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Website:
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Mass Times:
Weekend Mass Schedule:
Saturday: 4:30pm
Sunday: 9:00am & 11:00am
All will be lived streamed.

Weekday Mass Schedule:
Monday to Thursday: 10:00am
All Masses are live-streamed

*Polish Mass: 5:00pm on the last Sunday
of each month except July & August

St. Vincent de Paul Society:
905-898-4264
Website: sjcses.blogspot.com

Catholic Community Services
of York Region: 905-770-7040
Catholic Cemeteries: 905-889-7467
St. John's Cemetery
905-898-4137 ext. 226

New Parishioner?
Welcome to St. Elizabeth Seton!
If you would like to register, forms are available
at the church entrance or the parish office.
Parishioners with a change of
address, please inform the Parish office.
Envelopes may also be
acquired at the office.
Please introduce yourself to
Fr. Roy Roberts after Mass



Parish Schools
Good Shepherd School
905-895-0303
St. Elizabeth Seton School
905-853-0340
Our Lady of Good Counsel
905-478-4242
Sacred Heart High School
905-895-3340

St. Elizabeth Seton Parish

Christmas
December 25, 2022



Pastoral Team
Fr. Roy Roberts, Pastor
Deacon Marian Pawliszko
Deacon Stephen Pitre

Parish Staff
Parish Administrator ~ Ann Lynch
Sacramental Coordinator
Baptisms, First Communions & Confirmations ~ Jennifer McAvoy
Rectory Administrator—Nancy Rojas
Regular Office Hours
Monday to Thursday 9am to 4pm
Friday 9am to 1pm



Sacrament of Reconciliation:
Saturday ~ 3:00 - 3:30 pm
Or By Appointment

Sacrament of Baptism or Marriage: Please contact the office.

For those interested in the **Rite of Christian Initiation** of Adults &
Children of Catechetical age please contact Fr. Roy Roberts

**"Cheerfulness prepares a glorious mind
for all the noblest acts."**

St. Elizabeth Seton



Mass Schedules

Holiday Weekday Mass

No morning Mass on Monday,
December 26 or Tuesday,
December 27.

There will be 10am Morning
Mass on
Wednesday & Thursday, Dec. 28
& 29.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Saturday December 31st
New Years Eve – 4:30

Sunday, January 1st
9:00am & 11:00am

No morning Mass
on Monday, January 02 or
Tuesday, January 03, 2023



'Twas the season of Advent and all through the Church,
The whole building was thrown into a lurch.
Twenty twenty-three would soon arrive,
So the Office was abuzz, like a beehive.
New envelopes to alphabetize with an address,
Leaving the assembly room in a wall-to-wall mess.
The new Sunday missals arrived by the case,
Trying to display them, there was just no place.
The St. Vincent de Paul were in the midst of their campaign,
As bad economic times have been quite the savings drain.
But dozens of families hoping these times would be brief,
Were offered generous support much to their relief.
The Knights' Christmas trees all managed to go,
Adorning new homes with lights all aglow.
The crowds of people are starting to return,
But it's like stone-grinding corn in an ancient quern.

(Quern: noun: a primitive stone mill for grinding corn by hand – I had to look it up, but the rhyme works.)

It's not quite pre-pandemic, but the numbers are growing,
Our sacraments are back so communal life is on-going.
The nativities are out with 93 countries strong,
In the unity of Christ, a sign all peoples belong.
Every faith and religion, every country and nation,
It's God's way of granting human affirmation.
The Incarnation of God reveals a divine vision,
Of a world filled with peace with nary a division.
So we pray for the famines, the droughts and the pain,
We pray for the oppressed, the homeless, Ukraine.
Where hardship is brewing and life is despair
God in-the-flesh is a sign of God's care.
So as we gather with family and we gather with friends
Revelling In all the grace God sends.
Whether depressed or alone, feeling sad or heart-broken,
Unconditional love is what our God has spoken.
The Word was made flesh without fanfare or fuss,
Emanuel, our God is with us.
Merry Christmas to all, with the birth of the Light,
Merry Christmas to us, heavenly Peace on this night.

Fr. Ray

A Brief Christmas Development

Only the Gospels of Luke and Matthew contain a nativity narrative. Mark and John do not. The two versions have been melded together but they are very distinct. Over the years, scholars have tried to determine the actual date, but there is just no way of knowing. The celebration of the birth of Christ came rather late in its development. The primary focus was always the Resurrection and Easter. That season was well developed long before attention turned to a celebration of Christ's birth. The first celebration of Christmas on December 25 in Rome was 336 a.d. There are several hypotheses about this date's establishment. One tries to calculate the date using calculations of Jewish feasts. One directly equates the date to a solstice celebration. The other links the date selection to the pagan feast of Saturnalia, the Roman god of agriculture. The reality is, no one knows the actual date, and a feast rooted in the conquering of light over darkness, is as good as any to signify Christ as the light of the world.



The prominence of Christmas declined over the centuries and it wasn't until Charlemagne was crowned king of the Holy Roman Empire on Christmas day in 800 a.d. by Pope Leo III. A few centuries later, St. Francis of Assisi initiated the tradition of the nativity scene. As this caught on, it shifted the focus of Christmas and the historical aspect came to dominate the popular emphasis from the present and the future to the past. By the Middle Ages, Christmas had mostly supplanted the pagan rituals associated with the Solstice all over Europe. It became quite a raucous celebration more akin to modern celebrations of Mardi Gras in New Orleans. This caused a Puritan backlash especially in England and the Puritan East Coast of the U.S. In the 17th century, Christmas as such, was banned. For 22 years in Boston, Christmas was outlawed. Later, authors like Charles Dickens began to redefine Christmas and being more a family oriented celebration.

The Poem 'A Visit from Saint Nick', popularly known as 'Twas the Night Before Christmas', written by Clement Clarke Moore in 1823 tapped into a new direction for the Christmas spirit. It marked a commercialization of Christmas when Coke used a very Moore-like depiction of Santa Claus in a marketing campaign.



Christmas Season

Christmas morning is only day one in the fullness of the Christmas season. The second day of Christmas plunges us into the reality of discipleship with the celebration of the feast of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Chosen as one of the first deacons by the Apostles to serve the widows, Stephen is thought to be a Hellenistic Jew, and was stoned to death in front of a young Saul, later St. Paul.



The next day is the feast of St. John, the 'apostle whom Jesus loved'. I'm sure that the fact that it is John's Gospel where we find that title had little bearing. The following day the Church invites us to reflect on the slaughter of the Holy Innocents, Herod's attempt to eliminate any competition for his kingship as the prophecies spoke of a new king being born in Bethlehem. Although most biblical scholars challenge the veracity of how the story has been handed down to us, it is used today to be a sign of opposition to the coming of the Messiah.



The fifth day of Christmas is free of other liturgical designation. The sixth day is the feast of the Holy Family. Most of the time this feast is transferred to the Sunday between Christmas and New Years' except when Christmas occurs on a Sunday as it does this year.

The octave of Christmas concludes on New Years' Day which today we celebrate as a solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. It has had various titles over the years but as of 1960, Pope John XXIII designated it as the current title. The second day of the new year is the obligatory memorial of St. Basil the Great & St. Gregory of Nazianzen. This celebration has little to do with Christmas which is much the same for the celebrations leading up to Epiphany. Significant for us is January 4. In the United States, this is an obligatory memorial but optional for the rest of the Church. It is the day of St. Elizabeth Seton.

Finally the Christmas season reaches its ancient climax, the Epiphany, or the manifestation where three Gospel stories, the Magi, the Wedding at Cana, and the baptism of Jesus proclaim an incarnate God present in Jesus. In the Western Church, the baptism of Jesus is usually celebrated the Sunday after Epiphany, except in years where Christmas falls on a Sunday. That extends the Christmas season an extra week. This year the Baptism of Jesus is celebrated the day after Epiphany and falls into Ordinary Time. That is not the last of Christmas though. In Medieval times, the Christmas break would extend until the feast of the Presentation of Jesus on February 2nd. According to Jewish custom, forty days after the birth, the mother would attend Temple for a ritual purification after giving birth. It marked the time when all the decorations and greenery of Christmas to taken down in the homes. This is the last whisper of the Christmas Season.



Christmas Trivia

1. In the movie 'It's a Wonderful Life', what happened every time a bell rang?
2. What is the total number of gifts in the song "The Twelve days of Christmas"?
3. About how long does it take to grow a Christmas tree to its ideal height?
4. In which country was St. Nicholas born?
5. The word 'Yule' is often used in Christmas lingo. What is its origin?
6. In popular lore, when gold was dropped down the chimney of the home of three poor sisters, what Christmas tradition did it create?
7. Where does the name Kris Kringle come from?
8. In 1981, Bob & Doug McKenzie released their own version of a classic Christmas song. Which one?
9. In 1979, women's groups, politicians' and seniors' organizations protested which Christmas song?
10. In 'A Christmas Carol', what was the first name of Scrooge?
11. Who was the author of 'A Christmas Carol'?
12. In 1905, American author, O. Henry penned a now famous short story about a young husband and wife unselfishly providing gifts for each other in hard times? What was the name of this story?
13. What popular Christmas song was actually written for American Thanksgiving?
14. This Christmas drink, which is highly popular in the UK, is made from apple cider, lemons, oranges, cinnamon, cloves, allspice and nutmeg. What is it known as?
15. Which country is the largest exporter of Christmas trees?
16. What is the name of George Bailey's guardian angel in 'It's a Wonderful Life'?
17. What do traditional Ukrainians put on their Christmas tree for good luck?
18. Which saint is celebrated on December 26, the day after Christmas day?
19. From which country does the tradition of the Upside Down Christmas Tree originate?
20. How many ghosts are there in 'A Christmas Carol'?
21. What dish was served by Mrs. Cratchit in 'A Christmas Carol'? It is also mentioned in the song 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas'.
22. Which was the first country to issue a Christmas postage stamp?
23. How did the reference Xmas begin?
24. Why did Teddy Roosevelt, president of the United States, ban Christmas trees from the White House?
25. Where is the world's largest nativity scene?

Answers

1. An angel gets its wings.
2. $364 = (1 \times 12) + (2 \times 11) + (3 \times 10) + (4 \times 9) + (5 \times 8) + (6 \times 7) + (7 \times 6) + (8 \times 5) + (9 \times 4) + (10 \times 3) + (11 \times 2) + 12$ and according to PNC Financial Services, in 2022, it will cost you \$45,523.27 in American dollars, (\$62,670.37 Canadian) to surprise your true love with these gifts.
3. 15 years
4. Turkey
5. Norse and Celtic pagan celebrations of the rebirth of the sun starting on December 21 (winter solstice) and lasting 12 days, pre-dating the origins of Christmas.
6. Hanging stockings by the chimney with care.
7. Pennsylvania Dutch word for Christ-kind ('kind' being a German word for child as in kinder-garten)
8. The Twelve Days of Christmas.
9. 'Grandma got Run over by a Reindeer'.
10. Ebenezer
11. Charles Dickens
12. "The Gift of the Magi"
13. 'Jingle Bells'
14. Wassail
15. Canada
16. Clarence Odbody
17. A Spider's web
18. St. Stephen
19. Poland
20. 4
21. Figgy Pudding
22. Canada
23. X is actually a Greek letter, chi, the first in the spelling of Christ. A popular symbol, the P & X are used to denote Christ and the order is XP where P is the letter Rho, with the two letters translated as C-R
24. Environmental reasons, as an ardent National Parks supporter, establishing 150 national forests, 51 federal bird reserves, four national game preserves, five national parks and 18 national monuments on over 230 million acres of public land.
25. Einsiedeln, Switzerland

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