

Dear Saints:

On December 6 I had the pleasure of writing a thank you letter for a substantial donation to our parish food ministry. It was an appropriate day to write such a letter, since December 6 is the Feast of St. Nicholas of Myra, a day to honour a fourth century bishop famous for his acts of generosity and secret gift-giving. St. Nicholas took on other names over the centuries — Father Christmas and Santa Claus - and so this Christian hero lives on at this time of year in every act of kindness.

Recently the spirit of St. Nicholas has been alive and well in All Saints and in the other parishes of our regional ministry of South Georgian Bay. Benefactors have written sizeable cheques to Deacon Lorna for the food bank run out of St. Luke's, Creemore. Substantial gifts to Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach, will allow for badly needed renovations to make that church more accessible. Numerous gifts have been directed to All Saints' food ministry, towards our new sound system, and towards worship items in memory of loved ones. For all these gifts we give thanks and praise.

All this generosity shows that people see God's work amongst us and want to be a part of it. Our Christmas giving is a response to God's self-giving in God's son, Jesus. In the Christmas story, gifts to God's son (Mary and Joseph's loving care for him, the shepherds' adoration, the Magi's gift) are acknowledgements of a grace received. That grace glows in the manger/cradle in the small shape of the Christ child who is God's promise of love and salvation to us. Our gift giving thus flows from that greatest gift of all, Jesus, the Word made flesh, as St. Nicholas knew well.

This Christmas, may the gift of God in Christ fill us with love, hope, and generosity. Our worship schedule is packed with opportunities to give thanks and praise for Jesus, starting at 9:30am on December 24th (the Fourth Sunday of Advent) when we hope to have a children's Christmas pageant, through Christmas Eve at 7pm and 10:30pm. Barry, our music director, promises a carol sing for anyone who wants to show up a bit early for our Christmas Eve services! Finally, we gather again on Christmas Day at 9:30am. We pray that our worship will be a blessing to you.

As we close the books on this year, the deadline for gifts to All Saints (cheques, e-transfers, etc) for those wishing to receive a 2023 tax receipt is December 31. We also encourage you to consider our pre-authorized giving program for 2024, as the number of participants has declined somewhat this year.

Pleased be assured of my gratitude for all that you do to support our ministries and our witness to Christ in this community. May the Christ child and the spirit of St. Nicholas fill us all with joyful and generous hearts this Christmas and in the year to come.

Father Michael



O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL....

So begins one of our most familiar Advent hymns, often used verse by verse for the lighting of the Advent Wreath. It speaks to Christ's return, bringing justice and peace to a world that has and still knows such violence and unrest. We pray each day in the Daily Office, and each Sunday, for a world where justice and joy will be known upon our earth. It can be all too discouraging when we hear reports in the news of violence and injustice in our homes, our country and abroad. We can say with the Psalmist – O Lord, how long?

Jesus himself was born into a world where injustice and abuse and violence were daily occurrences. Rather than coming with swords blazing he came with a message of peace and love, showing respect for all regardless of health, wealth, social standing or political standing. Jesus was an equalizer – he treated all with compassion and mercy. He commanded us to walk the extra mile, to give a coat, to feed those who are hungry, to approach those in fellowship and friendship those that would be deemed unacceptable. He taught that God's love knows no bounds.

When the needs of those around us are so great, and the needs in our world seem overwhelming, the things that we are able to do make a difference. We have fed many people over this past year, we have provided clothing for those in need, we have welcomed the stranger, we have visited the sick. It doesn't need to be done from the mountain top, or with bells and whistles. We do it as part of our calling as people of faith. Each thing each of us does, all adds up and makes a difference. Some times it is the small things that we do that have a big effect. Coming in to the church this morning, I was waiting to turn right, but the traffic was backed up due to a red light. A car paused, waved me ahead in front of them, and their generous act brought joy to my day!

In this season of light, when so many live in darkness, I pray that God's light will continue to shine through each one of us. Light dispels darkness. We are called to be children of light. Let us through this holy season bring the Light - the hope, love, joy and peace to our families, friends and to our world.

Blessings,
Sharon+



The wardens wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and good health and happiness in 2024. We look forward to many Christmas events this year, and being able to celebrate the birth of our Lord together with the congregations of Prince of Peace in Wasaga Beach and St. Luke's in Creemore.

We send a huge thank you to Father Michael, Father Sharon, and Father Gord, and to our great staff, Nancy, Barry, Jimmy and Bob for all they do for our parish, and to all the amazing volunteers and financial supporters that allow our church to continue to serve so many vital ministries.

This year we have been able to enjoy again some of the programs and ministries that were put on hold during the pandemic. Thank you to all our outreach teams, and especially the leadership of Sharon and Moira. Thank you to our Livestream and Technical Team for continuing to present the slides on Sundays and bring the church services into our homes, and to Barry and the Choir for their musical talents.

Our church building and the rectory are in great shape now, and we thank the Garden Guild and Green Team for their tremendous contribution. Our new sign on Ste. Marie Street is very eye-catching and inviting! We have several major projects in the works for the coming year.

Church finances are always a concern and we thank Charles Barnes our treasurer for keeping us close to our budget. We are still looking at a deficit at the end of the year but hope to get back on track in 2024. Thank you also to Jim Cunningham and the board members of the Foundation, and to Ron Emo and John Kirby for their tireless work on the sale of our surplus cemetery land.

2023 has been a very difficult and dangerous year for those in so many other parts of the world, let us give thanks for all we have here in Collingwood, and in Canada.

Please keep safe and enjoy a Blessed Christmas,
God Bless,

With best wishes from Wardens
Penny Bourne, Catherine Durrant, Catherine Raaflaub and Jake Johnston.





Christmas Events and Services for 2023

Rectory Tree Trimming Party

4pm - 7pm, Saturday, December, 16th, All Saints Rectory, Collingwood

Community Carol Sing

7pm, Sunday, December, 17th, Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach

Quiet Christmas

A Service for Those Missing Loved Ones at Christmas

7pm, Wednesday, December, 20th, All Saints, Collingwood

Christmas Worship

Sunday December 24th in the Morning:

9:30am, Christmas Pageant and Holy Eucharist at Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach

9:30am, Christmas Pageant and Holy Eucharist at All Saints, Collingwood

Sunday December 24th in the Evening

3:30pm, Carol Sing, and 4pm, Holy Eucharist, St. Luke's, Creemore

7pm, Holy Eucharist, All Saints, Collingwood

7pm, Holy Eucharist, Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach

10:30pm, Holy Eucharist, All Saints, Collingwood

Monday, December 25th

9:30am, Holy Eucharist, Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach

9:30am, Holy Eucharist, All Saints, Collingwood

All Saints Collingwood

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