

## **From the Pastors Desk:**

*“At the time appointed by God, the only Son of the Father, the eternal Word, that is, the Word and substantial Image of the Father, became incarnate; without losing his divine nature he has assumed human nature”* (Catechism 479). The act of the Word made flesh, the union of divinity and humanity in perfect harmony, the inauguration of the new creation, the new Adam, the assuming of human nature in order to accomplish salvation, the embodiment in the flesh of deity, the union of Creator with the created, fully human and fully divine, the incarnation of the Son of God, the birth of Jesus Christ – this act is the event long hoped for by people of faith, this is the event we celebrate this day. For today, unto us, a Saviour **IS** born, Jesus, Son of God! The incarnation.

The incarnation is one of the great mysteries of our faith, a mystery difficult to fully comprehend or understand. Why would God send His only Son to be fully human while remaining fully divine? To be fully human means that Jesus was one with us, he laughed, wept, felt joy, experienced temptation, and he too felt pain. To be fully divine means that Jesus had a divine intellect, a divine will – he truly was the Son of God, and this was not surrendered, this did not cease, when he took on human flesh (Catechism 469). Again, why would God send His only Son? The answer is not found in the incarnation itself (although the answer begins to unfold in the incarnation), but rather the answer is found in the passion, death and resurrection yet to come. God sent His only Son to bring us salvation and the gift of ever-lasting life with God in our heavenly homeland.

One of the important questions we are invited to reflect upon each year during the celebration of the Incarnation concerns how the birth of Christ has been real and concrete for us over the past year. In other words, in what ways has the birth of Christ been made manifest? How have we touched and felt the birth of Christ over the past year? How has Christ been made real, visible and concrete to us over the past year here at Saint Francis of Assisi Parish?

It is often in the subtle revelations of Christ where the power of his birth is most visible, where we experience a new creation, where the purpose of Christ's coming is most fully understood. For instance, at our monthly celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick on the first Wednesday of each month the gift of Christ's healing compassion is visible – for he was born unto us to bring us healing. Or our monthly Eucharistic Adoration where new life is revealed to us in the Eucharist – for he was

born unto us to bring us the gift of his very self. In our outreach through the Saint Vincent de Paul Society – for he was born unto us to call us to care for the poor and needy in our midst. In our many social gatherings, often around food, we form community – for he was born unto us to help us be one, to form one body, though many parts, in Christ.

The birth of Christ into our lives has been revealed to us in more obvious ways over the past year as we celebrated the sacramental life of the Church. From the waters of new life in Baptism, to the experience of forgiveness and Eucharist our children had as they celebrated the sacraments of initiation, to our young adults who completed their initiation in the Sacrament of Confirmation, to the life-long commitment of couples in the Sacrament of Marriage, and even in the new life in Christ our beloved dead now enjoy as we celebrated their funerals.

Christ was born unto us to call us to grow in wisdom and understanding of our God – who is this God we follow? How have we sought knowledge and understanding of our God over the past year in response to the birth of Christ? Two obvious examples: one, our five week Lenten Lecture series that gathered a large number of parishioners; and two, our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd where twice weekly our children gather to grow in their knowledge and understanding of God. The birth of Christ each year ought to raise our hunger to know more about our God, and, as we seek knowledge, Christ is born anew in our hearts.

The birth of Christ was perhaps most visible in our parish this past year as we walked with Father Raphael towards his ordination to the priesthood. From his profession of final vows, to his ordination to the diaconate, and ultimately to his priestly ordination our parish witnessed the birth of new life, we witnessed the unfolding of God's grace, and we witnessed in a powerful way the presence of Christ in our community. This is the Incarnation in action.

As we look ahead to the coming year how will we experience the birth of Christ in our day-to-day lives of faith? Let us look to the nativity scene as the place to begin. The birth of Christ brings us hope, joy, gladness, the love of God, new life. I pray that the Incarnation we celebrate this day will continue to unfold in your life, that each day will be an experience of Christ born anew in your hearts.

Merry Christmas.

*Father Jim, C.R.*

# St. Francis of Assisi Parish

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Administered by the Congregation of the Resurrection: [www.resurrectionists.ca](http://www.resurrectionists.ca)



## Lord's Day Masses

Saturday 5:00 pm

Sunday 9:00 & 11:00 am

## Weekday Masses

Tuesday to Friday 9:00 am

## Reconciliation

Saturday 4:00 – 4:30 pm

or by appointment

## Sunday Children's Liturgy

Sunday 9:00 am Mass

## Prayer Network

Call parish office to request prayers

## Communal Baptism

Monthly, please call the parish office to register.

## Marriages

Congratulations! Please contact the parish one year before wedding date.

<b>Pastor:</b>	Fr. Tim Uniac, C.R. ( <a href="mailto:tuniac@hamiltondiocese.com">tuniac@hamiltondiocese.com</a> )
<b>Associate Pastor:</b>	Fr. Raphael Ma, C.R. ( <a href="mailto:rma@hamiltondiocese.com">rma@hamiltondiocese.com</a> )
<b>Pastoral Minister:</b>	Miss Ruthann Fisher ( <a href="mailto:rfisher@hamiltondiocese.com">rfisher@hamiltondiocese.com</a> )
<b>Music Ministry:</b>	Mrs. Terrienne Moulton
<b>Admin. Assistant:</b>	Ms. Alice Soeder
<b>Building Manager:</b>	Mr. Gary Howell

**Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 am to 12 noon  
1:00 pm to 4:30 pm**

**Vocations Information:** [www.vocationinfo.ca](http://www.vocationinfo.ca)  
[www.vocationculture.ca](http://www.vocationculture.ca)



*"We are a Christ-centred faith  
community seeking to be  
instruments of God's peace."*

# Merry Christmas

