



John the Baptist stands before us, an Israelite who kept the promise of the Messiah alive in people’s hearts. He calls us to give a practical expression to his message by waiting in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Who among us, would not hunger for more joy in our lives? According to today’s readings there is no reason for us to live our lives devoid of it. God is among us and the deep-rooted cause of our joy is awareness that he has come to save us. Joy is never far away but it often proves elusive and we miss it. The problem is that very often we go looking for it in the spectacular, whereas all the time joy is to be found in the ordinary things, in everyday happenings and with ordinary people. It is to be experienced in the smile of a child, in a letter from a friend and in the beauty of a flower. We can also discover that we possess joy in the good we do and in our caring and sharing.

**WHY CATHOLICS SHOULD PARTY
HARD DURING CHRISTMAS**

Two weeks ago we held a joint birthday party for our two daughters at our home. Katherine and Marian’s joy was so contagious. Since having children I have been amazed at how their simple joy can bring so much happiness, fulfillment and peace to our families.

Like Marian and Katherine, Catholics have to party hard this Christmas. By partying, I of course don’t mean drinking rum infused eggnog until you can no longer stand. Like children’s laughter on their birthday our joy as Catholics should be contagious. We are celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ who is our hope.

Facing the Bad and the Ugly

This isn’t just a pious symbolic phrase; it’s a fact. I can prove it. Forgive me for being blunt, but traditional and social media have become a cancer to our society. We are constantly subjected (or subject ourselves) to anxiety inducing news. Whether it’s the consistent social media updates that buzz in our pockets or the news that we start and end our day with, discouragement is looming around every corner.

Pushing Back the Dark

Bad news is a fact of reality. Yet worrying about them won’t add value to our lives (see Matthew 6:25-34). We have two choices. We can allow the darkness to consume us or we can be the lights that push back the darkness. Jesus says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). If Jesus is God, then this is objectively true. If Jesus isn’t God, then he is liar and deceiver (or *satan* in Hebrew). If we intentionally follow Christ’s teachings then we will become more like him (*theosis*); we will become lights that push back the darkness.

The final sentence of the above passage reads, “No one comes to the Father except through me” (v.6). We all have a sense of when justice needs to be served. Despite our best efforts justice isn’t always served in this lifetime, so it must be served in the next in the court of the final judge, Jesus Christ. In the book of Revelations, Jesus says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End” (22:13). He is the final judge that will set things straight.

The Peace of God that Surpasses All Understanding

So in Christ’s words: “Do not worry about life...” (Mt 6:25), but party hard this Christmas and be witnesses of the hope that Christ has assured us. My favorite Scripture reading appears in today’s second readings. St. Paul writes, “Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your request known to God. Then the peace of God that *surpasses all understanding* will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7). **Greg Garda**



Mass Intentions

Monday	Soul of Elsa Ballesteros
Tuesday	Souls of Aline Russell, Munira & Bolarde Lamooza
Wednesday	Soul of
Thursday	Departed Soul
Friday	Soul of John Frederick Jack Wilson

PRAYER REQUEST LINE
905 881-2786 ext. 250



ST. LUKE'S DECEMBER 2018 SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve – December 24th

4:00 p.m. with pageant, 8:00 p.m., and 12 midnight
with carols starting ½ hour before each Mass

Christmas Day – December 25th

10:30 a.m., and 12:15 p.m.

New Year's Eve – December 31st

5:00 p.m. Mass

New Year's Day – January 1st

10:30 a.m., and 12:15 p.m.



**NEW YEAR'S EVE
DINNER DANCE**

Time to start planning for your New Year's Eve celebration! We are continuing our tradition of having a high class served dinner and dance for a very affordable price. The evening begins with arrival at 7:00 and hors d'oeuvres served while you are settling in and socializing with your family and parish friends. Then at 8:00 you will be served at your table your choice of Prime Rib of Beef or Chicken with all the trimmings. Dancing follows to the music of the DJ Greg Benoit so bring your requests! Champagne and party favours are included in your ticket. There will be door prizes and a bar to purchase your drinks of choice. Tickets will be on sale this weekend so reserve your table early. The whole family is invited! Prices are: Adults \$45 Seniors \$30 Children 11 and under \$20. For further information contact Greg at greg.benoit@rogers.com or at 647-296-6851.



***Society of St. Vincent de Paul*
CHRISTMAS BASKET PROGRAM**

Special envelopes marked Christmas Basket Program will be available in the pews and in the Narthex.

Please place your donations in the envelope and drop it into the St. Vincent de Paul poor box. The funds will be used to purchase gift cards and will be distributed according to the size of the family. **Tax receipts will be issued by the Society of St. Vincent Paul. Please make cheques payable to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.**

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS FUN DAY



On **Saturday December 22nd from 1 to 4 pm** the St. Luke's Youth Group will be hosting a Christmas Fun Day for children from grades 1 and up. The children will participate in different activities such as paper airplane flying contests, a puppet show, playing board games and watching Christmas movies with popcorn. The day is an opportunity for parents to spend some quiet time at this busy time of year and for the children to spend some time together. Christmas treats and drinks like apple cider will be provided. If you would like to register your child for the Christmas Fun Day could you please email John at john.humphries@rogers.com or call him at 905-881-2786 ext:32. Children must be pre-registered to participate and there is a limit on numbers so register early...Thanks!!

TUNA CASSEROLES:

The Tuna Casseroles for the Good Shepherd Ministries are due on Sunday, December 30th. We know that everyone is busy so we are suggesting you might want to make it ahead of time. Thank you for your continued support during 2018.