

Inspiring Hope

Faith, as shared in Church, opens onto a vast and hopeful horizon as we anticipate Christ's return. Despite whatever tribulations we endure, our Church encourages us to focus on a future far beyond our past and present circumstances. Christ took on our human flesh, suffered, died for us and rose from the dead two millennia ago. As we prepare for Christmas, we renew our commitment to maintain our faith as St. John the Baptist told his followers: *Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire* (Mt 3:10).



As we celebrate Advent, we move beyond our present circumstances and hopefully anticipate our *future*. How did the authors of these biblical texts express these magnificent promises? There are a series of remarkable and inspiring images to support our desire to engage in the joyous expectation of Christ's return. This strategy is especially evident on this second Sunday of Advent. Many images from Mediterranean countries unveil our world's destination, according to God's plan. Here are some examples that anticipate the joyful transformations that are possible in our world.

In the first reading, the shoot that sprouts from the root of Jesse, David's father, proclaims a dramatic reversal of what could be expected. In biblical times, a tree was a treasure and a dead tree, a symbol of sin. I remember seeing a stump of an olive tree in an Italian orchard with a shoot which had produced a branch. This new life could become an olive tree and potentially last for a thousand years.

The prophet Isaiah prophesized the birth of a descendant of a royal family that people thought had ceased to exist. This descendant would be a man of God and a rallying sign for everyone. This king would symbolize and guarantee God's presence among his people. Hope was also reinforced by the images of wild and domestic animals that would co-exist peacefully on earth and enjoy a vegetarian diet. The world would then return to the harmony of earlier days.

The Gospel is also teeming with strong images. We learn details of St. John the Baptist's life in the desert: his clothes, food and agricultural references. He mentions the unproductive tree that is cut down and burned. He also uses the image of gathering wheat into the granary and burning the chaff at the end of the harvest. The image is clear: conversion leads to a sorting process, a final, definitive judgment and the growth that God has dreamed for our world.

Alain Faucher, priest

Translated by Honore Kerwin Borrelli

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MASS INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER 8, 2019

Please pray for:

Lea Guilbeault & Ferruccio Berardo
Pietro Iorio
Benito Di Fruscia
Archilaio Di Fruscia
Concetta Starnino
Dorothy Delorme
Julia Cianci
Dorothy Brisebois
Dominic Gualtieri
Livia Polo Sala
Gene Maher Marshal
Mary Zientek

Requested by:

Family
JP, Joe, Grace & Terry Iorio
Wanda Di Fruscia
Wanda Di Fruscia
Wanda Di Fruscia
Fr. Mike Shaw
Léo-Paul & Mary Leclerc
Fr. Mike Shaw
Lucy
Nassivera Family
Brother Terrence Maher
Nieces

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: Holy Family BAKE SALE and 20/20 Draw!!!!

Holiday Mass Schedule:

Christmas Eve mass is at 8:30 PM and
Christmas Day is at 10:30 AM
New Year's Eve is at 8:30 PM
New Year's Day: There is no mass

We are updating our e-mail distribution list. To receive news, updates and church communications, e-mail your info to Mail@HolyFamilyMontreal.com and we will add you to the list.

Université de Montréal seminar on Health and Spirituality: Spirituality often appears on the radar screen of health care workers. How does one define the relationship between health, illness, healing and spiritual dimension of a person? What does research have to say about this topic and how does one integrate spirituality in health care? The seminar will examine several views on spirituality: medical, theological, anthropological, and ethical. Mondays from 9-12 from January 6th to the April 27th, 2020 at the Marguerite-d'Youville Pavillon, room 4030. For more information, contact 514-343-7506 or fabienne.lescot@umontreal.ca

As of this September 2019, our Childcare Centre will continue to exist but will function differently. There will no longer be volunteers who will take care of the children. The Centre will continue to be open with toys and playthings. However, parents will have to go down with their child or children, and care for them themselves. This playroom will be available for any parent whose child cannot sit through the liturgy.

For those wishing to have a mass said for loved one or a friend, please see Sharon Murphy after mass.

Last Sunday's collection was \$3605. Thank you!

For Fr. David's 40th birthday, the congregation at St. Mary's, decided to give him a present of a new suit. Fr. David was so moved by the gift that the following Sunday he stood before everyone and began his homily with a tear in his eye, "Today I am preaching to you in my birthday suit."