



St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

7237 Morrow Road, Agassiz, British Columbia V0M 1A3 (604) 796-9181

www.stanthonyagassiz.ca email: st.anthonys@shaw.ca; parish.sapa@rcav.org

We, the Catholic community of St. Anthony of Padua, relying on the wisdom and the grace of God, unite ourselves to the call for renewal and transformation of our spiritual, social and economic life.

December 19, 2021 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

Pastor: Fr. Dennis O. Flores

dflores@rcav.org

Deacon: Jamie Meskas

jamiemeskas@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant: Beccie Bokenfohr

st.anthonys@shaw.ca

(604) 796-9181

Sunday Mass Times: Saturday Mass of Anticipation (5 pm)

Sunday: 9 am and 11 am

Weekday Mass Times: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday,

Friday & Saturday – 9 am; Tuesday – 7 pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation: 20 minutes prior to Mass

Adoration of Blessed Sacrament: All Fridays 9:30 am until
Benediction at 12 noon

Confession: 20 minutes prior to Mass or by appointment

Mass Intentions: December 18 to 25, 2021

Novena & Rosary begins 30 minutes prior to Mass

Saturday	Dec 18	5 pm	+Myrtle & Howard MacDonald
Sunday	Dec 19	9 am	Frank & Lynda Van Scheyndel
		11 am	+Fr. DD MacDonald, OMI
	Dec 19	6 pm	+Edwin Opsima
Monday	Dec 20	6 pm	Fr. Leo Casey, OMI
Tuesday	Dec 21	6 pm	+Fr. Gerry Guillet, OMI
Wednesday	Dec 22	6 pm	+Fr. Louis VanDane
Thursday	Dec 23	6 pm	+Fr. Art Vandendriessche
Friday	Dec 24	3 pm	Adoration/Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Holy Hour Benediction at 4 pm
Friday	Dec 24	7 pm	+Nancy Martin
Friday		11 pm	+Elizabeth Ryan
Saturday	Dec 25	10 am	Frank & Lynda Van Scheyndel +Honorata Flores
Saturday	Dec 25	5 pm	Manna Sacred Mills Thanksgiving

Last Sunday Collections

Loose Collection	\$283.10
Envelope	\$1787.10
Other	\$20
Total	\$2270.20

Please pray for those who are ill or housebound in our

Parish family: Cheryl Yaretz, Lyn Milburn, Ralph and Jeanette Watson, Janet Quinn, Paul Van Scheyndel, Joan Vowles, Stella Hildebrandt, Adriana Striker, Dan McIntyre, Cecilio Sanchez, Leo Wenk, Ellen Thompson

Please pray for the most recently deceased:

Stewardship Reflection

December 19, 2021 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

“For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy.”
(Luke 1:44)

When you hear the scripture readings and Gospel reading at Mass, do you “leap for joy?” If not, don’t blame the lecturer or priest, rather look inside yourself. What are you doing to grow in friendship with Jesus? How do you prepare for Mass each week? Or, do you just show up and expect to be entertained? As the Body of Christ, we are called to be active participants, not just passive observers.

COVID – 19 MASK MANDATE

Thank you for continuing to wear masks during Mass and in the church. This is a public health order you are asked to please adhere to this order by wearing a mask throughout Mass, only to remove when you are receiving the Eucharist.

Thank you for your cooperation and respect of this mandate. Hopefully, we will be able to keep our churches open and fully accessible throughout Christmas by doing our part. Let’s stay safe, and continue to be kind to one another



Would you like to place a poinsettia in the Christmas Altar Display this year in honor of your family or other loved one(s)? You may drop off your donation and the name(s) clearly marked on an envelope, whom you would like honored. either at the Parish Office or simply drop it into the Offering Basket.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness.

Attention CWL members!
Your annual fees of \$30 are due now.
Please submit as soon as possible.



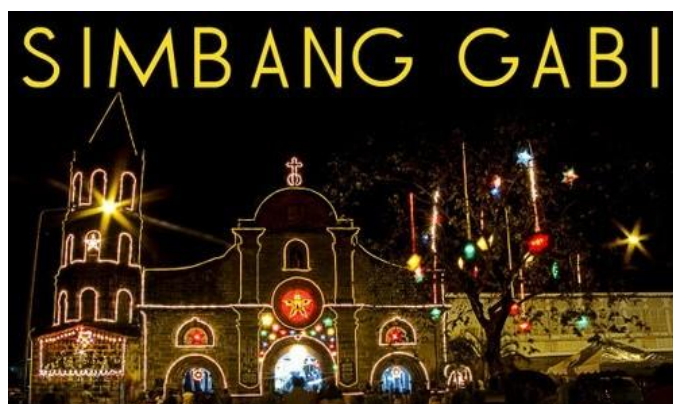
Christmas Mass Schedule

December 24th: 7 pm and 11 pm
Refreshments served after 11 pm

December 25th: 10 am

December 25th: Mass of Anticipation 5 pm

December 26th: 9 am and 11 am



“Simbang Gabi” is a tradition unlike any other. A Christmas Marian Novena of Masses, “Simbang Gabi” is a nine-day devotion that honours the Annunciation, the expectation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and culminating in the birth of Jesus. Centered on the Eucharist, it is a combination of deep prayer, community spirit, reconciliation, hope, love, and the grateful recognition of our redemption. We invite all faithful to celebrate this Promise of Salvation, by attending the Nine-Day Novena Masses (“Simbang Gabi”).

Simbang Gabi Novena and Masses begin on December 15th, continuing until December 23rd.

During that time the Mass Schedule is:

Date	Day	Rosary	Mass
Dec 18	Saturday	4:30 pm	5 pm
Dec 19	Sunday	8:30 am	9 am
	Sunday		11 am
Dec 19	Sunday	5:30 pm	6 pm
Dec 20	Monday	5:30 pm	6 pm
Dec 21	Tuesday	5:30 pm	6 pm
Dec 22	Wednesday	5:30 pm	6 pm
Dec 23	Thursday	5:30 pm	6 pm

A special note of thanks to everyone who has provided food for the snacks after each Mass during Simbang Gabi.

Thank you especially to Metro Huculak, Eme Wenk, Alisha Miller & Laurie Martin who have been out to set up and clean up each night!
YOU'RE THE BEST!!!!

Advent Confession Schedule

Saturday, Dec. 18, 9:30 am - 12 pm

And by appointment

Archbishop's Mass for Life

Join us as we celebrate life on Tuesday, Dec. 28, at Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver. Rosary begins at 11:30 a.m. and Mass is at 12:10 p.m. *"May we defend it and promote it from conception to its natural end."* Tuesday, December 28 at 12:10 p.m. Learn more at beholdvancouver.org/events.

Advent Calendar Contest for Kindergarten to Grade 7

The Archdiocese of Vancouver is holding an Advent challenge and contest for children in Kindergarten through Grade 7. For each day of Advent, children and families are invited to read a short scripture verse as written on the calendar and complete the task for each day. Mark each day's task and verse as complete by colouring in the blue star on that day. To enter the contest, have a parent/guardian send a picture of the child along with the child's name, grade, and school/parish to christmas2021@rcav.org no later than noon on January 4, 2022.

Year of the Family

On March 19, the church celebrates five years since the publication of the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* on the beauty and joy of love in the family. Pope Francis announced that a special year dedicated to the family will launch on the same day, which will conclude on June 26, 2022 on the occasion of the 10th World Meeting of Families in Rome with the Holy Father. "This special Year will be an opportunity to deepen further the content of the document *Amoris laetitia*, through proposals and pastoral tools. These will be made available to ecclesial communities and families, to accompany them on their journey." Learn more and view resources at rcav.org/year-of-the-family.

A gentle reminder from Pope Francis



This life will go by fast.

Don't fight with people, don't criticize your body so much, don't complain so much.

Don't lose sleep over your bills. Look for the person that makes you happy. If you make a mistake, let it go and keep seeking your happiness.

Never stop being a good parent. Don't worry so much about buying luxuries and comforts for your home, and don't kill yourself trying to leave an inheritance for your family. Those benefits should be earned by each person, so don't dedicate yourself to accumulating money.

Enjoy travel, enjoy your journeys, see new places, give yourself the pleasures you deserve. Allow dogs to get closer. Don't put away the fine glassware. Utilize the new dinnerware; don't save your favorite perfume, use it to go out with yourself; wear out your favorite sport shoes; repeat your favorite clothes.

So what? That's not bad. Why not now? Why not pray now instead of waiting until before you sleep? Why not call now? Why not forgive now? We wait so long for Christmas; for Friday; for Reunions; for another year; for when I have money; for love to come; when everything is perfect....look...

Everything perfect doesn't exist. Human beings can't accomplish this because it simply was not intended to be completed here. Here is an opportunity to learn.

So take this challenge that is life and do it now....love more, forgive more, embrace more, love more intensely and leave the rest in God's hands.

St. Anthony's Thrift Store will be closed from

December 21 to January 5, 2022.

Many, many thanks to our committed volunteers who have given so tirelessly again to make this venture so successful! Merry Christmas!

Amen

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Thank you to everyone who has been decorating our church for Christmas!

To Fr. Dennis and his crew – Tad Seymour, Marc Orr, Metro Huculak, and Harvey Andrew

To Urs Spaeti for the beautiful new barn for our outdoor Nativity Scene



We'd like to welcome **Mary France Go** who was baptized in our parish this weekend. Welcome to our faith family!
Congratulations to her parents Apple and John Go!



On this Fourth and final Sunday of Advent, the Gospel proposes to us once again the account of the Annunciation. *"Rejoice"* says the angel to Mary, *"you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus"* (Lk 1:28, 31). It seems to be an announcement of pure joy, destined to make the Virgin happy. Among the women of that time, which woman did not dream of becoming the mother of the Messiah? But along with joy, those words foretell a great trial to Mary. Why? Because in that moment she was *"betrothed"* (v. 27); she was unmarried. She was betrothed to Joseph. In such a situation, the Law of Moses stipulated there should be no relations or cohabitation. Therefore, in having a son, Mary would have transgressed the Law, and the punishment for women was terrible: stoning (see Dt 22:20-21). Certainly the divine message would have filled Mary's heart with light and strength; nevertheless, she found herself faced with a crucial decision: to say "yes" to God, risking everything, even her life, or to decline the invitation and to continue her ordinary life.

What does she do? She responds thus: *"Let it be to me according to your word"* (Lk 1:38). But in the language in which the Gospel is written, it is not simply "let it be". The expression indicates a strong desire, it indicates the will that something happen. In other words, Mary does not say: "If it has to happen, let it happen..., if it cannot be otherwise...". It is not resignation. No, she does not express a weak and submissive acceptance, but rather she expresses a strong desire, a vivacious desire. She is not passive, but active. She does not submit to God, she binds herself to God. She is a woman in love prepared to serve her Lord completely and immediately. She could have asked for a little time to think about it, or even for more explanations about what would happen; perhaps she could have set some conditions... Instead, she does not take time, she does not keep God waiting, she does not delay.

How often – let us think of ourselves now – how often is our life is made up of postponements, even the spiritual life! For example, I know it is good for me to pray, but today I do not have time... tomorrow... by saying "tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow", we postpone things: I will do it tomorrow. I know it is important to help someone, yes, I must do it: I will do it tomorrow. Today, on the threshold of Christmas, Mary invites us not to postpone, but to say "yes". "Must I pray!" "Yes, I will seek and pray". "Must I help others? Yes". How shall I do it? And I do it. Without putting it off. Every "yes" costs something, every "yes" has its cost, but it always costs less than what that courageous and prompt "yes" cost her, that *"let it be to me according to your word"*, which brought us salvation.

What, then is the "yes" we can say? Instead of complaining in these difficult times about what the pandemic prevents us from doing, let us do something for someone who has less: not the umpteenth gift for ourselves and our friends, but for a person in need whom no-one thinks of! And another piece of advice: in order for Jesus to be born in us, let us prepare our hearts, let us go to pray, let us not let ourselves be swept up by consumerism. "Ah, I have to buy presents, I must do this and that". That frenzy of doing things, more and more. It is Jesus that is important. Consumerism is not found in the manger in Bethlehem: there is reality, poverty, love. Let us prepare our hearts to be like Mary's: free from evil, welcoming, ready to receive God.

"Let it be to me according to your word". This is the Virgin's last word for this last Sunday of Advent, and it is the invitation to take a genuine step towards Christmas. For if the birth of Jesus does not touch our lives – mine, yours, yours, ours, everyone's – if it does not touch our lives, it slips past us in vain. In the *Angelus* now, we too will say *"let your word be fulfilled in me"*: May Our Lady help us to say it with our lives, with our approach to these last days in which to prepare ourselves well for Christmas.

- Pope Francis' Reflection on the Fourth Sunday of Advent 2020