM		
Thurs.						
Fri.		•Every Friday Angels' Day		•Red, White & Green Day		



SACRAMENTS of INITIATION PREPARATION



BAPTISM

The First Sacrament of Initiation

CONFIRMATION

The Second Sacrament of Initiation

FIRST EUCHARIST

The Third Sacrament of Initiation

ATTENTION PARENTS OF ALL CHILDREN GRADE 2 AND OLDER

The Sacraments of Confirmation & First Eucharist Initial Parent Meeting will be held in December. IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE PARISH please contact the Parish Office at 306.782.2449 ***Please note that preparation for receiving the sacraments occurs at the Parish only***



We welcome into our Catholic Christian Community

Raina Douhaniuk

who was baptized recently at St. Gerard.

May this child and his family experience joy and new life.



Penitential Service

Monday, December 19th @ 7pm



With the celebration of Reconciliation (in sacrament and in Penance celebrations), our Advent practices allow us to be closer to Christ and to improve our life.

The one-half hour Penitential Service will be celebrated communally with individual absolution (Form B) to follow. Several priests will be in attendance.

The Christmas & New Year Ministries sign-up sheets are in the Welcome Area NEXT WEEKEND for:

Welcomers, Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, & Hospitality Ministers – please indicate your time preference (8pm/10pm/10am – Christmas; 7pm/9am/11am – New Year's Day).

Altar Servers please sign up in Sacristy.

Next weekend is the St. Gerard "special collection" for the **Salvation Army Christmas Hampers**. If you do not have collection envelopes, please place your donation in an envelope, including your name & address. Thank you.



News from the CWL



Ladies, mark your calendars as we will start on November 22-23 and November 29-30 with the **Comfort Cushion Project**, starting at 9:30am 'til 3:30pm each day. Please bring your sewing machine, scissors. and a bag lunch. The rest is supplied by the CWL. This is a great time of fellowship while working on a wonderful project! Even if you do not sew, your help is needed with pinning & turning. See you Tuesday!

The Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) is a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God. Have you considered becoming a member? Please call Linda Maddaford at 306.783.3924 for more information about the CWL and our activities in the parish.

CWL Membership Renewal reminder: We will be collecting membership annual dues at the CWL Christmas Party on Dec. 7th. Dues for 2017 are \$25.

CWL Christmas Party for all Ladies of the Parish and Guests

Wednesday, December 7th
Mass: 5:30 pm
Supper: 6:30 pm

Please bring a personal care item for the Salvation Army. (e.g., shampoo, deodorant, Kleenex, toothpaste)

Tickets are \$15.00 each and will be available after each Mass the weekends of November 26/27 and December 3/4.



News from the Knights of Columbus



Dec. 4 Carols at the Nursing Home

Dec. 7 General Meeting

If you are interested in joining the Knights, please call Brian @ 306.730.7083 or 306.730.7017 after 5pm (or leave a message).

Stewardship Gifts are Irreplaceable

"To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit." 1 Corinthians 12.7

St. Paul tells us that God has blessed each of us for a reason. How has God blessed you? Are you using your **Stewardship** gifts according to God's plan; helping to do His work here on earth? Remember that if you don't do the work God planned for you, no one else can do it.

Religious Education at St. Gerard Church

At St. Gerard we are blessed to have an active Religious Education Committee, who, under the direction of the Pastor, is responsible to provide opportunities for all parish members and inquirers to further their knowledge of the Roman Catholic Faith, and to further-develop their spiritual lives. This is accomplished by providing the following programs:

- Infant baptism baptismal preparation for parents
- Confirmation & First Communion preparation for the second and third Sacraments of Initiation
 of all children in Grade 2 and older
- Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), Rite of Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church, Rite of Confirmation for those adults who were baptized in the Catholic faith
- First Reconciliation a home-based preparation program for those children who have received
 First Communion
- Parish-based home religion program for families who have children that do not attend Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools
- Marriage Preparation Program for couples who are unable to attend the programs offered at Regina, Saskatoon, or Muenster
- Adult Faith Formation programs and retreats

The Sacraments of Initiation

"The sacraments of Christian initiation - Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist - lay the foundations of every Christian life." (CCC 1212)

By Baptism, we share in Christ's death and resurrection. By Confirmation, we share in the gift of Pentecost. In Eucharist, we share in the food of heaven. This is why they are called sacraments of initiation - we are initiated into the community that holds the paschal mystery as its very life.

INFANT BAPTISM Through Baptism, God enables us to participate in his life in Jesus Christ and makes us his children. It is through this sacrament that we receive the Holy Spirit and become members of the People of God, of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Baptism becomes our commitment to grow in this new life and to strive to acquire spiritual maturity. By baptism, God purifies us from sin.

Baptism is the sacrament of faith which has the Risen Christ as its source, and it is the offer of salvation for all people. Intimately linked to Confirmation and to Eucharist, Baptism is, with these two sacraments, Christian Initiation. The child is baptized in the faith of his/her parents, of his/her godparents and of the Church.

CONFIRMATION & FIRST EUCHARIST Originally, the three sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist) formed one single celebration, at the Easter Vigil. For children of catechetical age and for adults, this is still the preferred way.

In the case of infants we separate the celebration of the sacraments, keeping in mind the order and the unity of these sacraments.

In the Archdiocese of Regina, children of catechetical age (Grade 2) prepare to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist. At St. Gerard, the "Come Join Us at the Table" program prepares children for both sacraments. If your child is older than Grade 2 and has yet to receive both sacraments, please contact the Parish Office at 306.782,2449.



RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA) is an incredible journey of discovery, the discovery of God's love in Jesus. If you or someone you know is interested in exploring the friendship and saving grace of Jesus Christ, we invite you to join us in the RCIA journey. It is a warm, welcoming experience that introduces the Christian faith in our Roman Catholic tradition. We explore topics such as Holy Scripture, the Sacraments, Church history and the core beliefs of the Church. Anyone who has taken this "leap of faith" has found it to be a life-altering experience.

The RCIA process is intended for those who are non-baptized. There are several rites and stages that are part of the process to prepare adults for Baptism and to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

Rite of Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church. If you have been baptized in another Christian tradition, the Catholic Church respects that baptism. Baptism is the sacrament of our rebirth in Christ and our immersion into His saving death and Resurrection. It can never be repeated. Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church happens after a period of preparation through catechesis, prayer and worship, and an introduction to Catholic life, values, and mission.



Adults who have been baptized in the Catholic Church but have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation can prepare for reception of this sacrament through a period of catechesis and prayer.

If you are interested in this journey of faith please contact Fr. Francis Hengen, or if you would like more information contact the RCIA Co-ordinator, Mary Bybliw, through the parish office at 306.782.2449 or email office@stgerard.ca

And to all our friends in St. Gerard's parish, we remind you that we all have a responsibility to share our faith and bring others to Christ. If you know of a family member, friend, co-worker or fellow student who is searching for a deeper meaning in their life, let them know about RCIA.

FIRST RECONCILIATION Preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (also known as Penance) for the first time is an exciting time. It is a time for focus on God's mercy, how we forgive amongst our family, friends, and community, and how we celebrate forgiveness. At St. Gerard, once a child has received the Sacrament of First Eucharist, s/he will prepare to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Currently, "We Prepare for Reconciliation" is a parish-based home program that is offered each fall.

PARISH-BASED HOME RELIGION (CATECHETICAL) PROGRAMSometimes families choose the public school system to educate their children. In order to assist parents to raise their children in the Catholic faith, a parish-based home program is offered to parents and their school-age children. This program begins in September. Currently the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies are used for this program.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM In the Archdiocese of Regina, engaged couples are required to participate in a Marriage Preparation Program. These programs are offered in Regina, Saskatoon, and Muenster. Sometimes it is difficult for a couple, for a variety of reasons, to attend a program outside of Yorkton. At St. Gerard's we have Marriage Preparation Couples who are trained to provide a program, right here in our community!

ADULT FAITH FORMATION Learning about our faith does not end after we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. In fact, it is the <u>beginning</u> of our life-long journey of ongoing conversion and catechesis. Various programs and sessions are offered to assist adult parishioners to develop their spiritual life.

Finally, beloved,

whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Glancing Thoughts

First Sunday of Advent A November 27, 2016

Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm: 122: 1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:37-44

Left Behind

In the Gospel Reading, Christ gives a warning about his coming again. Stay awake and wait for me, he says, or else it will be for you the way it was for the people left behind in Noah's time.

Those people watched Noah build his big boat on dry land, and they must have laughed at him. *They* weren't worried. They ate their dinners and held their weddings just as always. And then the flood came. In one day, it swept them all away.

And here is what Christ says: It will be like this when I come again; those who weren't waiting for me will be left behind when I return.

These are puzzling words. Are we supposed to expect Armageddon any day now, for every day of our lives? Will we be left behind if we don't?

Well, look at Noah's flood. Human beings had gotten so evil that it began to look as if God had made a mistake in creating them. So, in the flood, God did something like an autologous bone marrow transplant on the human race. God sifted through the bad cancerous lump of humanity and found a few human beings who looked morally and spiritually healthy. The idea was to reproduce those spiritually healthy human beings after the flood, when the evil people were gone. By this means, the human race could have a rebirth.

The people who laughed at Noah's boat were so evil that they could be waked up to their spiritual peril only when the water rose. Their only chance of salvation came in the catastrophe of the flood when the fear of death may have prompted them to turn to the Lord for salvation. There are things much worse than physical death.

But physical death is the end of the line as far as chances for salvation go. Those who will not turn to the Lord before they die will just be left behind, without the Lord, as Christ says. They will have missed the boat permanently.

So Christ isn't directing us to keep an anxious eye out for Armageddon's advent. Any day now - who knows when? - we may die. What we need to be waiting for while we live is *Christ*. If we live in expectation of the Lord's coming for us, we will not be left behind on that day.

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The **GIVING TREE** is here until Dec. 11th!

- 1. Pick a gift tag from the tree
- 2. Purchase that gift
- 3. Place the NEW, UNWRAPPED gift under the tree with the gift tag attached (gift bags are okay).

Gifts are to be under the tree **by December** 11th, so that they can be sorted and delivered to the Safe Haven, Salvation Army, Shelwin House and White Spruce Provincial Training Center.

Ministry and the Spiritual Life

Just as all Jesus' words and actions emerge from his communion with his Father, so all our words and actions must emerge from our communion with Jesus.

"In all truth I tell you," he says, "whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, and will perform even greater works. ... Whatever you ask for in my name I will do" (John 14.12-13).

It is this profound truth that reveals the relationship between the spiritual life and the life of ministry.

- Bread for the Journey by Henri J.M. Nouwen, ©1997 HarperSanFrancisco

Catechism Theme: Christ's Second Coming (CCC 673)

Since the Ascension, Christ's coming in glory has been imminent, even though "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority." This eschatological coming could be accomplished at any moment, even if both it and the final trial that will precede it are "delayed."

What images do you have of Christ's return in glory? What would happen if he arrived in a way unexpected?

As we prepare for Christmas, the Church reminds us of Jesus' coming at the end of the world. While this might seem contrary to the season, let us remember that whether Christ comes in glory or as a poor child, the results are the same. The Second Coming and Christmas invite us to come closer to the Lord. Both urge us to approach the Lord without delay, even through events of the world distract us.

Reflect on your anxieties this week. Bring them to the Lord. And pray for the peace to survive the unexpected.

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2017 Giving Program

The 2017 collection envelopes are available in the Welcome Area NEXT WEEKEND for those who have contributed by this method in 2016. Please use the new envelopes commencing January 1, 2017.

If you do not have collection envelopes and would like to receive a set for 2017, **please complete a Parish Registration Form, located on the large glass table in the Welcome Area and at the south entrance**

Do you know that donations to St. Gerard Church are income tax-deductible? Contact the Parish Office for details. 306.782.2449



Experience Christ through human beings both ordinary and extraordinary! Become acquainted with saints, mystics, artists and theologians – "Pivotal Players" who shaped the church and changed the course of civilization.

Tuesday, November 29th @ **7:30 pm**, meet Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225 - 1274) a priest, scholar and theologian who confronted classic questions still being asked today. Hear the beautiful soundtrack "Tantum Ergo", composed by St. Thomas.

An Adult Faith Formation evening, organized by the St. Gerard Religious Education Committee

Stop by the Parish Office

For a great assortment of bibles, books and religious articles

Open Monday- Friday (8-noon/1-4)

Children's books (starting @ \$2.00): Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

A is for Altar, B is for Bible
Bartimaeus
Blessings & Prayers
My First Little Books
The Creation Story
The Good Samaritan
The Life of Jesus
The Paralysed Man
The Three Great Catholic Prayers
Zacchaeus

Rosaries (starting @ \$2.00)

Statues (starting @ \$8.00)

Adult prayer books (starting @ \$5.00)

Extreme Faith Youth Bible	\$14.00
NRSV (softcover)	\$14.00
NRSV (hardcover)	\$15.00
Good News Bible (softcover)	\$15.00
Catholic Women's Devotional Bible	\$25.00
Catholic Youth Bible	\$25.00

Baptism gifts (starting @ \$6.00)

Crucifix (starting @ \$5.50)

Nativity items (starting @ \$5.75)
Holy Family Nativity Scene (metal)
Holy Family Creche (glass)
Nativity Characters (porcelain)

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AWAKE	BURGLAR	READY



YOUTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

"The Plowshare"

This Week...

The time is here for us to prepare for the coming of Jesus - for his first coming in Bethlehem and for his final coming at the end of time. Both comings encourage us to reject sin and the ways of darkness, and to embrace goodness and the ways of light. To become ready for the coming of Jesus is to turn our destructive habits into constructive habits.

For Your Reflection

Heaven is surely the place without war and tools of destruction. Why can't earth also be such a place? Why can't swords and spears and tools of war and violence be turned into plowshares and pruning hooks and tools for growing things and cultivating life? It would be the best way to get ready for Jesus.

- Name some personality traits that could be thought of as "swords and spears," such as gossiping or using sarcasm and put-downs. Are there "swords and spears" in your personality?
- How can you cultivate spiritual life and growth in your own personality?

The world seems to be getting more violent. Our country has so many murders each day that all of them do not even make the news. Hearing that a human being killed another human being is "no big deal"! We see it all the time on television.

- Why has the world gotten so violent?
- What do you think are the contributing factors to the attitude that violence is an acceptable way to respond to conflict?
- How can a group of young people concerned about violence affect their neighbourhood or school?

Excerpt from In Touch With the Word, Cycle Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, St. Mary's Press, 2004



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LOST SOMETHING?

Mitts, toques, etc. – check the literature display drawer marked "Lost and Found" in the Welcome Area.

Books, religious articles, jewellery, etc. - contact the Parish Office.

OFFERING A MASS

The offering of a Mass in the name of a deceased family member or friend is one of the greatest ways to keep our beloved dead in our living memory. At each celebration of the Mass, the great prayer of sacrifice is made complete as Jesus' life, death and resurrection is offered to God the Father. When we offer a Mass for a particular person, we ask that in a special way the individual be remembered by the priest who offers up the great sacrifice on behalf of the whole community of faith. In a very real and active way, the life, death and resurrection of the person remembered becomes present and is offered up with Jesus. Each time we offer up a Mass for someone, living or dead, we celebrate the greatest gift of our faith – the gift of Everlasting Life in Christ

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is available daily at the EADM Centre Chapel at 484 Hamilton St. Regina. Hours: 10:00 am to 8:00 pm on Monday through Thursday. Friday, Saturday & Sunday: 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Please help us keep Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament available in our city on a daily basis.

The Healing and Growth Centre St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission

St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission – Searching for God's purpose in your life? Want to live life more fully, and take your faith to the next level? Then, come to St. Therese! At St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission, adults of all ages can explore their faith, discern their vocation in life, foster their prayer life and deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ. Please see the brochures at the entrances of the church, or visit on line at www.sttherese.ca

Rachel's Vineyard: a psychological and spiritual journey for healing after abortion.

If you are experiencing post abortion distress symptoms such as; depression, flashbacks, nightmares, anger, denial, suicidal urges, eating or sleeping disorders, drug or alcohol abuse, inability to bond with your live children, spiritual divorce from God, or avoiding relationships you can receive help and healing by attending a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Weekend. For more information please check out our website at www.rachelsvineyard.org, or email Bonnie at r.vineyardsk@sasktel.net, or call 1-306-480-8911.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY offers <u>distance education</u> courses for adults seeking faith formation for personal and professional development: *Diploma in Ministry; Certificate in Lay Ministry; Come Let Us Worship: A course in liturgical foundations; Certificate in Spirituality; and Diploma in Intellectual Disability Studies.*

For an information package please contact Continuing & Distance Education, St. Francis Xavier University, toll free 1-877-867-5562, diplomainministry@stfx.ca or check the website:

www.mystfx.ca/academic/continuinged/Ministry.html