

OUR LADY OF PEACE PARISH

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

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Feast of the Holy Family

Solemnity of the Holy Family

As Catholic parents, it is our duty to pass on the faith to our children. While religious education programs, Catholic schools, youth groups, and clergy play an important role, the primary responsibility for nurturing faith lies with parents. These supporting roles exist to reinforce what parents are teaching their children at home. It is in the family where faith should first be passed on.

Today, we reflect on the example of the Holy Family—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. They traveled together to Jerusalem for the Passover feast, a tradition they followed every year. The significance of this action is clear: Mary and Joseph, as parents, fulfilled their religious duties as a family. On this particular occasion, Jesus remained behind in the temple and amazed the religious leaders with his understanding. This deep knowledge of the faith was undoubtedly a result of his upbringing in a family committed to the Jewish faith.

Unfortunately, in today's world, many parents do not introduce their children to religion, often claiming they want their children to make their own choices when they are older. However, studies show that children raised without religious guidance are more likely to grow up with no faith at all. Consider today's college students—many arrive on campus unprepared to ask the deep questions about life and faith, because they have not been exposed to religious teachings. As a result, they focus on career preparation and material success, leaving little room for God in their lives.

The lesson here is clear: if we want our children to grow up with faith, we must pass it on to them while they are young. The role of teaching faith to children belongs first and foremost to the parents. Any other influence is secondary and inadequate in comparison. As parents, we invest in our children's education, extracurricular activities, and social lives. These are important, but they should not take precedence over passing on our faith. To be most effective, parents should work together in this task. Two religious parents have a far greater chance of success than one. It is especially vital that fathers are involved, as children with non-religious fathers are less likely to practice their faith as adults compared to those with non-religious mothers. Research also shows that children raised without religion are more vulnerable to extremist ideologies later in life.

What should parents do? Take your children to Mass. Teach them to pray. Bring them to confession. Surround your home with religious images. Share with them what your faith means to you. Read the Bible together and tell them the stories of the saints. Get

involved in your parish, making it a central part of your family life. Show them by example what it means to give generously to the poor. Always speak positively about the church, even when you feel frustrated. Teach them right from wrong according to God's teachings, as revealed through the Church, not as the world teaches through the media. Most importantly, nurture your own faith life. You cannot pass on to your children what you do not have yourself.

If you are a parent with grown children who no longer practice the faith or have joined another religious group, don't feel guilty. They are adults, and their spiritual choices are their own responsibility. Don't give up hope—adult children can return to the faith, just as St. Monica's prayers for her son Augustine eventually led to his conversion and sainthood.

Grandparents, too, have an important role to play. If your adult children are not raising your grandchildren in the faith, there is still much you can do. Pope John Paul II called grandparents "evangelists" for a reason. Encourage, but do not pressure, your children to baptize, guide, and nurture your grandchildren in the faith. If they are open to it, take your grandchildren to Mass or religious education classes. Let them see your faith in action, and even gift them religious books or items that may, in time, help them grow in their own faith.

Raising children to have faith is not easy. Perhaps you remember the story of a seven-year-old in Utah who drove off in his parents' car one Sunday morning to avoid going to church. Even the most vibrant churches can seem dull at times, and some parents' actions may inadvertently contradict their words. If children see religion as something of hypocrisy, or if the image of God they receive is one of fear rather than love, they may reject the faith. But these challenges should not discourage us. Instead, they should motivate us to do better.

Few days ago, children opened Christmas gifts that they will cherish for years to come. But the greatest treasure we can offer our children is the gift of faith. This is a gift that will last far longer than any material possession. Let us strive to pass it on with love and dedication.



*Christmas
Mass Schedule*

Tuesday, December 31st
New Year's Eve Mass 5pm
Wednesday, January 1st
New Year's Day Mass 10am

	
Mass Intentions	
<u>Saturday December 28th</u>	5pm
<u>Sunday December 29th</u>	
10am	
†Irene McNulty Requested by Geraldine Frost	
†William & †Genevieve Chornenki Requested by Michelle Giorno	
†Isobel Fanaki Requested by Zirnheld Family	
11:30am	
Healing Intentions for Bozena Rupik	
Requested by Julie & Mir Rupik	
Monday December 30th - No Mass	
<u>Tuesday December 31st</u>	
N O 9:00am M A S S	
<i>New Year's Eve Mass - 5pm</i>	
<u>Wednesday January 1st 2025</u>	
<i>New Year's Day Mass</i>	
10am	
<u>Thursday January 2nd 2025</u>	
9am	
†Jan, †Wlade, †Jerry, †Henry & †Stan Swiderski	
Requested by Czeslawa Emerling	
 <u>First Friday January 3rd 2025</u>  9am	
Eucharistic Adoration & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	

HAPPY
New Year

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

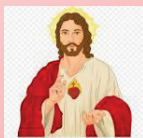
The past year may have been filled with difficulties, uncertainties, and moments of doubt, but as pilgrims we are reminded that we are never alone. Our Lord walks with us, guiding us, and lifting us up. As pilgrims on this journey of faith, we are called to keep moving forward with hearts full of hope, regardless of the challenges we may face along the way.

May God bless each of you abundantly in this New Year. May this year bring you peace and joy. Keep your hearts open to His grace and be a light of hope to those around you.

Happy New Year!

Fr. Biju Kannampuzha

First Friday - January 3rd, 2025
Adoration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus



First Fridays have traditionally been associated with the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To appropriately observe First Fridays there will be Eucharistic adoration following the 9:00 am Mass until 10:15 a.m. Closing with Benediction.

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!

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

***Our Lady of Peace,
Pray for us***

SUNDAY MISSAL

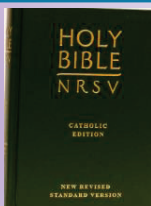


The 2024-2025 Sunday Missals

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 you'd like to discard your Sunday Missals from past years.

Holy Bible NRSV
For sale in the Parish
Office - \$40






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