

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

3200 Thomas Street, Mississauga, ON L5M 0V6

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Email: parishoffice@stjosephinebakhita.ca

Pastoral Team

Pastor: Rev. Mark Achilles Villanueva

Deacons: Deacon Gerry Steyn, Deacon Michael Ho, Deacon Roman Lim

Administrative Assistant: Cecilia Vaz

Assistants: Clifford Jumapit, Benjamin Alcantara

Volunteer Asisstants: Marina Taguicana, Agnes Lim

**JOY • PEACE •
LOVE**



HOPE • FAITH

Mass Intentions

Sunday (December 26)

7:30 AM +Juanito & Milagros Umali,

+Evelyn and Ruel Macalaguim

9:00 AM Thanksgiving of Arbie

Sarmiento and Family. +Walter Correya

11:00 AM +Urselina Peixoto, +Teresa

and Jose Homen

12:30 PM +John Ann Braganza, +Joseph

D'Melo, +Peter Paul D'Mello, +Nestor

Reyes, +Urbana Delpino

Monday (December 27)

7:00 PM +Walter Correya

Tuesday (December 28)

7:30 AM +Teodora, Cecilio and Narciso

Nicomedez

Wednesday (December 29)

7:00 PM +Albert Martin, +Reginia

Sinajon, +Epifania Ordonez, Special

Intention of Nunez Family

Thursday (December 30)

7:30 AM For the Parish Community and

Benefactors

Friday (December 31)

7 PM +Peter & Priscilla D'Souza

Saturday (January 1)

9:00 AM For the Parish Community

11:00 AM For the Parish Community

12:30 PM For the Parish Community

Please note that there will be no Mass
on Saturday at 5 PM.

I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL

"It is only with gratitude that life becomes rich," noted German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I am deeply grateful to all of you, dear parishioners of St. Josephine Bakhita, especially during this pandemic months, for your patience, understanding, cooperation, and generosity of spirit. Your continued support of the parish has brought me tremendous joy, comfort, and encouragement.

I am deeply grateful to all our volunteers - Sacristans, Ushers, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Music ministries, The Knights of Columbus, The Daughters of Isabella, the Legion of Mary, our Catechists, Art and Environment and if I may, I would like to single out our Volunteer Cleaning Crew who come every Monday morning to ensure that our worship space, the hall, the washrooms, and even our offices are spotlessly clean, emptying the bins and throwing out the garbage, and disinfecting the whole place. It is a lot of work, but all our volunteers do it for the love of God and for the whole community.

Thank you to Fr. Martin and Fr. Jaison who have been celebrating the Holy Mass for us even during lockdowns. I am deeply grateful for their brotherly support and their readiness to assist in any way they can to serve our community. They are always so giving of their time especially when I wanted to go away for a few days of rest.

Thank you to Deacon Roman, Deacon Michael, and Deacon Gerry and their families for their dedication in serving God through our parish community. I will be at a loss without their presence and assistance. If I may, I would like to single out Deacon Roman because he has become my right hand man especially when it comes to the physical maintenance of our Church Building. I may know how to celebrate the sacraments, but I often find myself clueless as to use even a simple hammer. Deacon Roman has been my go-to-person when something needed to be fixed and his readiness to help has lifted some of the heavy burden that I carry as a priest and an administrator.

Thank you to Susan who has taken on the role of volunteer coordinator and also our payroll manager. The work of ensuring that we are in full compliance of the archdiocesan requirements for volunteers and staff is a

is a lot of responsibility. Thank you also to Liza for ensuring that our Financial records are in proper order - that all your donations are accounted for, disbursements are with accompanying receipts and the like. Without these two ladies, who are so meticulously organized, I would have been a nervous wreck.

Thank you to our parish office staff, Cecilia, Ben, Clifford, and Marina. They are an incredible support team, often going well beyond what is required of them in serving our community. Cecilia has been my point person for all that pertains to sacramental preparation for the children of the parish, just ensuring that every child has the proper certificates, for example, requires much patience and record-keeping skills to accomplish it. Clifford and Ben have been our frontliners. They open and close the church, look after anyone who comes to the office for all sorts of requests, ensuring that your donation records are in order just to name of a few of the things that they do for our community. Marina is our office volunteer assistant, whose presence is such a joy around the office, helping in any way she can and whatever needed to be done, even if only to shred papers and putting things in order in the parish office.

Thank you to Aurora, who has been helping me to organize the wedding files and bringing the sacramental records up-to-date. Lots of work and painstaking and careful writing of information - all these for love of God and for the parish community.

Thank you to Serge. Serge has stepped up to help in so many ways - Despite his age, he is so full of vigor and willingness to serve in any way he can. He has imbibed the spirit of Jesus who took a basin of water and washed the stinky feet of his disciples at the Last Supper. Every Monday, Serge would take his bucket, mop, globs and cleans the toilets, often kneeling on the cold tiles to ensure that you and I know have a spotlessly clean, sweet-smelling comfort room to use.

As we celebrate together the birthday of the Saviour and as we are about to conclude the year 2021, I would like us all to remember all our blessings and be grateful. All these are signs of God's goodness! Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year to all!



Join us for Holy Hour
from 6 PM to 7 PM
Monday to Friday

A Celebration of Family

The family today is under assault from many fronts. Just watch any show or movie that involves the family and chances are that fathers are often presented as idiotic, mothers are overbearing, and children as wise beyond their years. The Biblical model for the family has increasingly been abandoned. We have all felt the pain of family dysfunction in one way or another.

There are also joys and cherished moments that we experience as a family...and even those like me who live alone, there are wonderful moments with extended family or friends, and parishioners that remind us of what real connection feels like. We are made for relational joy.

I love to use my creative imagination when meditating on God's Word. So I invite you to picture in your mind a pious Jewish couple, who took their baby to the temple at Jerusalem. It was going to be a twofold ceremony - the ritual purification of the Blessed Mother as prescribed by Leviticus 12:208, a woman who bore a child was unclean for forty days following the birth of a son or eighty days following the birth of a daughter. The second ceremony involved the requirements of Exodus 13: The first-born male belongs to God and must be set apart for the Lord, that is, dedicated to the service of God... The law also commanded that the Israelites should offer in sacrifice a lamb or two-turtledoves. While they approach the temple, they were met by an eighty-four year old woman, called Anna. Was Ana just a mere stranger who happened to notice how beautiful the child was in his mother's arms? I am sure many a mother would be complemented by a stranger how beautiful their baby is. There is a tradition, however, that Anna knew the Blessed Mother when she was a child, teaching her in the ways of the Lord.

Picture in your mind the young family and as they were about to enter the gate, Ana was there... Ana must have been surprised to see Mary, her former student. Mary, in turn introduced her husband Joseph. I can imagine how excited they were to show Jesus and they must have shared with her the incredible events that have transcribed - the angel's announcement, the birth in Bethlehem, the visit of the shepherds... As she listened, she

became more and more excited. She praised God and introduced the infant to others around her... Ana is a model to us all especially to the seniors. Advancing age and the disappointments of life can easily make us cynical and miserable unless we place our hope rightly. Ana's hope in God and his promises grew with age. She never ceased to pray. She dedicated her life to the service of others - I can easily picture of her helping out in the temple as the priests would allow her - after all, isn't that what many of our seniors are doing - cleaning the church, changing the linens, watering the plants, filling the oil lamps, taking care of the sacristy, manning the bread table, praying and interceding.

At the temple was Simeon, a devout priest, who, according to the Gospel, was waiting the coming of the Messiah with great anticipation. The Bible also tells us that he was quite old and wished desperately to see the "consolation of Israel" before he died. His prayers were answered the moment Joseph and Mary placed their baby into his arms: "Now, Master, you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Then Simeon blessed them and prophesied: "Behold this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed - and a sword will pierce your own soul too." Although these words were addressed to the Blessed Mother, Joseph was also afflicted with sorrow. Tears must have welled up in his eyes. We know the anguish of parents when they are told of the health and well-being of their child by their doctor. We can easily picture in our mind, the agony that pierced their hearts. Joseph must have resolved to do whatever he can to shield his child. He was not a witness to the suffering and death that Jesus will endure on the cross as the Blessed Mother did, but he must have had some premonitions that caused him great affliction of knowing that he would not be there to protect his suffering boy or comfort his beloved wife when all these words of Simeon will come to pass.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

To give some rest to our Parish staff who had to assist the pastor during the Christmas Masses, our Office will be closed for three days December 27, 28, and 29. The church will be opened only for the regularly scheduled Holy Mass or other Services such as Funerals.

December 27, Feast of St. John
7 PM

December 28 to December 30
Regular Schedule

December 31, Year's Eve Mass will be
at 7 PM

January 1, Solemnity of Mary, Mother
of God
9 AM, 11 AM and 12:30 PM

There will be no 5 PM Saturday Vigil
Mass for the Feast of Epiphany

January 2, Epiphany of the Lord
7:30 AM, 9 AM, 11 AM, and 12:30
PM

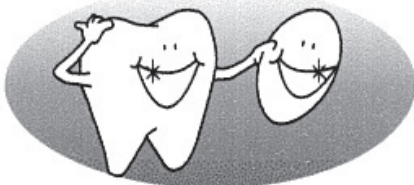
Regular Office Hours will resume on
Thursday, January 6.

If you require immediate assistance
during those dates that the parish
office is closed, please call Fr. Mark

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

In January we will begin our immediate sacramental preparation for all our children in the parish who will be celebrating their First Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation.

On January 8, Saturday at 11 AM, we would like to invite all our Confirmation Candidates to participate in our first gathering. We will gather inside the church for a general introduction into how the sacramental preparation will take place and when the Sacrament will be administered. To assist you and your families to plan ahead, we will also give you the dates. Bishop Ivan Camilleri will be administering the Sacrament and has provided us with the dates.



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