**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**It is through the Holy Spirit that this child been conceived in her……….**

**Mass Schedule and Intentions**

**Saturday, December 17, 5:00 p.m. Mass - For world peace, the poor and the youth**

**St. Peter's Christmas Party 6:15 p.m.**

**Sunday, December 18, 9:30 a.m. Mass + For world peace, the poor and the Parishioners of St. Peter's**

**11:00 a.m. Mass - Pro - Populo**

**7:00 p.m. Novena Mass + For the repose of the Soul of Luz Quitain Mueca by the Family**

**Monday, December 19, 7:00 p.m. Novena Mass**

**Tuesday, December 20, 7: 00 p.m. (Healing Mass)**

**Wednesday, December 21, 7:00 p.m. Novena Mass**

**Thursday, December 22, 7:00 p.m. Novena Mass**

**Friday, December 23, 7:00 p.m. Novena Mass**

**Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve Mass 7:00 p.m. Mass + For the repose of the Souls of Tom and Mary Whelan on the 20th anniversary of their death by Ann and Mike Boriel**

**Sunday, December 25, The Nativity of the Lord Christmas**

**10:30 a.m. Christmas Day Mass - Pro - Populo**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT REFLECTION:** **We are accustomed to call the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary 'the annunciation'. This Sunday's gospel reading perhaps ought to be called 'the annunciation to Joseph'. Joseph is in fact the principal actor in the account of the birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. Like Mary, he too had to listen for the message of God. Like Mary, he too was invited to play his part in the working out of God's mysterious plan that the Son of God should become man. This gospel reading, just like the annunciation to Mary in the Gospel of Luke, gives us the basis for our belief in the virginal conception of Jesus. Here we find an expression of this mystery in the words of the angel to Joseph: 'she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit' (v.20). The Son of God is born among us in an utterly extraordinary way. The role of Mary as 'virgin mother' is quite unique, and Joseph has to go against his initial inclinations and make the decision to 'take his wife to his home' (verse 24). In this reading we encounter the first of many verses which Matthew will quote from the Old Testament, declaring that they are 'fulfilled'. The text read at this Mass from the prophet Isaiah speaks of God's constant solidarity with the people. The fulfilment of this same text, which is announced by Matthew in the gospel reading, points to something even greater, the extraordinary intervention of God to bring the Son of God into the world. Are we like Joseph willing to go against deeply felt ideas in order to do the will of God? Why would God desire that the Saviour should be born by virginal conception? Let us pray that we may welcome God's new ways as we prepare for Christmas. Let us pray for the people of Palestine and Israel that they may have peace.**

**SEASON OF ADVENT:** **Advent has a twofold nature: It prepares us for Christmas, when we recall Christ's first coming among us, and it is also a time when we look forward to his second coming at the end of the ages. Advent is a season of joyful expectation. Ordo 2022-2023, page 73.**

**Homelands Mass - Cancellation**: **Please note that the Homelands Mass scheduled for January 15, 2023 has been cancelled indefinitely. Thank you all who have participated in this special Mass in the past years.**

**THE GREATEST GIFT:** **Christmas is coming! So much time has been spent in the past weeks thinking about gifts, where to find just the right presents for all the people on our list. Nothing but the best for those we love. And if we're honest, we've spent a few hours thinking about the presents we'll receive. Today's Advent message makes even the best gift seem a little shabby. In accepting her role as the mother of Jesus, Mary gave everything to God. She gave up her reputation, her "social acceptance" and her ability to "choose her own path." She willingly sacrificed her will, her life, her future and in doing so brought God's greatest gift to us, His son Jesus. As Christmas fast approaches, may Mary's gift teach us the real meaning of Christmas, giving to God in celebration of the gifts He's given us.**

**NEW SUNDAY MISSALS:** **HAVE ARRIVED! And You are welcome to purchase a copy or more of the new Sunday missal at the parish office for $8.00 each.**

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD:** **Children's Liturgy of the Word is back! Please join us at 9:30 a.m. Mass every Sunday. Parents are welcome to participate with their young children. We ask that masks be worn at this time.**

**Ottawa School of Theology & Spirituality Winter Semester 2023: Moved to an online format for winter 2023. The two 5- week sessions will run Jan. 9 - Feb. 6, and Feb. 13 - Mar. 20. Please check the website for course descriptions: www.osts.ca.**

**ST. PETER'S CHRISTMAS NOVENA:** **All are invited to 9 days of Novena Masses for Christmas from Thursday, December 15th - Friday, December 23rd, each evening, starting at 6:30 p.m. with the Holy Rosary and followed by Holy Mass 7:00 p.m. Christmas Novena is a Catholic tradition that is celebrated across the world. It is a great source of spiritual nourishment to all of us, as we prepare for the celebration of the birth of our Jesus Christ. Invite your families and friends and come share in this wonderful time of Reflection. Please note that there will be No Weekday Morning Mass celebrated during our novena.**

**Michaelangelo's Sistine Chapel Exhibition:** **Dec. 7 - Jan. 22, Ottawa EY Centre, 4899 Uplands Drive: This globally successful exhibition is an innovative and unique interpretation of Michelangelo's timeless masterpiece. Info and further details: https://chapelsistine.com/theexhibition/**

**WISDOM OF THE SAINTS**: **Arise, all you nobles and peasants! Mary invites all, rich and poor, just and sinners, to enter the cave of Bethlehem, to adore and to kiss the feet of her newborn Son…..Let us enter; let us not be afraid. - St. Alphonsus Liguori.**

**ADVENT PRAYER:** **Blessed Father We are an expectant people always rushing to accomplish things, only to experience time slipping through our fingers. We expect things to improve hoping that somehow we will not always put you and our relationship with you on the back burner of our lives. For this reason we pause for a moment in prayer. Be with us during this season of Advent. Help us to come to an appreciation of "holy waiting". As once your people long ago waited for their Saviour to be born, help us enter into the spirit of celebrating the growing awareness of your Word in our lives. Let the power of your Word not be buried or forgotten because of the press of our other obligations. Amen.**