



# ST. PIUS X PARISH

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## OUR PIUS UPDATE December 22, 2020





## IN PRAISE OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Almost overnight, enchantment stole through my neighborhood and city here and there, dotting homes and yards, Christmas lights appeared. A mismatched string of blue and white draped over the fence across the street. A twinkling porch two doors down. A riot of color in the park across from the hospital. Signs of irrepressible hope emerging from a dark night of the soul.

The same thing is happening in cities and towns across the globe. In the midst of the pandemic, hope is showing up in the most mundane and innocent of ways: in Christmas lights. Whether in low wattage hope flung across a window or in a dazzling display that illuminates an entire yard, Christmas lights say it all: death, disorientation, denial will not have the last word.

I write in praise of Christmas lights: echo of the star of Bethlehem, reminder of the light of the world, symbol of childlike joy. If the world ever needed these simple reminders of light, of family, of salvation, we need them now.

In fact, the pandemic has caused us to long for the normal, unassuming things we once took for granted: a hug, a handshake, a smile. How we miss the unselfconscious gathering of people and sharing the same air as others. Not to mention worship and song, even sporting events. We miss visiting the sick in the hospital, and bedside goodbyes when death is near. Oh, to sit close to someone, to snuggle a grandchild, to pass the peace! The sheer normalcy of going to work. Yes, all of these things have changed dramatically in 2020. Christmas lights remind us of enduring hope.

We want normal, but it's still a long way off. At least not until a vaccine becomes widespread, and maybe not even then. That means Christmas this year won't be easy or normal for many people. Loved ones will be missing around the tables. Festive celebrations will take on a decidedly different tone. Christmas Eve services will likely be on Zoom. Probably even Santa and the elves will be wearing masks.

Maybe that's why I found the Christmas lights in my neighborhood strangely grounding. Twinkling reminders that someday it would all be okay again. And that in the meantime, it was okay to let out my breath, and to relax a little.

If ever we needed Christmas, 2020 is the year. So as Advent unfolds and gives way to Christmas proper, may your hearts be as bright and illumined as simple Christmas lights.

**SOURCE:** Rebekah Simon-Peter, Coco/Shutterstock



## LIVESTREAM MASS AND FACEBOOK COMES TO ST. PIUS X PARISH



Recently we created the official *Facebook* page to update our ways of communicating with our dear parishioners. If you go to

- <http://www.facebook.com/stpiusxnl>
- press **LIKE** and
- press **FOLLOW**

you can access our parish Facebook page.

We are live streaming our *Christmas Eve 4:00 pm Mass* and you will be able to access this by clicking <https://spx.ca/livestream> or on *Facebook* at <http://www.facebook.com/stpiusxnl/live> . There is a **LIVE STREAM** tab at the top of our parish webpage - [www.spx.ca](http://www.spx.ca). A live stream connection will be available 5 - 10 minutes before Mass begins.

## MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



## THE HURON CAROL



The "**Huron Carol**" (or "*Tw'as in the Moon of Wintertime*") is a Canadian Christmas hymn (Canada's oldest Christmas song), written probably in 1642 by **Jean de Brébeuf**, a Jesuit missionary at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons in Canada. Brébeuf wrote the lyrics in the native language of the Huron/Wendat people; the song's original Huron title is "*Jesous Ahatonhia*" ("*Jesus, he is born*").

The song's melody is based on a traditional French folk song, "**Une Jeune Pucelle**" ("*A Young Maid*"). The well-known English lyrics were written in 1926 by Jesse Edgar Middleton, and the copyright to these lyrics was held by The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, but entered the public domain in 2011.

The English version of the hymn uses imagery familiar in the early 20th century, in place of the traditional Nativity story. This version is derived from Brébeuf's original song and Huron religious concepts. In the English version, Jesus is born in a "*lodge of broken bark*" and wrapped in a "*robe of rabbit skin*". He is surrounded by hunters instead of shepherds, and the Magi are portrayed as "*chiefs from afar*" who bring him "*fox and beaver pelts*" instead of the more familiar gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The English translation uses a traditional Algonquian name, Gitchi Manitou, for God, which is not in the original Wyandot version. The original lyrics are now sometimes modified to use imagery accessible to Christians who are not familiar with aboriginal Canadian cultures.

The 1926 English version by **Jesse Edgar Middleton** -

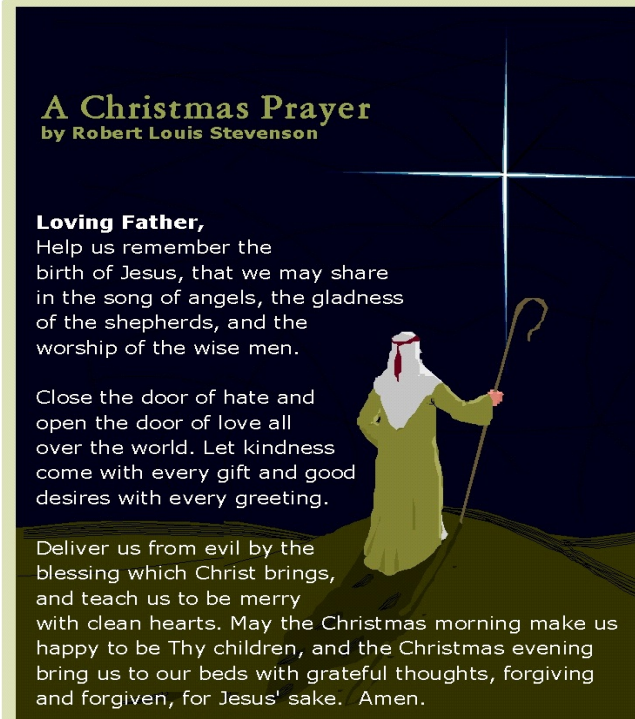
*'Twas in the moon of winter-time  
When all the birds had fled,  
That mighty Gitchi Manitou  
Sent angel choirs instead;  
Before their light the stars grew dim,  
And wandering hunters heard the hymn:  
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,*

*In excelsis gloria."  
Within a lodge of broken bark  
The tender Babe was found,  
A ragged robe of rabbit skin  
Enwrapp'd His beauty round;  
But as the hunter braves drew nigh,  
The angel song rang loud and high...  
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,  
In excelsis gloria."*

*The earliest moon of wintertime  
Is not so round and fair  
As was the ring of glory  
On the helpless infant there.  
The chiefs from far before him knelt  
With gifts of fox and beaver pelt.  
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,  
In excelsis gloria."*

*O children of the forest free,  
O sons of Manitou,  
The Holy Child of earth and heaven  
Is born today for you.  
Come kneel before the radiant Boy  
Who brings you beauty, peace and joy.  
"Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,  
In excelsis gloria."*

SOURCE: *John J. Pungente, SJ* January 4, 2020, [www.ignation.ca](http://www.ignation.ca)



**A Christmas Prayer**  
by Robert Louis Stevenson

**Loving Father,**  
Help us remember the  
birth of Jesus, that we may share  
in the song of angels, the gladness  
of the shepherds, and the  
worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and  
open the door of love all  
over the world. Let kindness  
come with every gift and good  
desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the  
blessing which Christ brings,  
and teach us to be merry  
with clean hearts. May the Christmas morning make us  
happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening  
bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving  
and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.