



ST. PIUS X PARISH

16 Smithville Crescent
St. John's, NL
A1B 2V2
Tel: (709) 754-0170



E-Mail: stpiusx@nl.rogers.com
Webpage: www.spx.ca



OUR PIUS UPDATE December 15, 2020

Advent Prayer for Light

Son of God,
You are the light of the world.
This Advent shine your light on
all our choices this day.
Create in us the ability to let
your light shine forth for others.
We ask this in the name of the
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Amen.



Our parish Christmas Season preparations continue to unfold. Mass attendance pre-registration is complete. We are full to allowed capacity for all four Masses. We've persons on waiting lists. There could be some movement of persons off/on the listS depending on the travel plans of some pre-registered persons.

We're near confirming that the 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Mass will be 'live streamed'. This will allow more parishioners to participate in Mass at 'their parish church' [Hurrah!]

Masses in our parish church includes our wearing masks; an essential protocol we choose to follow. Provincial Health guidelines state: "Masks are to be worn by everyone entering, exiting or moving around in the building, although masks may be removed while you are in physically distanced seating, and remain seated." Out of an abundance of caution and to make sure our church building continues to remains safe, parishioners are encouraged to keep their masks on even while sitting at all Christmas Masses. COVID-19 is on a dramatic rise on the mainland. Let's do what's within our means to keep ourselves and each other safe to worship together.



To Our Jesuit Parishes Across Canada,

I hope you are all keeping well, and I know you are busy during this time of Advent. However, I am asking if you can take some time for **Fr. Stan Swamy**, a Jesuit priest incarcerated in India facing spending Christmas in prison on fabricated charges. On behalf of Canadian Jesuits International, I want to bring to your attention his circumstances and an important advocacy ask that is coming from our Global South Jesuit partners in India. This is a global Ignatian initiative and we hope you can join us. Please see the attached document for further details.

On **December 10, International Human Rights Day**, social media and write letters calling were used for the immediate and unconditional release of **Fr. Stan Swamy**, a Jesuit priest in India arrested on fabricated charges. Along with **Fr. Stan**, 15 other people have been arrested.

Raising international awareness and putting pressure on government officials will go a long way to help the 16 incarcerated Human Rights Defenders to be released. This has been proven tactic used by such organizations as Amnesty International.

Please consider contacting your local Member of Parliament to promote justice for Fr. Stan.

Canadian Jesuits International

HANAKKUH 2020



Christians celebrate Christmas. Often around the same time, Jews celebrate Hanukkah. This is a relatively minor holiday in strictly religious terms. It commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, at the time of the Maccabean Revolt.

Starting in the latter part of the twentieth century, many secular Jews began to celebrate it as an alternative to Christmas. That is especially the case here in North America. Go into a card shop and you will see Hanukkah greeting cards sitting alongside cards with Santa or the traditional nativity scene from Bethlehem.

Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights, is observed for eight nights and days. It takes place in the Hebrew calendar at a time that corresponds to anywhere from late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar. This year it is celebrated from December 10-18.

Perhaps the most familiar symbol of Hanukkah is the menorah, a nine-branched candelabrum. Usually, one candle is separated from the other eight. It is used to light the eight candles, each representing a day of Hanukkah.

After lighting the candles, it is customary to play (or spin) the dreidel. This is a four-sided spinning top that children play with. It's not just a toy. It is a toy with a message. Each side is imprinted with a Hebrew letter that ends up being an abbreviation for the Hebrew for a great miracle happened there. This is a reference to the miracle of the oil.

The name Hanukkah derives from the Hebrew verb meaning to dedicate, as in the rededication of the Temple. A good place to look for scriptural references to Hanukkah is the First and Second books of the Maccabees. It is there that we find a detailed description of the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem and the lighting of the menorah.

Christian scripture refers to this festival. There is a reference in John 10: 22-23, in which we read that the decision to kill Jesus occurs at the time of this feast.

Oil-based foods, such as latkes (fried potato fritters) and other treats, are associated with Hanukkah. The ideal is that olive oil be used. Eating these foods serves as a reminder of the miracle of the small flask of oil keeping the menorah of the second temple lit for eight days.

Hanukkah money (Gelt) is often given to children during these days. Many Jewish families supplement this with other gifts, so that Jewish children can enjoy gifts just as their Christmas-celebration peers do.

A typical greeting on cards is: May you be blessed with gifts of love, peace, and happiness this Hanukkah. It's not just the Festival of Lights. May it also be a festival of hope, happiness, love, and health.

SOURCE: Philip Shano, SJ, www.ignatian.ca, December 9, 2020



COURAGE

I have always been intrigued by *Saint John the Baptist's* story. He was not afraid to be bold, and he often kept himself separated from others, preferring to pray in silence and live off of the land. Although I have never felt called to the life of a hermit, this type of lifestyle fascinates me: the freedom to structure your day as you like, the beauty and quiet of nature around you, and the closeness you can cultivate to God. Also, how many of us wish we had the confidence to act on our beliefs, or pretty much anything else, as John the Baptist did? In my experience, a bit more confidence comes with age, but certainly not to the

degree that we see here!

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that even the least person in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist. Even the greatest of men on earth is surpassed by a small soul in heaven. We may or may not fulfill the daunting prospect of living out our Christian walk in as dramatic a way as this great man, but we can in fact achieve something spectacular by quietly living out our faith and vocations to the best of our ability. It may not look exactly the same as what John the Baptist did, but the result is the highest of rewards. We are all called to different things, and that diversity is what makes our world such a beautiful place. God wants the best for each one of us, and wants to be with us for all eternity. There is nothing greater than that.

Ponder:

In what way can I act out Saint John the Baptist's courage in my everyday life?

Pray:

Lord, I do not always have the fortitude and strength to make the best decisions, and to stick to what I know is right. Help me to have the courage and boldness of Saint John the Baptist as I live out my Christian walk.

SOURCE: Tiffany Walsh, www.catholicmom.com, December 10 edition

