

A Blessed Christmas to All

PASTOR: Fr. Wilfred Gomes
ADMINISTRATOR: Fr. Vincent Hawkswell
PARISH DEACON: Dcn. Tony Gray
ACCOUNTANT: Elizabeth Bell
ADMIN ASSISTANT: Cleiser Oliveira

MASS SCHEDULES

SUNDAY MASS: ★
Saturday 4:30 pm
Sunday 8:30 am, 10:30 am

WEEKDAYS: ★
Monday - Saturday: 9:00 am
1st Friday: 6:30 pm

CONFESSIONS: ★
Monday - Saturday: 8:30 - 8:50 am
Saturday: 3:30 pm - 4:15 pm

ADORATION: ★
Friday: 9:30 am - 4:00 pm

1st Friday of the month
9:30 am - 4:00 pm &
7:00 pm to Saturday 8:00 am
Sign-up sheets located in vestibule

BENEDICTION: ★
Friday: 4:00 pm
1st Friday : 4:00 pm and the following
morning at 8:00 am

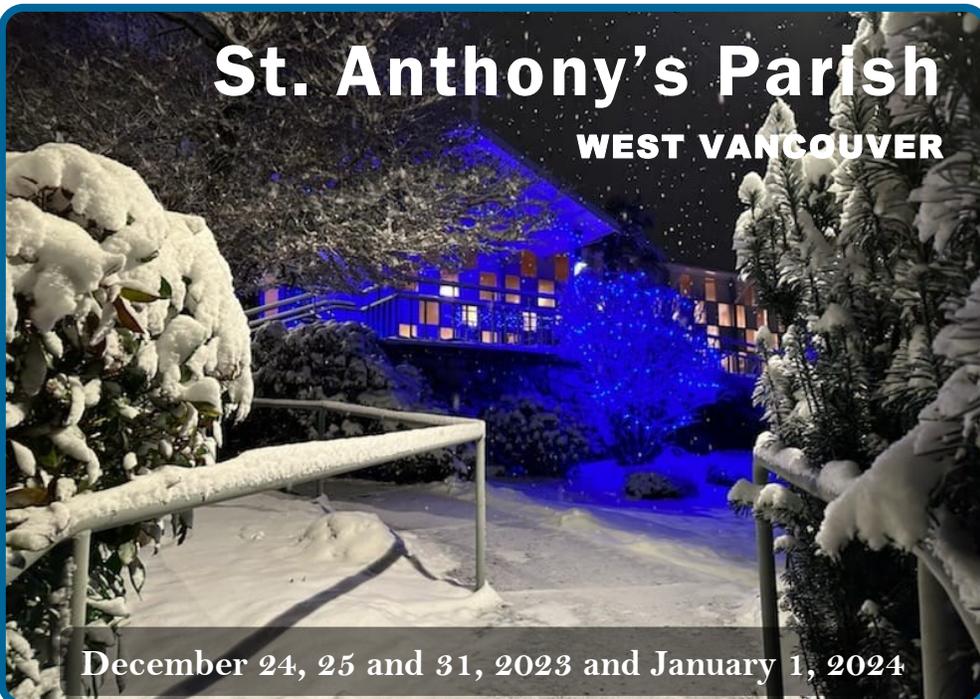
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2347 Inglewood Ave., West Vancouver, BC
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OFFICE HOURS: ★

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St. Anthony's Parish

WEST VANCOUVER

December 24, 25 and 31, 2023 and January 1, 2024

Christmas & New Year's Mass Schedule

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 23: 4:30 pm
December 24: 8:30 am and 10:30 am

HOLY FAMILY SUNDAY

December 30: 4:30 pm
December 31: 8:30 am and 10:30 am

CHRISTMAS

December 24: 4:30 pm
with Children's Pageant
December 24: 10:00 pm
with Carols at 9:30 pm
December 25: 8:30 am and 10:30 am

SOLEMNITY OF MARY (New Year's Day)

December 31: 4:30 pm
January 1: 8:30 am and 10:30 am

"Do we really believe that Mary's Son is God?"

This is a question a young person once asked the late Archbishop James F. Carney of Vancouver, the bishop who ordained me. It struck him so forcefully that he subsequently made it the basis of more than one homily.

"Do we really believe that Mary's Son is God?"

When we look at our parish nativity scene, what do we see?

We see a Baby lying in a manger, in the food trough of farm animals. We see His mother Mary and His legal father Joseph. It is cold, and the animals are warming Him with their breath. We see shepherds adoring Him.

That is, perhaps, all we can see with human eyes; but we should look with the eyes of faith. Right now I am on a "high." For the last few weeks, I have heard numerous confessions. There is no greater joy a priest can experience than to hear parishioner after parishioner coming back to God, repenting, apologizing, and promising to do better.

Congratulations!

But now I ask again: "Do we really believe that Mary's Son is God?"

This Christmas, as temporary administrator at St. Anthony's, I wish you the joy that comes from believing that Mary's Baby Son is God, Who has taken on our human nature so that we can take on His divine nature.

Thanks to those who have spent countless hours decorating the church for Advent and Christmas. Thanks also to those who have contributed to our parish charities and sent gifts and cards to the staff and me.

We all wish you a blessed, joyful, holy, happy, and merry Christmas and many blessings in the new year!

Fr. Vincent Hawkswell

News in and around the Parish

MASS INTENTIONS

DECEMBER 25 - 31, 2023

Monday, December 25

Christmas Day

8:30 am - *Sp. Int. of Ann and Laurens Binkin*

10:30 am - *Parishioners*

Tuesday, December 26

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Lorna Dalinghaus*

Wednesday, December 27

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Sole Barraza*

Thursday, December 28

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Fr. Craig Scott*

Friday, December 29

9:00 am - † *Anna Bek*

Saturday, December 30

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Tammy Chan*

4:30 pm - *Sp. Int. of Bishop Gary Franken and Family*

Sunday, December 31 (Holy Family)

8:30 am - *Sp. Int. of Tyler Yupangco*

10:30 am - *Parishioners*

New Year's Eve

4:30 pm - *Parishioners*

CENTENNIAL BOXING DAY SKATING PARTY

Everyone is invited to join us for our free annual skating party at the West Vancouver Ice Arena.

TIME: 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

DATE: Tuesday, December 26

Refreshments: Provided

Bring family members & friends!
All are welcome!



ARCHBISHOP MILLER'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

With particular concern this Christmas, we turn our gaze to the suffering Holy Land, to Bethlehem. There the Lord came into the world in a stable and was laid in a manger where animals feed on hay, since his parents could find no room in an inn.

Let us, then, look at the scene. Mary and Joseph do not seem to be a very fortunate family. Their Child was born in the midst of great hardship. Yet, they are full of profound joy, because they love each other and they are certain that God is at work in this astonishing birth.

And the shepherds? What did they have to rejoice about? That Newborn Infant wasn't going to change their condition of poverty and marginalization. It was their simple faith that helped them to recognize that the Child wrapped in swaddling clothes was the fulfilment of God's promised Saviour for all the people.

God came among us in silence and in the darkness of night. Why like this? Because the Word of God had no need of spotlights or loud human voices. He himself is the Word who gives life its meaning. He is the Light that brightens our path: "The true light, which enlightens everyone" (Jn 1:9). Christ's birth was the victory of the Light over the darkness of evil and sin.

At Christmas we celebrate that our mighty God truly became "Emmanuel," God-with-us. No barrier or any distance can separate us from him. God is so powerful that he made himself vulnerable and came to us as a defenseless child, so that we might love him. God is so good that he gave up the splendour of his divinity to be born in a stable, so that we might find him. In that Child Jesus, God became so close to us that we are able to speak to him personally and to enjoy a trusting relationship of deep affection with him.

To give a deeper meaning to Christmas, I urge every family to set up a Nativity scene in their home. It is a simple but effective way of passing on the beauty of the faith to your children. Let them experience amazement and wonder at Jesus' birth. The manger helps all of us to ponder in our hearts the mystery of God's love that was revealed in the poverty and simplicity of the Bethlehem stable.

Jesus comes to accompany our daily lives, to share with us in all things: our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears. Like the shepherds on that silent night, let us set out in haste and allow ourselves to be amazed by the Child lying in a manger who is waiting to welcome us.

With my blessing, prayers and warmest best wishes for a joyous celebration of Christmas, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,
+ Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB

ST. ANTHONY'S CAROLLING

St. Anthony's Choir invites you to join them for Christmas carol singing.

TIME: 9:30 - 10:00 pm

DATE: Christmas Eve
followed by
Christmas Eve Mass

BLESSING OF CHRIST CHILD FIGURES

Bring your Christ Child figure from your home Crèche to any Christmas Mass at St. Anthony's and they will be blessed.



News in and around the Parish

MASS INTENTIONS

JANUARY 1 - 7, 2024

Monday, January 1

New Year's Day

8:30 am - *Parishioners*

10:30am – *Parishioners*

Tuesday, January 2

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Kyan Alexandra Watson*

Wednesday, January 3

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Fr. Craig Scott*

Thursday, January 4

9:00 am - † *Gina Charles*

Friday, January 5

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Karen Balogh*

6:30 pm - *Sp. Int. of Leo and Jo Ann Cullen*

Saturday, January 6

9:00 am - *Sp. Int. of Ivy Wei*

4:30 pm - *Sp. Int. of Roxanne Tadeo*

Sunday, January 7

8:30 am - *Sp. Int. of Maggie Count*

10:30 am - *Parishioners*

CHRISTMAS EVE PAGEANT

DEC 24, 4:30 PM MASS

A reminder to the parents who would like their children (aged 4 to 15 years) to participate in this year's December 24th Children Christmas Mass and Pageant.

REHEARSAL TIME: 4:00 PM

DATE: DECEMBER 24, 2023

WHERE: CHURCH HALL

Your children should arrive in an angel or shepherd costume (no Church costumes are available) at the Hall promptly at 4:00 pm.

Parents will leave their children in our Pageant Committee's care and proceed to the Church, to choose a seat for your family. Please save a seat for your children, because they will come and sit with you just before Mass begins.

Merry Christmas from the Pageant Committee!



ST. ANTHONY'S PARISH LOGO CENTENNIAL CONTEST

Do you feel inspired to create a logo for our wonderful Parish? The chosen logo will be displayed as part of our new website, letterhead, envelopes, bulletins, and social media.

All designs and ideas welcome!

Prizes for first place and runner up.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

January 31, 2024

For more information and to submit your design, send an email to the Centennial Committee via: saintanthony.vvan@gmail.com

PROJECT ADVANCE

End-of-Year Call **2023**

To Empower our Community

SCAN or CLICK the QR-CODE to donate online



FIAT SNOWSHOE

Come spend quality time with the Religious Sisters of the Archdiocese and have fun outdoors.

TIME: Start with 9:00 am Mass

DATE: Saturday, January 6

MEETING PLACE:

St. Anthony's Parish, West Vancouver

After Mass, drive to Cypress Mountain to snowshoe up Black Mountain. The trail is a 5.3 km snowshoe loop with a beautiful view at the top.

All women aged 18-35 are welcome! There is no cost. Please pack a lunch and bring your snowshoes. If you need help getting snowshoes or a ride, please contact Sister Mary Martha at smmhetzler@rcav.org

Learn more and register at beholdvancouver.org/events

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Wednesday, January 3, 2024



COMMUNITY LUNCH

Join us on our next community lunch. Invite friends and neighbours along and join fellow parishioners for a delicious lunch.

TIME: 12:00 noon

DATE: Thursday, December 28

PLACE: Parish Hall

RSVP to the [parish office](#).



PARISH ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

SAT—DEC 23	6 pm	Christmas Carolling at Dundarave Beach
SUN—DEC 24	9:30 pm	Carol singing before Christmas Eve Mass
TUE—DEC 26	11:00 am to 1:00 pm	Boxing Day Skating Party at
THU—DEC 28	12:00 pm	Community Lunch
FRI—JAN 5	7:00 pm	Parish Holy Hour
MON — SAT	8:15 am — 8:30 am	MORNING PRAYERS
MON	10:00 AM	CATHOLIC FAITH IN PLAIN ENGLISH (RESUMES JAN 8, 2024)
TUE	7:00 PM	CHRISTIAN MEDITATION
WED	4:00 PM	MARIAN MOVEMENT CENACLE
WED	6:00 PM	PREP (RESUMES JAN 10, 2024)
THU	1:00 PM	CRAFT GROUP (RESUMES 2024)
THU	7:00 PM	ALPHA (RESUMES 2024)
THU	7:15 PM	RCIA (RESUMES JAN 11, 2024)
FRI	9:30 AM—4:00 PM	ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
FRI	3:00 PM	DIVINE MERCY

Alpha at St. Anthony's

Join us for Alpha at St. Anthony's for 12 weeks commencing:

TIME: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

DATE: February 22, 2024

Registration now open. Alpha provides a space to ask all your questions about life, faith, and meaning in a friendly environment. Each Alpha session includes a short video, time to connect over a meal, and plenty of time to discuss.

REGISTER ONLINE

SCAN or CLICK the QR code on the



CHRISTMAS REFLECTION

Wyatt Lafrenière is a six-year-old boy who lives in Quebec, Canada. Wyatt is autistic. Because of this, it is difficult for Wyatt to stay still, and he is hyper-sensitive to being touched. Even the simple task of getting a haircut is a next-to-impossible ordeal. So, Wyatt's mother was grateful to find Franz Jacob, a barber who caters to autistic clients. When Franz plans to give Wyatt a haircut, he schedules the appointment at the end of the day so that he has as much time as he needs. It often takes an hour and a half. He closes his shop because he knows that things must be quiet. He likes to start by playing a game with Wyatt or sharing some candy. Franz says, "If I can get him to smile, that builds trust, and things go much easier."

As the haircut begins Wyatt often starts wandering around the shop. Franz follows him, speaking softly and carrying his scissors. If Wyatt sits down on the floor, Franz gets down on his hands and knees and crawls over to the boy, ready to make a clip or two. If Wyatt lies down on his stomach with some toy, Franz will lie down next to him and wait patiently until he can reach over gently and catch a tuft of Wyatt's hair in his shears. "The secret to success," says Franz, "is for me to realize that Wyatt will not conform to me. I must conform to him. I need to follow him, adapting to his movements and his moods. That is the only way to give Wyatt a haircut."

Now the story of the barber and his client is an appropriate one for us today on Christmas. What we celebrate today is not simply the birth of a child, or even as the angels tell the shepherds "the gift of a savior." It is in fact the gift of a savior who chooses to be human like us. The great mystery that we celebrate today is the mystery of the incarnation, a mystery that tells us that our almighty God chose to take up human flesh and become like us in all things but sin. Like the barber in my story, God did not wait for us to adapt to God. God chose to adapt to us, to take up our frail human nature and to make it God's own.

The good news that comes from this profound mystery is that God knows every graced human experience personally. The importance of family, the joy of friends, and the beauty of living are aspects of life that God sees with human eyes. Worries about the future, doubts and indecision, the reality of pain are truths that God feels with a human heart. Hope for the future, the willingness to serve, and the desire to be loved are experiences that God understands with a human soul.

Most importantly the power of the incarnation is not limited to the day of Jesus' birth. What the incarnation reveals is the way that God deals with us always. So, as we gather together with family and friends over the next few days, we should remember that God gathers with us, joining in the memories, the stories, and the love that humans share. The birth of Jesus reveals that God is willing to adapt to us, to follow our movements and our moods through the twists and turns of our lives. The joy of the gospel does not flow from our efforts to conform to God, but from God's choice to conform to us.

Merry Christmas!