

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

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Pastoral Team

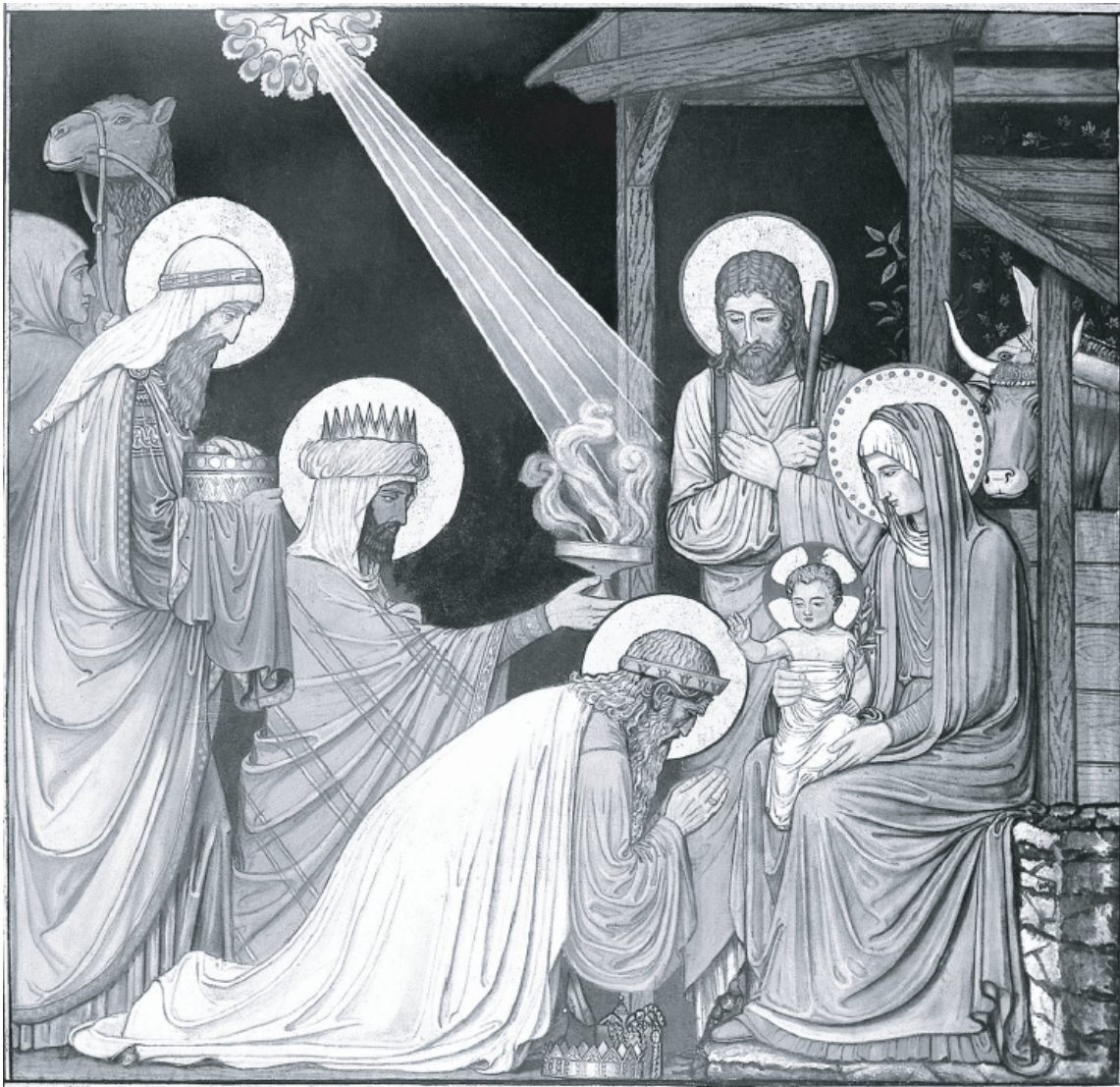
Pastor: Rev. Mark Achilles Villanueva

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



Feast of the Holy Family



“Child, why have you treated us like this?” Mary’s question to Jesus is probably not unfamiliar to many of us. We have either heard it or asked it. If it was not spoken, it was a question beneath the silence and tension that filled the room.

The incident described to us in the gospel today is repeated in one form or another in many households - when a child is not yet an adult and is also no longer a child. We wonder what was in the mind of Joseph and Mary. Wasn’t it only yesterday that we were wrapping him in swaddling clothes and laying him in a manger? We wonder if the parents, like many parents, were struggling with letting Jesus grow up.

As we all grow up, new ways of seeing and relating happen. I would imagine that most parents always see their children still as their babies even if their children have become maturing adults themselves. Sometimes, adult children frustrates their parents and vice versa.

“Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” “Did you not know...?” What do you hear? There is that familiar ring of confidence, incredulity, and attitude, isn’t it? But there is more to it than meets the eye. Perhaps, Jesus is identifying where we might be able to encounter him. We can find him in our gathering.

We are invited to participate in his life. Let not our emotions and sentimentality of Christmas be the only thing we experience of Jesus. Those bands of cloth that wrapped him, will be stripped of him and he will be nailed to the cross two decades later.

Jesus promised that he will be with us always, but we do not own him. Let us try not to make him like us. Instead, let us follow him. Where the Master goes, we must go...even unto death!

Jesus will not let himself be defined by what his parents want. He will chart his own course of action. But this does not mean he loves them less or does not care about them. In truth, Jesus would return to Nazareth with them and was obedient. The gospel writer sums up those silent years in Nazareth under the guidance of Mary and Joseph, as a time of growing in wisdom and grace.

Jesus will not remain a baby. Like him we too must grow up. If we are to ask ourselves, what have changed in us since last Christmas? Can we readily say we have grown more in our faith? Has our life been transformed for the better?



Your Donation Envelope is ready for pickup in the narthex. If you do not see your own box of donation envelopes or if you want one for yourself, please do not hesitate to approach the parish desk. We encourage even those who are giving thru PAG or Credit Card to still have their own Box.

REQUEST FROM THE PARISH DESK

If your information has changed, please advise the parish desk to update your information in our parish database.

If you wish to top your donation for 2024, please ensure that you either date your cheque by December 31, 2024 or use the 2024 envelope, or notify the parish desk of your intention. We will be closing our Financial Book by the middle of January. Any donation that we will be receiving after we have closed our Financial Book will be considered donations for 2025. Donation Tax Receipts will be mailed to you using the information you have provided.

Please note that Credit Card donations for the parish are managed by the Archdiocese. If you have given a one time donation online, you would have received your Tax Receipt immediately in your Email inbox. Recurring donations will be sent to you by email and/or by mail by the Archdiocese.

If you have any questions regarding these matters, please do not hesitate to approach the parish desk and see Clifford especially. Clifford is in-charge of the business affairs of our parish community.

Thank you for your donations and your cooperation.

OUR NEW YEAR SCHEDULE

NEW YEAR'S EVE

December 31
5:00 PM

NEW YEAR'S DAY

January 1
9 AM, 11 AM, and 12:30 PM

January 2
7:30 AM

The church and the office will be closed on January 2 and 3.

January 3
7 PM

We will resume regular schedule on January 4

Annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Prayer Service 2025

Sunday, Jan. 19, 2025, 4 p.m.

Venue: North City Church (Toronto District Christian High School, Highway 7/Kipling Ave.)
377 Woodbridge Ave., Woodbridge, L4L 2V7

Theme: "Do you believe this?" (John 11:26)

Join Bishop John A. Boissonneau (Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto) and a wide representation of Christian leaders to pray for the restoration of full visible unity willed by Jesus Christ for His Church. This event is jointly organized by the Office for Promoting Christian Unity and the Greater Toronto Area Council of Christian Churches and celebrates the 1,700th anniversary of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea.

FINDING HOPE THROUGH HOPELine

For many people, an end-of-life diagnosis can seem completely overwhelming. It's often described as time stopping, but for those of us who work in hospice and palliative care, we know the diagnosis is just the beginning. The HopeLine was created to help newly diagnosed patients, caregivers and family members identify resources that can support them on their end-of-life journey. It's easy to access (just call 416-619-5700) and takes a customized approach with one of our compassionate team members working directly with callers to help pinpoint resources with hospice palliative care options within their home community. The HopeLine is open to any individual residing within the Archdiocese of Toronto who requires end-of-life support services and holistic care for patients, caregivers and extended family and friend networks.

Through the pilot phase, the HopeLine helped many parishioners in the Archdiocese of Toronto to access resources that made a difference for their families. One story in particular stands out to me. A woman (I'll call her Mary) reached out to us on the HopeLine when her 78-year-old father, John, was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. Mary's father lived in their family home with his 75-year-old wife, Eliza, and no family living close by. Mary was concerned for both her parents who were already struggling with meal preparation and daily living activities. The cancer diagnosis just made everything harder. Mary worked with a member of our HopeLine team and who made her aware of local resources such as Meals on Wheels, community hospice and Ontario Health at Home for support. With regular nutritious meals delivered, visits from a nurse educator to help teach her parents about how to administer

medications, community personal support visits from Ontario Health to help John with personal hygiene and respite volunteer visits to give her mom, Eliza, a break, Mary's father was able to enjoy six months at home with his wife and a peaceful death in his own bed. This is the gift of HopeLine.

Mary's story highlights the importance of having support and a plan. The Archdiocese offers the Horizons of Hope program designed to empower and educate parishioners by addressing questions surrounding palliative care, dying, death, suffering, accompaniment and bereavement in a holistic fashion. I encourage everyone to access these resources, start important conversations with loved ones, and of course, to call us on the HopeLine when they need extra support.

To learn more about Horizons of Hope, please visit: <https://www.cccb.ca/faith-moral-issues/suffering-and-end-of-life/horizons-of-hope-a-tool-kit-for-catholic-parishes-on-palliative-care/>.

WINTER WEATHER

Please be advised that when there is a heavy snow accumulation in our Church sloping roof, we will close the two inner courtyards. We ask that you enter and leave thru our Parish Hall for your safety.

We also ask that you be mindful of wet spots inside the church and hallways. Watch where you are walking. No matter how much we try to keep the place dry, people come in with their wet shoes and leave wet spots around. If you see any wet spots, please inform our ushers or the parish desk. Thank you for your cooperation.



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