

# ST. MARY'S CHURCH

63 Elgin Street, Collingwood, ON L9Y 3L6

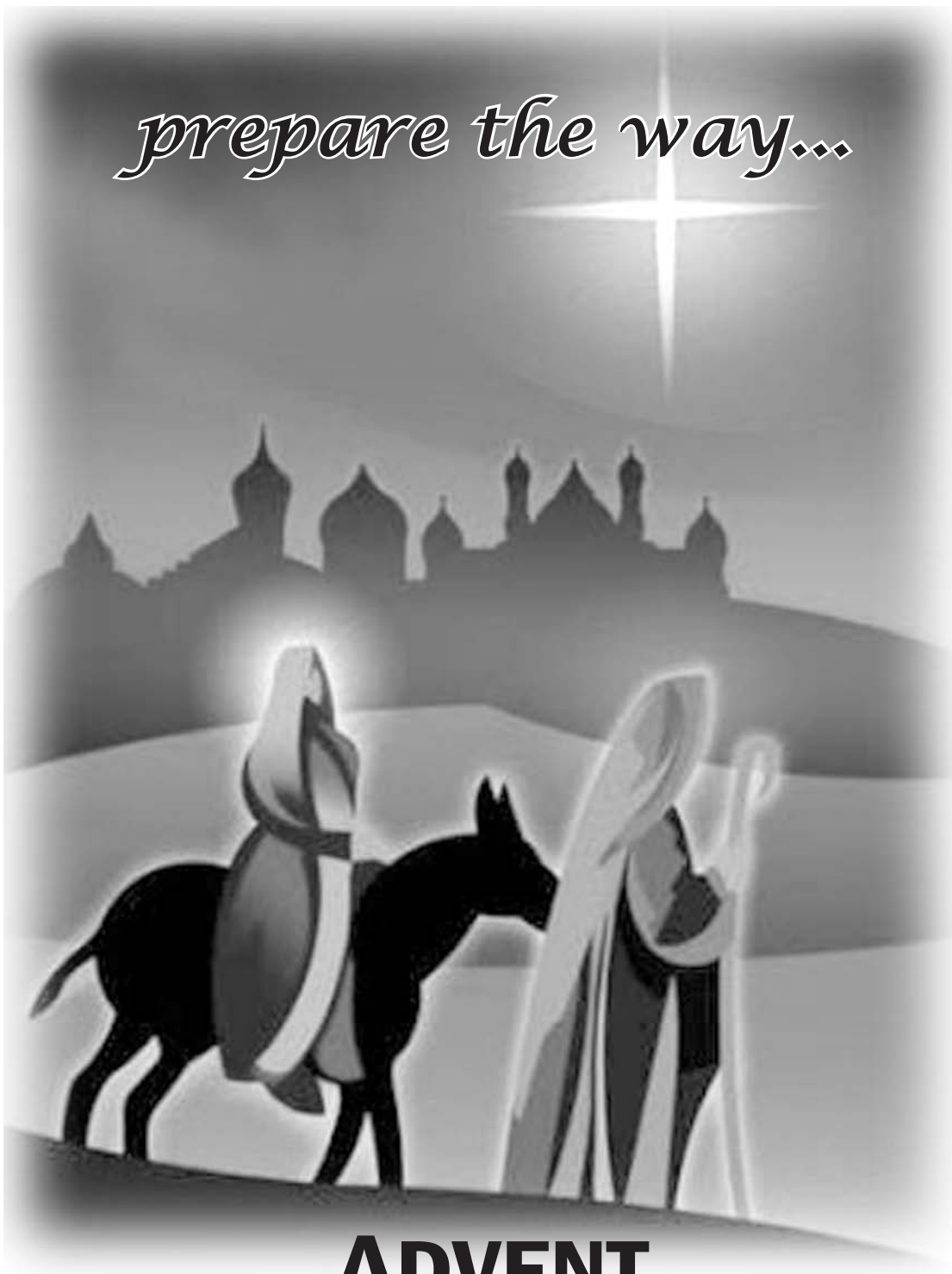
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Fr. Charles Forget, **Pastor**

Jayne Williams, **Office Administrator**

*prepare the way...*



## ADVENT

## The Meaning of Christmas And Other Things We May Be Wrong About

An often-used line that may follow discussion and differing opinions about the right decision or choice and whether something may be good or bad, right or wrong, is: "Have you ever considered you might be wrong?" If we leave no room within our own minds for consideration of whether we have all the facts, have considered an alternate view's side of the argument or are at least open to new information, then we may find ourselves absolutely wrong about what we had so confidently and perhaps even fiercely defended.

I think this reality can be applied not so much in the way we see Jesus now in our lives but the way we might see Him if He was with us bodily, as He was among His Mother and disciples two millennia ago. It makes me ask myself; "Would I receive Jesus with considerable scrutiny, openness, attentively listening to Him speak as a street and road preacher? Would I have even considered that the long-awaited Messiah could be realized in Him, as plain and unimportant as He might appear. Would I see Him not so much within my own mind and sense but pick up on the voiced and murmured remarks of others around me? Could I, would I, easily be swayed by the comments and judgments of others in forming my opinion about who He might be or even just of Him as a man, a teacher, an orator, or possibly a friend? In the course of history man has so often been wrong in their sizing up of people and individuals; has been wrong about guilt and innocence in sending good people to their deaths and setting criminals free. We even will argue that human, incarnate innocence must come second – or last – in light of another persons greater good under the guise of freedom of choice but not for everyone.

The question I ask of myself is: would I accept Jesus or have accepted Him had I not received the formation from my Catholic parents? How would I see Jesus if I were not a Christian? And had I been born in another place and time, would I be open enough to see Him among others as unique, attractive, and worth a listen? As humans we come into the world trying somehow to put the universe together within ourselves but also have a drive in us to within our own small and seemingly insignificant lives, to want to put and leave a dent in it. Then the haunting words of John the Baptist echo from that now silenced voice of time but in my own head that "He must increase, I must decrease".

My mother used to say, "Those with the loudest voices in an argument most often have the weakest defense of it." And thus is the world in which we live. One day all people (I hope) will recognize the power of the mass-media in our time to form strong opinions one way or another and to the point where a majority can believe and even be led to believe that such and such a person is evil or that even someone who does evil things is good and should lead us. St. Paul was totally wrong about the followers of Jesus as he sought to round them up and persecute them. Did Paul have passion and zeal? Yes. Was he willing to put considerable effort into carrying out actions based on his beliefs? Yes. Was Paul wrong? Yes. And it took an extraordinary force of grace from outside of Him to show him that, even God blinding him

temporarily as if to emphasize the blindness that had taken over Paul's life.

I once read a poster, similar in style to the ones you see in old Western movies, hung on posts in the streets proclaiming that some criminal was "Wanted" accompanied by a sketch and description of the outlaw. But this poster was about Jesus and how a "Wanted" poster about the Saviour might appear today or how it might easily be seen in Jesus' own time. As the Gospels attest, Jesus was deemed by many as a criminal, an outlaw, a figure stirring the people up, perceived as irreligious in the face of Jewish faith and leaders. For the self-acclaimed Godly, Jesus was too secular. For the secular, He was too religious. And after they had put Him to death on the Cross, believing Him to be dead, rumours are going around saying that He was alive. Preposterous.

*(Beneath picture of a macho-looking Christ, this message)*

### **WANTED !**

Jesus, also known as Christ, wanted on charges of sedition, criminal anarchy, vagrancy and conspiring to overthrow the established government.

Dresses poorly. Uses carpentry as a cover. Has visionary ideas.

Associates with common working people, the unemployed and winos. Has variety of aliases: Prince of Peace, Son of Man, Light of the World, etc.

Full beard and scars on hands, feet and side, the results of injuries inflicted by angry mob led by respectable citizens and local authorities."

As citizens of Rome or Jerusalem or any place in the ancient world, would we have considered Jesus to be a criminal or at least someone worthy of our scorn and rebuke? Would we listen to those 'respectable citizens' on their opinion of Jesus and what He was guilty of? Would we have lined up alongside angry protesters to denounce Him? Would I? Would I, could I possibly side with Him and defend Him? It may be believed that given another time and place, these questions are impossible to answer. But, I say, we can and we must answer them.

God came to the earth from heaven 'disguised' as just another woman's baby. He was born into nothingness and no one saw Him nor recognized Him save by the power of the Holy Spirit, as in the case of Simeon or by invitation as with the Magi and the shepherds.

And though He was expected by the religious He was summarily rejected by them. And the crowds, the general populace, believing themselves to be respectable citizens, believed that what their local authorities (mass media) and even their religious leaders said about Him. And they were all wrong. He was God-in-the-flesh. He was the manna come down from heaven. He was sent by the Father to save us by saying and doing the very things we killed Him for. And, if they (we) could be wrong about Jesus two thousand years ago, could we be wrong about so much of what the world is dishing out to us as true? In this 'information age' there is so much information – much of it godless and dark. Our pride can comfort us in believing that we know because authorities pop star or actors of our own choosing have said it is so. Rather, we should come to know Him who is always known and seen in the Good, the True and the Beautiful. Given the Holy Spirit, as we are, Jesus told us that 'He will lead you into all truth' (Jn 16:13). May this Christmas find us following truly the One who was expected and came as the Way, the Truth and the Life. (FrC)

**MASS**  **SCHEDULE & INTENTIONS**

Tues Dec 24 <sup>TH</sup>	
4:30pm	CHRISTMAS EVE
6:30pm	CHRISTMAS EVE
Wed Dec 25 <sup>th</sup>	
9:00am	CHRISTMAS DAY
11:00am	CHRISTMAS DAY
Thurs Dec 26 <sup>th</sup>	NO MASS
Fri Dec 27 <sup>th</sup>	NO MASS
Sat Dec 28 <sup>th</sup>	
3:30 to 4:00pm	Confession
4:30pm	Special Intentions
Sun Dec 29 <sup>th</sup>	
9:00am	For the People
11:00am	For the Family of Sandy Mattacott Requested by Sandy Mattacott

*Please Pray for the Sick*

Jean Ferguson, Fred Coulson, Hilary Joseph, Henry Niepalla, , Albert Sant, Teresa & Feliks Kosierb, Elizabeth Pavilsa, Ashley Zavitz, Alex Poirier & Family, Tammy MacDonald, Anita Taglione, Denis Fennessy, Mary Little, Yvonne Grimm, Janine Wright, Anne Johnston.

*Please Pray for the Recently Deceased*



**The Sanctuary Lamp Burns**  
For the Intentions of the  
St. Mary's Parishioners  
From Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> to Dec 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024



Regular Collection Dec 15<sup>th</sup> \$6175.36 (Inc PAG)  
ShareLife \$34,886.00



**OFFERTORY ENVELOPES**

There are still some Offertory Envelopes that need to be picked up. They will be in the parish hall this weekend, and then they will be brought back into the office until the New Year. If you would like to start using envelopes please give me a call at the parish office and I will get a box ready for you.

Please note the office will be closed  
Between Christmas and New Year

**CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE**

The Masses for Christmas and New Year's will be as follows:

**Tuesday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)**  
4:30pm and 6:30pm  
**Wednesday, December 25 (Christmas Day)**  
9:00am and 11:00am

**New Year's Eve**  
**Tuesday, December 31**  
4:30pm  
**Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God/New Year's Day**  
**Wednesday, January 1**  
10:00am

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
**December 22, 2024**



**Warming hearts with your support for ShareLife**

**NEW:** Your gift will double in value! From November 1 until year-end, your contribution to our parish's ShareLife campaign will be matched by an anonymous donor up to a total of \$500,000.

As we shelter from the winter storm, we are thankful for your ShareLife support, keeping many off cold streets and igniting hope for a brighter future. Wishing you a warm and safe Christmas season, and thanking you for your enduring compassion that extends the same to others.

**THANK YOU**

Thank you to all who came out to the Christmas Concert on Friday evening. Dymtro was amazing and we were truly blessed to have had the chance to enjoy his wonderful voice. It was also for such a great cause.

**CHRISTMAS IS LIKE A KISS**

Pope John XXIII once said, "Christmas is like a kiss". How true! It is the night that justice and peace kissed, mercy and kindness embraced, God and man became one. There is a love at Christmas, a love that embraces the real world of disease and despair, destruction death sin and sorrow. Christmas want to gather us all together as one great human family to give us a greeting of God and the kiss of his Christ.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

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 The Rosary*

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