



If Christmas is about the Word of God taking on human form and living among us, and if God is All-Powerful and All-Being, then God has always been at work trying to break through and be noticed by us. It remains for us to be open to recognizing God's presence and responding to it.

I share with you the magic of this Season, filled with hope and great expectation. I trust that the baby Jesus will open for us new ways of living in peace and protecting one another's dignity. I pray that God will daily reveal in unquestionable ways the mercy poured out on us, God's children.

Gift from St. Joseph Parish: The Healing Power of Confession, presentation by Scott Hahn on CD

Please accept this timely gift from our parish as a sign of our appreciation that you have joined us for the Christmas liturgy in thanking God for the gift of Jesus, and as an invitation to participate in this Year of Mercy called by Pope Francis. (See Pope Francis Invites Us for more)

We encourage you to listen to it again and again. For those who love the timelessness of Scripture, you will find Scott Hahn probing Genesis 3 and the description of our original fall, probing the Scripture to reveal how God wants to share divine life with us. Then when in Scott's own life he hesitated to accept what the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) had to offer, he was given Mark 2:5ff, John 20:21ff, and James 5:14-16.



For those nourished by stories that demonstrate God's Spirit active today, listen as Scott Hahn, the storyteller, shares personal stories about shop-lifting and restitution, intending suicide and new life, and the disgraced beggar priest who heard the confession of the Pope. And for those who enjoy theology and delving into the mystery of God and of life, Scott Hahn has a wonderful way of making the Sacrament accessible and desirable. Hear how he has incorporated a regular Jubilee Day of Mercy in his family and how it has helped.

Our hope is that you will hear and experience, in the words of Scott Hahn, "that the Sacrament is not a police line-up or an interrogation, but an out-pouring of God's healing mercy'.

Action: during Lent, join a study group exploring this CD

Meaning of the 12 Days of Christmas

- One Partridge – Jesus Christ, Our Savior
- Two turtle doves - Old and New Testaments
- Three French hens - faith, hope, and love.
- Four calling birds - the four gospels
- Five golden rings – 5 books of Torah
- Six geese a-laying - the six days of creation.
- 7 swans a-swimming- seven gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Eight maids a-milking -the eight beatitudes.
- Nine ladies dancing - 9 fruits of the Holy Spirit
- Ten Lords a-leaping -the Ten Commandments.
- Eleven pipers piping - eleven faithful Apostles.
- Twelve drummers - 12 pts.in Apostle's Creed.



Christmas Message: Do You Hear What I Hear

We choose this popular hymn to demonstrate that the mystery of God is constantly being expressed; what is requested is for us to see, hear, know, and listen. This happens when we engage in the activities of our every day with a perspective that God is speaking to us. Can we watch Star Wars and name the force GOD? Can we learn the latest medical and scientific advances and name the creator GOD? Can we allow to rise in us the feelings of frustration at the wars and atrocities happening in the world, and name that work of our conscience, GOD?



Pope Francis Invites Us: Jubilee Year of Mercy (Misericordiae Vultus, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, #2)



"We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness."

From December 08, 2015 to November 20, 2106, the Jubilee of Mercy will be celebrated with an extraordinary call to conversion, away from sin and towards greater holiness. The Holy Doors at the Vatican are open, and special graces are made available. Three church doors in our diocese have been designated to symbolize the doors at the Vatican, and we are planning a late spring event in the design of a pilgrimage. **Action:** plan on joining us on our pilgrimage.

Description of the logo : The motto *Merciful Like the Father* serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure (Lk 6:37-38). The logo expresses the profound way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity and does so with a love with the power to change one's life. One particular feature worthy of note is that while the Good Shepherd, in his great mercy, takes humanity upon himself, his eyes are merged with those of humanity. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, the new Adam, one's own humanity and the future that lies ahead, contemplating, in his gaze, the love of the Father.

The Lonely Ember

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination. As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail." Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."

Calendar of Events:

December

27 Feast of the Holy Family The *Feast of the Holy Family* is a liturgical celebration in the Catholic Church in honor of Jesus, his mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Saint Joseph, as a family. The primary purpose of this feast is to present the Holy Family as a model for Christian families.

January

1 Feast of Mary the Mother of God This wonderful title, Mary, the Mother of God, "*Theotokos*", reveals a profound truth not only about Mary, but about each one of us. We are now invited into the very relationship that she had with her Son. We can become "God-bearers" and bring Him to all those whom we encounter in our few short days under the sun.

February

10 Ash Wednesday, beginning of Lent The seventh Wednesday before Easter and the first day of Lent, on which many Christians receive a mark of ashes on the forehead as a token of penitence and mortality.

March

27 Easter is the celebration of Jesus Christ's rising from the dead (His Resurrection) after His crucifixion which took place on what we now term Good Friday.

May

15 Pentecost is a holiday on which we remember the coming of the Holy Spirit on the early followers of Jesus. It is the birthday of the Church, the community of the followers of Christ enlivened by the Spirit.

Bishop Stephen Jensen, of the Prince George Diocese, Building Together in Faith (Diocesan Appeal): The appeal is a call for each parish community and each member of the Diocesan Church to become involved in a new and particular way in the mission of the Church. Each baptized member of the church is called to continue the mission of Christ in our world, individually and as a body. As part of the local church, the diocese, we are invited to share in the mission through the annual appeal. With the encouragement of the Bishop, the appeal supports: (**Action:** consider making plans to participate)

Youth: Diocesan Youth Conference, (April-May 2016), World Youth Days (July 25-31, 2016)

Camps: Camp Morice, Stewart Lake, camps for children, youth, and families (July-Aug. 2016)

Rose Prince Pilgrimage: First Nations people sponsoring this event (First week of July)





St. Joseph's Parish

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(Rectory Phone) 250-847-3175

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 9AM-3PM

MASS TIMES

Saturdays 5PM

Sundays 9AM

For week day Masses and Sacraments and other concerns, please call the Parish Office.

CHURCH GROUPS

Knights of Columbus (Fr. Callaly Council 7973)

Catholic Women's League

SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Catholic School

School Principal: Rosemary McKenzie

Our school website: www.stjosephsschool.ca

Phone: 250-847-9414

Children, Youth and Family Programs

Camp Morice; Children and Family Camps

Diocesan Youth Office; DYC, University Chaplaincy

(Contact the Parish Office)



St. Anthony's Parish

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Fax: (250) 845-2823

Website: in progress

e-mail: houston.parish@gmail.com

Pastoral Assistant: Dennis Gonia

Cell: (778) - 816-0512

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Saturday 9AM-5PM

MASS TIMES

Sundays 11:30 AM

No week day Masses

For Sacraments and other concerns, please call the Parish Office.

EXISTING CHURCH GROUP(S)

Catholic Women's League

Pastoral Visitations (home visits with the Priest)

twice a month

Celebrating Christmas: consider joining us in the Christmas Season as we celebrate the many aspects of the mystery of the birth of Christ. The season is composed of the following feasts: Feast of the Nativity (Dec25), Feast of the Holy Family, Feast of the Mary the Mother of God (Jan01), Feast of the Epiphany, and the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. All these help uncover the depth of what it means for God to take on human flesh and dwell among us.

The cycle of the Saints adds further reverence to this time as we celebrate Saint Stephen, first martyr (Dec26), Saint John, the evangelist also known as the Divine (Dec27), Holy Innocents, infants martyred by King Herod as Jesus escaped to Egypt (Dec 28).