

# OUR LADY OF PEACE PARISH

## A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

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**Our Pastor: Fr. Biju Kannampuzha** Tel: 416-239-1259 Ext 3

**Office Administrators: Teresa McNamara & Rosanne Colavecchia** Tel: 416-239-1259 Ext 0



## **The Visitation**

Joseph Campbell once said, “Every hero’s story really begins when he leaves home.” Campbell was talking about Greek and Roman mythology. But he was also talking about life. Great things can happen when you step out of your comfort zone.

Today’s gospel is a vivid example of that. Mary leaves the comfort of her home in Nazareth, setting out into the rugged hills of Judah. And with that, a great heroic story begins—in fact, the greatest ever. It’s the heroic story of Christianity—the story of a blessed gift being offered to the world. It was a story unfolding even before Christ was born. And at the center of it were the two heroic women, Elizabeth and Mary. Each in her way was fulfilling God’s plan, each was helping to bring forth the good news of our salvation — Mary, carrying Christ, the Word made flesh; and Elizabeth bearing John, the Voice who will be the herald of the Word. Both of these holy women speak to us today.

There is Elizabeth, the saint of patience, the saint of eternal waiting, the saint of Advent. She was a woman getting on in years, presumed to be barren, when God brought a child into her life. In Luke’s gospel, she is the first person mentioned outside of Mary to encounter Christ. Consider what that means. Before there were disciples and apostles, before the blind saw and the lame walked, long before Cana or Capernaum, there was Elizabeth. She was the first to welcome Jesus, by welcoming his mother. And, like so many others in the centuries that followed, that encounter changed her. Elizabeth felt the child in her womb leap – and, in a preview of Pentecost, she was filled with the Holy Spirit. She sensed a miracle standing before her. And she was moved to ask the question that so many others would ask through history: *How does this happen to me?* How does this gift happen to any of us? How are we so blessed to receive God’s grace in our lives? We can only wonder.

And wonder is the perfect sentiment for these last days of Advent. The Incarnation, God becoming man, is the most wonder-filled act in human history. At midnight on Thursday, we will sing of it, and in the middle of a dark winter night, this church will be ablaze with light, overflowing with music and joy. But here, in this gospel passage, it is already beginning.

And it is happening because of Mary—the other heroic woman in this scene. Mary, the blessed, Mary the pure, Mary the trusting, Mary full of grace. Mary, the one who had the courage to believe what was unbelievable – and who set out on that journey, the Visitation, a moment so full of meaning. This gospel gives us a foretaste of Bethlehem: it shows Mary bringing Jesus into the world. Pope Benedict called the Visitation the “first Eucharistic procession”— Mary as

living tabernacle, carrying Christ to Elizabeth for adoration.

But there is also something else at work here. With this visit Mary taught us something so fundamental to our faith: *we are meant to bring Christ to others*. When Mary answered “yes” to the angel, she knew what she had to do. She had to share this, share *him*, with the world. That was her great vocation.

That, too, is ours. If you want to know the gospel mandate, here is where it begins. Here is our calling. We are called to be Elizabeth, welcoming Christ and looking for him in others. But we are also called to be Mary, bringing Jesus to a waiting world—to the lonely, the forgotten, the homebound, the neglected, and the poor. That is our charge, our mission.

And it comes with risks. God calls us, as He called Mary, to set out in haste to the hill country of our own lives—the rugged terrain that can be hard to climb, that isn’t easy or comfortable or close. The weather isn’t always agreeable, either. But then: no great story ever starts with “It was cold, so I stayed in” as Cole Haan shoes ad says.

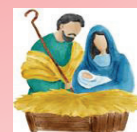
God asks us to make the journey anyway, and to trust that He is with us. In these last days of Advent, as the weeks of waiting come to a close, we remember how God kept His promises –and we look east, to a rising star, to a new promise about to be fulfilled. We journey on. And we pray to make that journey the same way that Mary did: full of faith, full of hope, and full of joy.

**Dear Beloved Parishioners,**

As we prepare to celebrate this joyous season of Christmas, we are also entering a significant moment in the life of the global Church—the beginning of the Jubilee Year with the theme “*Pilgrims of Hope*.” This season of Advent has been a time for us to reflect on our journey of faith, and with Christmas, we are reminded of the light of Christ, who comes to guide us as we walk together as pilgrims in this world.

The Jubilee Year calls us to renew our commitment to hope and unity, to deepen our faith, and to continue our pilgrimage toward God. As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, may His presence fill our hearts with peace, joy, and a renewed sense of purpose. Let us be a community that walks with one another in faith, trust, and charity, as we seek to bring the hope of Christ to all corners of our world.

May this Christmas bring you and your loved ones abundant blessings, and may the year ahead be filled with grace as we journey together as Pilgrims of Hope.



With love and prayers,  
Fr. Biju Kannampuzha



**Mass Intentions**

**Saturday December 21<sup>st</sup> 5pm**

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**Sunday December 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**10am**

- †Casimir Stec Sr. Requested by Drozdal Family
- †Hippolyte & †Yvonne Borde Requested by Susan McRae
- †Trish Marsh Requested by Beverly Toloffson

**11:30am**

- †Shue Guang-Zhu Requested by Julie & Mir Rupik

**Monday December 23<sup>rd</sup> - No Mass**

**Tuesday December 24<sup>th</sup>**

**NO MASS 9am**

**Christmas Eve Mass - 5pm**

**Wednesday December 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Christmas Day Mass**

**10am & 11.30am**

**Thursday December 26<sup>th</sup> 9am**

**NO MASS**

**Friday December 27<sup>th</sup> 9am**

- Special Intentions Requested by Michele Giorno
- † Nazzareno Nizzero Requested by Nizzero Family



**Christmas Flowers**

As the joyful season of Christmas approaches, to make our sanctuary truly special, we are seeking your generosity in donating flowers for Christmas decorations. We welcome poinsettias, both big and medium size, in traditional Christmas colors or any that you feel would add a special touch to our decorations.

Please bring your flower donations to the church on or before Monday December 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Your generosity will contribute to the shared spirit of Christmas in our parish, and we look forward to celebrating this joyous season with you.

**2025 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES**



Offertory Envelopes for the year 2025 are conveniently placed on the table at the rear of the church. Upon collecting your 2025 envelopes, please complete the card sticking out from the box, furnishing your full name, address, telephone number, and email address and leave it in the container provided.

To prevent any confusion, kindly refrain from using the 2025 envelopes until the beginning of the New Year.

Take a moment to inscribe your name and address on the envelopes for the initial weeks of 2025, offering an additional way to verify your contact details. We encourage you to include the donation amount on your envelope, providing valuable assistance to the counters.

If you currently do not use donation envelopes, we urge you to consider adopting them or explore the option of enrolling in a monthly-preauthorized giving plan. (PAG) Both approaches contribute to the financial stability of your parish while ensuring you receive a beneficial tax receipt annually.

*Your ongoing support is deeply appreciated, thank you!*



**Sanctuary Candle Intentions**

**St. Joseph: Giuseppe (Joe) Luca**  
Requested by the Family



**Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Christmas Eve Mass 5pm**

**Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Christmas Day Masses 10am & 11.30am**

**Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>**

**New Year's Eve Mass 5pm**

**Wednesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>**

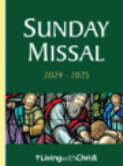
**New Year's Day Mass 10am**



**ALTAR SERVER MINISTRY**

We will be continuing our regular training sessions with our new & experienced Altar Servers. If your child is interested in joining the Altar Servers, For any questions, please

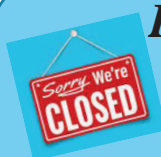
contact Arnold at [asamson@archtoronto.org](mailto:asamson@archtoronto.org)



**The 2024-2025 Sunday Missals**

Are ready for you at the back of the church. Please consider a minimum \$5.00 donation

Recycle bins are located near the church exit doors, if years.



**Parish Office will be Closed**

**24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> December**

Please email with any urgent or important messages, as emails will be checked. [olpeace@archtoronto.org](mailto:olpeace@archtoronto.org)






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