

St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish

Office: 1500 Hanwell Road, Fredericton NB E3C 1N3 Phone (506) 444-6021

Father Bill Brennan, Parish Priest Website: stkateri.ca Email: office@stkateri.ca

Mass Schedule: St. Ann's Sunday @ 9:30 am/Holy Family Saturday @ 4:30 pm and Sunday @ 11:00 am

December 21st, 2025 – 4th Sunday of Advent & Christmas

Christmas Reflection from Bill Brennan, Pastor, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish

The Hebrew word for Bethlehem means 'house of bread' ('Beth' - house / 'lehem' - of bread). I find it fascinating that our Christmas story tells us that Jesus is born in 'the house of bread'. This is a very positive image of our world, with Bethlehem being the 'symbolic village' for our 'global village'. Indeed our world is a 'house of bread'. The bread of family life, the bread of education, the bread of work and provision, the bread of leisure and rest, the bread of faith communities, the bread of nature and creation, the bread of God living among us. This is a glimpse of the banquet of breads that we are privileged and challenged to partake of on our journey through life.

Christmas time is one of the deeply sacred moments in our year when we are invited to recognize the complexity of our individual and communal quarrels, conflicts, prejudices, past hurts, and the temptation to hoard more than our share of the world's bread. Once again we can ask for a glimmer of hope and a bit of movement towards freeing us in joining our family tables, friendship tables, the global community and our natural environment with a deeper awareness of our interdependence and a fuller appreciation that the bread we personally bring is needed, unique, delightful and holy.

I have often mentioned over the years that bread can only become bread through a process where thousands and millions of individual grains are milled into flour and kneaded together. In the great mystery of one loaf of bread is the truth that each grain of wheat that makes up the loaf is essential. This holds for us the following truth that Jesus taught us in his actions and words of who we each are as human beings. When we join our lives with Christ to the lives of others in loving ways and pool our knowledge, imaginations, bodies, minds and spirits for the common good, God makes us into loaves of life giving bread.

Jesus from his birth till his death included the gifts of everyone from the shepherds, who were often viewed as unclean and unworthy, to the thieves on the cross beside him whom he welcomed into paradise.

As we reach out this Christmas season to those who have greater economic challenges than ourselves and are depending on our generosity and peacemaking, may our outreach not just be 'out-reach'. May it also be an experience of 'receiving-in'. What do we need to receive from the amazing bag of gifts of those we reach out to? After all, our loaf is only true bread when the many grains are included.

Thank you to all of you for all you do to make St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish such a life giving 'loaf of bread' for so many. May you be blessed deeply by the Christmas season by, Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, who lives among us EVERYWHERE! Merry Christmas!!

Advent Week 4 – Purple Candle of Love.

THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE REMINDS US OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US AND FOR ONE ANOTHER. "NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN GOD; IF WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER, GOD LIVES IN US, AND HIS LOVE IS PERFECTED IN US." –1 JOHN: 4-12



Advent Song Week Four – 'O Come All Ye Faithful': The Latin title 'Adeste Fideles' is translated to mean "O Come, You Faithful". While we do not know the exact origin of this hymn, it is often attributed to an English music copyist, John Francis Wade and could quite possibly date back to 17th century in Portugal. Although there are a number of different verses, the version we are familiar with today is from Frederick Oakeley an English Catholic priest, which dates to 1841 and appears in Murray's Hymnal of 1852.

The verses of this hymn include the manger, the Holy Trinity and uniting our heavenly and earthly church, inviting followers to join the angels in praising Jesus, "*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation; O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!*"

This beautiful song places us right in the story of the coming of the Messiah through its biblical references such as: Luke 2, 8-16, "...there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night...so they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger." (***See how the shepherds, summoned to His cradle, leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze...***).

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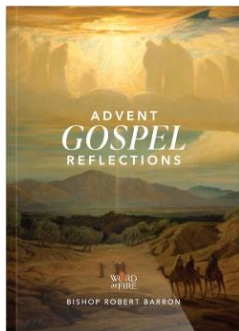
In Luke 2, 13-14, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" This hymn also speaks of love. God's love for us in sending us his only son and the Shepherds adoring and joyful praise.

In your quiet time this week, the fourth week of Advent, let us focus on God's love for us and for others:

- Where do you need God's love in your life today?
- How can I open my heart to receive God's love?
- Where do you acquire the inspiration for showing God's love to others?

"Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand." –St. Teresa

Advent Weekday Masses: During the Advent Season weekday Masses followed by one hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be held on the following date: December 18th at 7pm at Holy Family Church.



Journey Through Advent. Our last session will be on **Monday, December 22nd at 7pm at Holy Family Church.** This has been a wonderful opportunity to slow down, connect with God and with one another and to open our hearts to the grace God is waiting to give us in this season of waiting.

African Mass of Thanksgiving. The African Catholic Community are joining us for a special Mass of Thanksgiving on **Sunday, December 21st at 11am at Holy Family Church** and taking part in various ministries. There will be a Parish Pot-Luck gathering after Mass @ 12noon in the Parish Hall. Please let Agnes know how if you wish to contribute to the potluck, via email wgns70@hotmail.com There will be many African dishes and other international dishes you might bring. All are welcome!

Christmas Mass Schedule St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish

December 24th: 4pm and 6pm, Holy Family Church, Christmas Eve Masses. *(Masses will be livestreamed and will be the traditional Family Bell Mass with the children.)*

December 25th: 9:30am, St. Ann's Church

December 25th: 11am, Holy Family Church

January 1st, Mary, Holy Mother of God
Mass at 11am at Holy Family Church

Summary of Support for December 13 & 14

Regular/Loose	\$ 4,563.90
PAD (wkly. average)	2,314.62
St. Patrick's Cemetery	25.00
Oromocto Food Bank	280.00
Collection for Life	150.00
Christmas	940.00
Outreach	3,010.00
TOTAL	\$ 11,283.52

OPTIONS FOR OFFERTORY DONATIONS:

1. *Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD).* Forms are at the entrance of the churches. Return to parish office.
2. *Mail:* St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish, 1500 Hanwell Road, Fredericton NB E3C 1N3.
3. *Electronic Funds Transfer to* office@stkateri.ca

YOUR 2026 DONATION OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

Are now available to pick up at the entrance of the church. If there is not a box with your name, please feel free to take a 'NEW' box. Be sure to write your name and address on your envelopes as you offer them.

Parishioners using PAD (Pre-Authorized Debit) for your donations, there are packets of 'Special Collection Envelopes' available as well. Feel free to pick up a packet.

Thank you for your generous and continued support of our parish.

Thank you for helping to *Turn Debt into Hope!*

Thanks to your support of Development and Peace — Caritas Canada Fall Campaign 'Turn Debt Into Hope'.



Many impoverished countries in the Global South are struggling with conflict, humanitarian crises and climate change. Cancelling their unjust debts would free up scarce revenues, allowing them to better meet the needs of their citizens. Citizens like little Melati and her mother, Ade, in Ethiopia, who only aspire to live in dignity.

Each signature amplifies the message of debt justice to creditors and political leaders. You can still sign-the petition online by clicking on the following link: **sign the petition**

Eucharistic Ministers for Christmas and New Year Masses at Holy Family:

December 24th at 4pm:

Joanne Linton / Harold DeCoursey / Leslie Carr
Sharon Watts / Margie Snell / Rita Maxwell / Fr. Bill

December 24th at 6pm:

Dorothy Blanchard / Colleen Hamilton
Sadie Cameron / Fr. Bill

December 25th at 11am:

Patrick Burgoon / Bettyanne McMackin / Fr. Bill

New Year's Day at 11am:

Patrick Burgoon / Judy Kelly / Fr. Bill

Readers – Holy Family – Christmas 2025

Christmas Eve 4 pm	Christmas Eve Bell Mass for Kids	Debbie Landau, Mary Beth Gorey Roly McSorley
Christmas Eve 6 pm	Christmas Eve Bell Mass for All	Jane Buckley James McGroarty
Christmas Day 11 am	Christmas Day	Doreen Cormier Ebuka Ezeokafor Maureen Hawthorne One member of the Obi family
Thursday, Jan. 1	Mary, Mother of God	Patrick Burgoon Norma Downing Mandy Gilmore Anna Mae Snider

Rosary: Please note there will be no Rosary at Holy Family for the next two weeks as we celebrate Christmas and New Year's Masses. Next Rosary date is **January 8th**.

READINGS for December 21st

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24

Responsorial Psalm: May the Lord come in;
he is king of glory.

READINGS for December 28th

First Reading: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-21

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Responsorial Psalm: Lord, who walks in his
ways.

Mass Intentions at St. Ann's

Dec 21st William Buckley
Sandy & Myrtle Goodine
Dec 25th Peter & Chris LaForest
Jan 4th For The People

Mass Intentions at Holy Family

Dec 20th For the People
Dec 21st Howard Richards
Dec 24th (4pm) Leona Murphy / Gary Stewart
Dec 24th (6pm) June Wilkins & Tyler Messer
Dec 25th Leah Devlin
Jan 3rd Charles LeBlonde
Jan 4th Edna Chisolu Ezeokafor

READERS AT ST. ANN'S

Dec 21st Carolann Doherty
Jan 4th Lawrence Cameron
Jan 11th John Monkhouse
Jan 18th Stacey Chessie
Jan 25th Elaine Geldart

READERS AT HOLY FAMILY

Dec 20th William Cormier / Mona LeBlanc
Dec 21st Patrick Burgoon / Carl Duivenvoorden
Flora Ederaro / Mandy Gilmore

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS AT HOLY FAMILY

Dec 20th Leslie Carr / Colleen Hamilton
Dec 21st Annie Zdyb Rinne / Verna McCloskey
Jan 3rd Rita Maxwell / Harold DeCoursey
Jan 4th JoAnne Linton / Annie Zdyb-Rinne

Our Sacred Stories
Christmas – A Blessing of Wonder and Awe
(Fr. John Jennings)

“The People who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shone.” (Isaiah 9:2)

The prophetic voice of Isaiah proclaims the wonder of God for all the earth. Are we able to stand in wonder at what is all around us? How often do we stand in awe? In fact, it is always before us. Dark places there are indeed in our lives. At times life seems pretty unexciting and routine. But life in fact is full of wonder and fills us with an awe that we do not recognize unless we open our eyes and heart to that blessing of God.

Wonder makes everything new. It is the gift of every small child. Watch the eyes of the little ones. Their world is ever new. It is a world of discovery at every moment, in all they encounter. To them, nothing is ordinary or familiar.

Young lovers manifest the same. They have embarked on a journey of discovery, standing in a world of wonder with each other. Moved by their love the awe in which they hold each other causes them to glory in their companionship.

Here we entering the Christmas season, truly a season of wonder and awe. It is a time to let the wonder of God and God’s relationship wash over us. For all the many ways in which we regard this Christmas season, at its core is the wonder of the Incarnation – that God has come among us in Jesus and shares our humanity. What a wonder - if we are truly awake and aware.

We journey this whole season of Advent and Christmas with many figures of our faith – with the prophets of the Old Testament and the hopes of Israel, with John the Baptist and his heraldic voice, with Mary and Joseph who walk in wonder and awe in what God is doing through them. Everything is new. Nothing can be ordinary or familiar for them or for us.

Can we stand in wonder and awe at God’s dream for our world, for humanity? Is it possible for us to live in awe and wonder at such a loving act of God who has come among in Jesus and shares our human experience? Can we have the spirit of the little child, the sense of discovery of the young lovers, the awe of Mary as the Angel Gabriel appears?

Somewhere in the ordinary and familiar of our world we encounter and discover this great gift of awe and wonder. We see it in what we celebrate at Christmas – the Incarnation of our God. We may seek and search

for God, but God is among us. God shares our humanity and stands with us in all creation. On the final Sunday of the Advent season, we hear of the wonder-filled presence of God. The Gospel writer Matthew (1:18-24) expresses this in the name given to the promised one “Emmanuel”, God is with us. We hear it again, in the readings of Christmas evening and day.

We are entering a season of wonder and awe, for God is among us. Jesus the Christ in the wonder of the Incarnation is the image of our loving and life-giving God. In Jesus, we come to recognize the wonder that marks our faith. Matthew who opens us to this awareness of God’s constant presence, reassures us again at the end of his Gospel. Jesus passes on his mission to his followers with these words: *Know that I am with you always, yes, to the end of time* (Matt.28:20). Do we have the vision in our hearts to stand in wonder and in awe of a God who will never leave or reject us?

During this Christmas season, may you, your family and friends and all our world be blessed with the gift of wonder and awe in the many expressions of the loving presence of our God.

Knights of Columbus Keep Christ in Christmas Drawing Contest 2025

Parishioners in Kindergarten through Grade 8 are invited to participate in the Keep Christ in Christmas Drawing Contest.

All submissions should be on paper approximately 11” x 17”. Paper will be available in the entrance of the Church.

All posters should be the original work of a single person.

The theme of the contest is: “Keep Christ in Christmas”.

Drawings will be judged in five categories: Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4, Grades 5-6 and Grades 7-8. Prizes will be awarded for each group at the local level and the first place winner from each group will be entered for competition at the Provincial level. Local level prizes: 1st

Place: \$ 25.00, 2nd Place: \$ 20.00, 3rd Place: \$ 15.00.

Provincial level prizes: 1st Place: \$ 75.00, 2nd Place: \$ 50.00, 3rd Place: \$ 25.00. All entries become the property of the New Brunswick Knights of Columbus. The following information must be printed on the back of each drawing: Name of Participant, Age of Participant, School Grade, Name(s) of Parent or Guardian, Telephone Number for Parent or Guardian and Name of Parish. Entries must be received by Thursday, December 25th, 2025. Drawings can be left in the box in the entrances of Holy Family Church or St. Ann's Church. For more information, parents can contact

Vic Badeau at 506-440-2840.