

# St. Teresa of Avila Parish

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate  
44 Leonard St., Kitchener, Ontario, N2H 6C8 Phone: 519-743-4525  
E-mail: [st.teresa@stteresakit.ca](mailto:st.teresa@stteresakit.ca) [www.stteresakit.ca](http://www.stteresakit.ca)

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

December 26, 2021

## St. Teresa of Ávila

“To have courage for  
whatever comes in  
life - everything lies  
in that.”



## Parish Staff & Organizations

**Pastor:** Fr. Marian Gil, OMI

**Parish Secretary:** Mary Steffler

**Business Administrator:** David Agnew

**Facilities Manager:** Jack Pigeau

**Volunteer Gardeners:** Jim Weber,  
Stella Lemieux, Fatima Pacheco,  
Magie Navaleza, Betty Skinner

**Baptism Preparation Team:**

**CWL President:** Mary Alice Zister

**Lector Co-ordinator:** Mary Steffler

**Eucharistic Minister Co-ordinator:**

Kim Voelzing

**Adoration Chapel Co-ordinators:**

Herb Altman – 519-893-4793 or

Rosemary Mussar – 519-743-5656

**Prayer Group:**

Mila Navaleza - 519-574-8534 or

519-900-0250

**Finance Council Chair:**

Don Pickett, Jr.

**Pastoral Council Chair:**

Barbara Daly

**St. Vincent de Paul:**

Bernie & Rosemary Pickett

519-749-1501

**St. Teresa School**

Principal: Mr. Brian Goodyear

Secretary: Mary Lavigne

519-743-2131

**Parish Office Hours**

Monday - Friday

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Wednesday – Office Closed**

**Saturday Liturgy:**

9:00 a.m. (except in August)

5:00 p.m.

**Weekday Schedule**

Please check inside for  
weekly schedule

**Sunday Liturgy:**

10:00 a.m.

**Confession:** 30 min. before Mass; Sat., 4:15 – 4:45 p.m.

**Healing Mass:** First Friday of each month  
(September – June) – 7:00 p.m.

**Prayer Meeting:** Temporarily suspended

**Christmas – December 25, 2021**

The story of Jesus' birth (Lk 2:10-20), which begins with a reference to Caesar Augustus, concludes with the shepherds, people looked down on by most of society, visiting the infant. As the angels return to heaven, the shepherds decide to go see "this thing" that has happened in Bethlehem. Their visit confirms everything the angels had told them about the birth of the Savior and Messiah. They then spoke publicly about all they had seen, to the great astonishment of all who heard. **Mary ponders all this in her heart, and the shepherds return to their fields praising God. What had been told to them really happened.**

The Bethlehem story, of course, was told during Midnight Mass. But today we are, as it were, going behind the scenes, and looking at the deeper meaning of that story. After all, who is that little baby, so small, so helpless? And why do we make such a fuss about His birth? **He is the Word of God. From the beginning He was with God and WAS God.** Think of those extraordinary words as you gaze at the crib.

**Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**

It is a time when we can reflect on the quality of our own family life in the light of the Church's 'First Family'.

The family had gone to Jerusalem, according to their regular custom, to celebrate the Passover with thousands of other pilgrims. As the caravan of pilgrims was on its way home, Mary and Joseph suddenly realised that Jesus was not with them. They went back to the Temple and were amazed to find their boy calmly sitting with the religious teachers and discussing with them. And He was impressing them with His intelligence and the answers He was giving to their questions.

Mary, however, was not quite so appreciative. "My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you." **"Why were you looking for me?" Jesus replied. "Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?"**  
Lk 2:48-50

What did He mean talking like that? Jesus replies in words that many have thought to be disrespectful. **Jesus says that He was never lost; He was at home. Jesus is God's Son, and He is in His Father's house.** Mary had mentioned Jesus' 'father' but Jesus had spoken about 'My Father'. They did not yet fully grasp what He was talking about. Their Son had a very special mission which went far beyond the life in Nazareth. Only later would the Mother understand. For now, she stored the memories in her heart.

**"In this house all must be friends, all must be loved, all must be held dear, all must be helped!"**

St. Teresa of Ávila

Diocese of Hamilton  
Prayer Calendar 2021

**Diocese of Hamilton  
Prayer Calendar**

December 27 – Very Rev. Msgr. Murray Kroetsch  
December 28 – Rev. Francisco Cruz  
December 29 – Sisters of St. Anne (s.s.a.)  
December 30 – Rev. Adam Wroblewicz, C.R.  
December 31 – Rev. Melvin Pinto, O.C.D.  
January 1 – The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God  
January 2 – Epiphany of the Lord

**Vocations**

**Vocations – Feast of the Holy Family  
December 26, 2021**

By Baptism we are God's holy family. Pray today for the grace to live faithfully your vocation as a single, married, ordained, or consecrated person. If you think God is calling you to be a priest, religious, or permanent deacon, contact Bishop Wayne Lobsinger, Director of Vocations and Priestly Formation, Diocese of Hamilton, (905-528-7988).

[vocations@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:vocations@hamiltondiocese.com)  
<https://hamiltondiocese.com/vocations/>

*Serra Prayer for Vocations*

O God, Who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech You, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Saint Joseph her spouse, Saint Junipero Serra, and all the saints, an increase of labourers for Your church, fellow labourers with Christ to spend and consume themselves for souls, through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God forever and ever. Amen.

**Preparing for Confirmation and First Communion & Reconciliation – Important Dates:**

**Confirmation –**

**Jan. 9, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.** – Holy Mass – The Baptism of the Lord

**Jan. 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.** – Catechetical Session 2: “Reconciliation the gift of God’s Mercy” (parents & candidates)

**First Reconciliation and First Communion –**

**Jan. 13, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.** – Catechetical Session 2: “Discovering the gift of the Eucharist” – Part I (parents & candidates)

**The Divine Mercy Chapel** is open for Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, **Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.** Please see the Chapel Guidelines as you enter the chapel. To sign up, please call the parish office - 519-743-4525. **Please note: The chapel will close at 12 noon on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2021; and New Year’s Eve, December 31, 2021.**

**Stewardship Report December 19, 2021**

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Envelopes .....                | \$ 3173.00 |
| Loose .....                    | \$ 117.50  |
| Building and Maintenance ..... | \$ 350.00  |
| Christmas .....                | \$ 520.00  |
| Flowers .....                  | \$ 215.00  |
| Funeral .....                  | \$ 150.00  |

Thank you to those who continue to remember the parish through financial donations!

**Donations for the year 2021** – As we approach year end, we wish to remind you that the diocesan bookkeeping policy requires that parish books close on December 31, 2021. Donations from individual parishioners or businesses that would like to receive an income tax receipt for 2021 must be received at the parish office by December 31, 2021. *Thank you for your support and generosity given to our parish community!*

**Mass Intentions**

**December 27, 2021 – January 2, 2022**

Tuesday, December 28, 2021 – **7:00 p.m.**

**In thanksgiving and for God’s blessings for the Miciula Family – Ewa**

Wednesday, December 29, 2021 – **8:30 a.m.**

**Holy Souls – Moser Family**

Thursday, December 30, 2021 – **8:30 a.m.**

**+Lenny – Ken**

Friday, December 31, 2021 – **8:30 a.m.** – **No Mass**

*Vigil of the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God*  
**5:00 p.m.** – **+Leona Grobe – Peter Grobe**

Saturday, January 1, 2022 –

*Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God*

**10:00 a.m.** – **+Gil Lemieux – Stella Lemieux & Family**     **5:00 p.m.** – **No Vigil Mass**

Sunday, January 2, 2022 – **10:00 a.m.** –

**Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord – Year C**  
– **Parishioners of St. Teresa Parish**

**Live-streaming on Zoom**

The **10 a.m. Sunday Mass** will be live-streamed. To join Father, click on the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/5887658626>

Password: 274733

**Daily Readings:**

Lectors may find daily readings at this link:

<https://readings.livingwithchrist.ca>

**Christmas Flowers** – Envelopes are available at the back of the church for those wishing to make a contribution to assist with the cost of the flowers and trees. Thank you for your generosity.

## Christmas Mass Schedule 2021

St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Kitchener, Ontario  
Tel.: 519-743-4525

### Christmas Eve

Friday, December 24, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.

(Mass also on Zoom)

### Christmas Day

Saturday, December 25, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.

(Mass also on Zoom)

### The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Saturday, December 25, 2021 - NO Vigil Mass at 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 26, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.

(Mass also on Zoom)

On the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, there will be a special blessing for families.

### Mary, The Holy Mother of God

(Holy Day of Obligation)

Friday, December 31, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 1, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

(Mass also on Zoom)

### Epiphany of the Lord

Saturday, January 1, 2022 – NO Vigil Mass at 5:00 p.m.

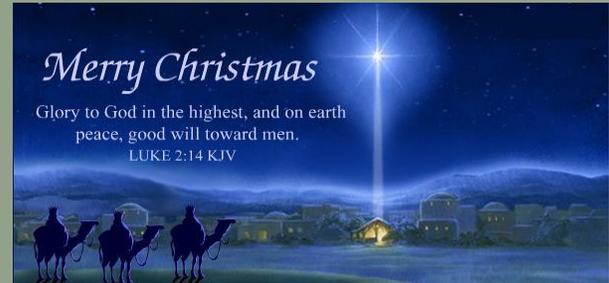
Sunday, January 2, 2022 – 10:00 a.m.

(Mass also on Zoom)

### To join us online for the Christmas Masses:

Click on the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/5887658626>;  
Password: 274733

The Parish Offices will be closed from  
December 24th, 2021 through January 2, 2022.



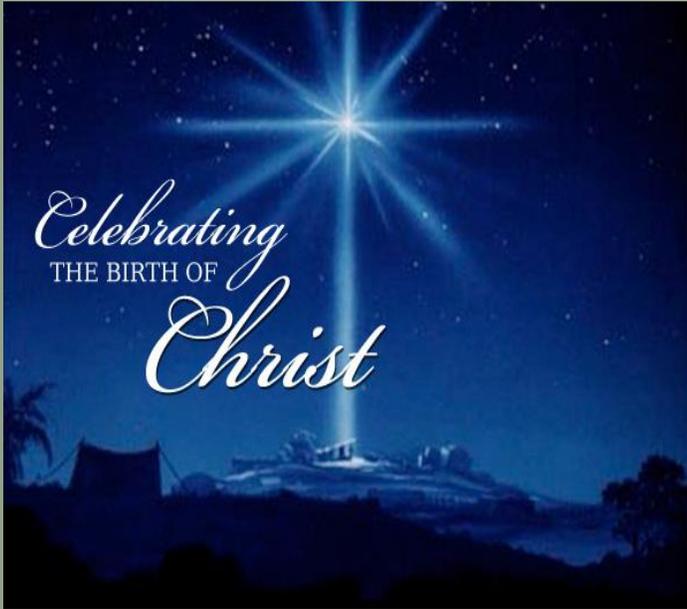
### Dear Parishioners & Guests,

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a wonderful Christmas, filled with many moments you will always remember. May this Christmas be more than just a season; may it become a way of life for us. May the little Child whom we contemplate in the manger, watch over all the children of the world, as well as vulnerable and discarded persons. May all of us receive peace and consolation from the birth of the Saviour, and in the knowledge that we are loved by the one heavenly Father!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Fr. Marian Gil OMI  
Pastor

## Christmas Traditions Around the World



Adam and Eve appear in many books besides Genesis, such as the Quran, the Life of Adam and Eve, the Talmud, and Gnostic texts. Jewish tradition sometimes includes reference to other wives of Adam. Adam and Eve were never officially recognized as saints by the early Church. However, they were honoured as unofficial saints throughout the Middle Ages. December 24 was set aside for several centuries as their feast day and was often celebrated with a Paradise Play which told the story of humankind from the creation of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden up to the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem. The play featured a large evergreen tree called a Paradise Tree, with its branches laden with red apples. Eventually, small white discs were added representing communion wafers.

The Paradise Tree was especially popular in Germany where it was brought into peoples' homes and was decorated with dried apples that had been kept in the root cellar for the winter. In 1880, glassmakers in Thuringia discovered how to make blown glass balls and bells which soon replaced the apples and resulted in what we all know as the traditional Christmas tree all over the world.



The apple has traditionally been the most popular symbol of the forbidden fruit mentioned in the Bible, which did not describe the specific fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil eaten by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die." Genesis 2:16-17]. There have been controversies over which fruit the Bible referred to with many scholars believing that the fruit was a pomegranate or a fig. There have also been speculations about the peach, apricot, quince, fig, and banana.



### **The Polish have many traditions.**

However, one special tradition that originated in early Christian times is that of Oplatki (O-pwaht-kee) – Christmas Wafers {Singular: Oplatek (O-pwah-tek)}. These wafers are made out of flour and water, are very similar in consistency to Communion hosts, and are imprinted with Christmas images. The breaking of the Oplatek mirrors the Last Supper and the celebration of the Mass. The tradition originally came about because Bethlehem means “House of Bread.”

Oplatki are usually shared before the Christmas Eve meal. The eldest family member breaks off a piece of the wafer and hands it to another family member offering a blessing – a kind of Christmas wish for the other person. Since animals were among the first to greet Christ, even pets can share in the Oplatki. The wafers are generally white but most packs of Oplatki come with one or two pink wafers for family pets. This tradition is not only observed in Poland - Americans call them Christmas Wafers, Lithuanians have plotkele, and Slovaks have oblatky. The sharing of the Oplatek is a time for families to come together in love and forgiveness. To wish you a Merry Christmas the Polish would say *Wesołych Świąt!*

### **The Alpine Countries**

In these European countries, there is a tradition of carrying a statue of Saint Joseph to a different home every night. The custom can be adapted by moving a statue of Saint Joseph to a different room in the house during Advent. On Christmas Eve, Saint Joseph joins the Nativity Scene with Mary, Jesus, and the shepherds.

In Germany, Christmas trees are a very popular tradition. In some cases, there can be a Christmas tree for every member of the family! The trees are decorated with lights and candy. The lighting of the Christmas tree is often a special part of Christmas Eve and children open presents afterwards. A roast goose can be part of the Christmas dinner. Merry Christmas is *Fröhliche Weihnachten!*

The French often celebrate Christmas throughout December. In some cases, gifts are given on December 6, the feast of Saint Nicholas, as well as Christmas, and sometimes on New Year’s Day also. Shoes are placed by the fireplace instead of stockings. Figurines in manger scenes are sometimes dressed in traditional French apparel. Merry Christmas in French is – *Joyeux Noël!* Italians, in almost every town and village have contests for the best Nativity scene. Depending on the family and where in Italy they are from, gifts may be opened on December 13 (the feast of Saint Lucy), December 25 (Christmas), or January 6 (the Epiphany). Christmas is a very family and food centered holiday in Italy. The Christmas season begins on December 8 – when decorating and major Christmas preparations begin. A traditional Christmas bread is *panettone* which is shaped like a dome and made with raisins and candied citrus peel. *Buon Natale* is how to say Merry Christmas in Italian.

## POPE FRANCIS REFLECTS ON HOLY FAMILY

Sunday's feast of the Holy Family, said Pope Francis (in 2020) at the weekly Angelus, calls us to reflect **“on the fact that the Son of God wanted to be in need of the warmth of a family, like all children.”** This is why the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph can serve as a model “in which all families of the world can find their sure point of reference and sure inspiration.”

### Families open to joy

A key note of the life of the family of Nazareth was joy, with the Child Jesus **“surrounded by the maternal affection of Mary and the care of Joseph, in whom Jesus was able to see God's tenderness.”**

### A special year to bear witness to family love

We too, said Pope Francis, **“are called to rediscover the educational value of the family unit.”** Families, he said, must be founded **“on the love that always regenerates relationships, opening up horizons of hope.”** The Pope emphasized the importance in the family of prayer, affection, forgiveness, tenderness, and adherence to the will of God. “In this way,” he said, **“the family opens itself to the joy that God gives to all those who know how to give joyfully.”** A happy home, he added, is also outgoing: **“it finds the spiritual energy to be open to the outside world, to others, to the service of brothers and sisters, to collaboration in building an ever new and better world,”** especially by the example of daily life.

### Three important words

Pope Francis recognized that every family has its problems, and that at times, because we are human, because we are weak, we even fight within the family. “I want to tell you one thing,” the Pope said: **“If we fight in the family, never end the day without making peace.”** Once again, he recommended three words that should be common in every family: **“please,” “thank you,” and “I'm sorry.”** If these three words are present in the family, he said, the family will be in good shape.

The Holy Father went on to entrust the “journey” of the Year “Amoris Laetitia Family” to “the Holy Family of Nazareth, and in particular to Saint Joseph, the devoted spouse and father.” The special **Year dedicated to the “Family Amoris laetitia,”** was inaugurated on the Solemnity of Saint Joseph

(19 March 2021), and will conclude with the celebration of the Tenth World Meeting of Families, to be held in Rome in June 2022.



The Office of Evangelization and Catechesis and the Liturgy Office have prepared the attached link to the diocese website with a beautiful resource for families to share and pray together in celebration of the Feast of the Holy Family: <https://hamiltondiocese.com/holyfamily2021/>

### Prayer of John Paul II for Families

Lord God, from You every family in Heaven and on earth takes its name. Father, You are love and life.

Through Your Son, Jesus Christ, born of woman, and through the Holy Spirit, the fountain of divine charity, grant that every family on earth may become for each successive generation a true shrine of life and love.

Grant that Your grace may guide the thoughts and actions of husbands and wives for the good of their families and of all the families in the world.

Grant that the young may find in the family solid support for their human dignity and for their growth in truth and love.

Grant that love, strengthened by the grace of the sacrament of marriage, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass.

Through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that the Church may fruitfully carry out her worldwide mission in the family and through the family. We ask this of You, who is life, truth and love with the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

