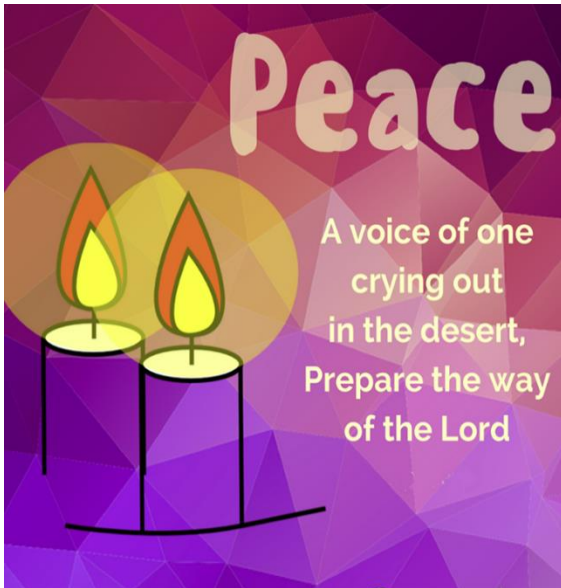




St. Martha's Parish

Second Sunday of Advent - December 10th 2023

Gospel Reflection - Mark 1:1-8



The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. Starting from what can we begin to live and plan again? From this good news. Never start again from pessimism, from problems, from the illusory primacy of a cruel reality that seems to dominate in the world. Starting over from bad news is only apparent intelligence, devoid of gospel wisdom. Starting again from God's good news: and immediately, from the first words, Mark shows how to recognize and welcome it. The whole experience of the spiritual man is summed up in these few verses. The first step leads to Isaiah and John and could be defined as follows: looking for prophets. Like Isaiah, a prophet is one who "opens paths" even in the desert, traces of hope even where it seemed impossible. The prophets, path openers and free men: to listen to them is to become like them. The second characteristic of every prophet is to be waiting, dissatisfied with what he has. Isaiah and John announce an Other (a more powerful one comes), have their center elsewhere: in a desire, a horizon, a person.

They announce that life is not static but ecstatic, coming out of oneself, living on the move. Like a prophet, every spiritual man is constantly on a journey, looking for what he does not yet have, his home is beyond: then he is ready for births and beginnings. Thirdly, a prophet is he who re-orientates life: John preached a baptism of conversion for the forgiveness of sins. Sin is the experience of those who cannot reach their goal and have lost their way. Forgiveness is God who once again indicates the point of arrival and sets off again, the caravan that sets off again at dawn, the wind for the ship that sets sail. Forgiveness is a new beginning, a new sea, a new day. The forgiven sin no longer exists, annulled, erased, eliminated. And it is good that revokes evil. Good is worth more: good news of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is God coming bringing love, and all that is non-love is non-God.

Etiquette at Holy Mass

Remember that good Christian behavior should be exhibited on the road to Church and its parking lots as well! Patience is a virtue – yes, even when it's related to safety!

- Chewing gum does break the Eucharistic fast! Please, please, no gum, food or drink in the Church! Babies' necessities are excepted. God will provide all that you need at Mass.
- One last thing before you come in: check that cellular phone! Is it off or on vibrate mode?

Contact Information

403-381-8891 • office@stmarthasparish.ca

Pastor: Fr. William Monis

Office closed on 25, 26 December and 1 January

To rent the Knights of Columbus Hall contact Marcus Lynch-Staunton (403) 359-4457

Mass, Confession, Prayer

Mass Times: Mon, Wed-Fri 9am Tue. 7pm
Sat. 5pm Sun. 9am & 11am

Reconciliation: Sat. 4pm or by appointment

Adoration: Fri. 10am-8pm following Mass – schedule permitting
Rosary: 30min before Mass - **Divine Mercy Chaplet:** Fridays 3pm
Divine Office: Morning prayers after weekday morning Masses

Please pray for the sick in our parish:

Fr. Andrew Pyon, Theresa Vanden Dungen, Vera Schwartzkoff, Pauline Chabot, Ben Stroeve, Joe Gatner, Anthony Johnston, Riley Svoboda, Devassy Palissery, Helen Smith, Kathleen Roth, August Schulze-Ebbinghoff, Ernest Geisler, Veronica Eagle Bear, Teresa Andron, Roz Walderman, Lou Karpick, Ellsworth Braun, Ellis Watson, Adeline Sherman, Linda Westgeest, Peter Danielson, Raymond Sander, Pauline Chabot, Most. Rev. Gerard Pettipas, Bernie Yaretz, Theresa Blackwater, Viola Mogus, Robert Dubois.

Enlarge the Tent – Art of Accompaniment

“Removing our Sandals before the Sacred Ground of the Other” with Fr. Tim Boyle. Each gathering will begin at 10:15. We will celebrate Eucharist at 11:15. **Monday January 22:** “*Zacchaeus... the first of many seekers... and why they don’t want to join*”

Mothers’ Rosary Group

The Mothers’ Rosary group will be meeting weekly downstairs at St. Martha’s for prayer and fellowship, **every Wednesday from 9:30-11:30**. Babysitting is provided. Please join us! We are looking for babysitters. If anyone is interested in this paid position, please contact the office.

Pax Christi

Please join us for the Latin Rosary in the Chapel at **6:30pm on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month – suspended for this month**. Everyone is welcome. For more information please contact Chris Robinson at 403-393-0400 or by email at rosariumlatinum@outlook.com.

Abiding Together Podcast group

Abiding Together Podcast group for adult women is **Thursdays from 6:30pm - 8:00pm** in the gathering space at St. Martha’s. - **No meeting on December 14, because of the penitential service**. Bring your bibles and a notebook. More info here: <http://www.abidingtogetherpodcast.com/> or email Shanice scharchun@gmail.com

Soap for Hope Canada

If you have extra soap/toothpaste/shampoo or any hygiene items you’d like to donate to those in need, you can drop them off in the box by the church’s door.

Grocery Cards Program

Support our Parish! It is a KofC & CWL Fundraiser. Purchase your Grocery Cards in our gathering space after all weekend Masses: the value of the card is the same as when you buy it at the store, but our parish gets a 4% or 10% profit by the program.

St Vincent de Paul looking for furniture.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul has received requests for basic **household furniture and other items for kitchen, living room and bedroom**. For more information or for pick-up of items, please leave a message at 403-328-5493. Phone lines are open Mondays @ 9:00 am to Thursdays @ 5:00 pm..

Hobby Prayer group & KofC outreach program

The Hobby Prayer group, which **meets on Mondays from 1:30 to 3:30pm** at STM, is teaming up with our KofC to support the less fortunate; we’ll be knitting/crocheting scarves, toques, blankets, mittens, while KofC will be going out in our community to help those in need. There is a **box in the gathering space** labeled “**KofC outreach**” for anyone who wishes to help by donating any of those items and/or leftover yarns that can be used in this new undertaking. THANK YOU!

Mass intentions

Mon 11 Dec	9:00 am	Bernard Mc Cabe +
Tue 12 Dec	7:00 pm	Michael Cormican +
Wed 13 Dec	9:00 am	Alojz Straga +
Thu 14 Dec	9:00 am	Ana Pal +
Fri 15 Dec	9:00 am	deceased of Ponjavic/Bebek families
Sat 16 Dec	5:00 pm	Fernand Nadeau +
Sun 17 Dec	9:00 am	Alojz Straga +

Donation envelopes

This is the last weekend that donation envelopes for 2024 can be picked up from the gathering space. If you wish to sign up for Pre-Authorized Giving Plan please contact Moncy: finance@stmarthasparish.ca **For those who already have PAD, a box of special donations envelopes is available at the parish office.**

Thank you from CWL

We would like to thank everyone who donated & supported the St Martha’s CWL Annual Bake/Craft Sale & Silent Auction which was held after each mass on November 25th & 26th. We are pleased to announce that a total of \$986.50 was raised by this event and the proceeds will be used as part of our annual contribution to the Youth Ministry at St Martha’s Parish. Thank you again & God bless, on behalf of St. Martha’s CWL Council

CWL annual Christmas party

St. Martha’s CWL & KofC invites You to our Annual Christmas Potluck on Tuesday, **December 12** | Cocktails: 5:30pm, Dinner: 6:30pm | Knights of Columbus Hall (Downstairs). Free Admission with potluck dish to Share & Your Gift of Sharing with a maximum value of \$15.00|Join Us for some Fun, Fellowship, Music & Door Prizes

Hosts for the NET team

A NET Team of 6 missionaries is staying until May. We need families to host the team (2 team members for 2 weeks). If this is something that you are willing to do, please contact Heather: 403-380-4871 or email lethbridgeNEThousing@gmail.com

Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary meets every **Saturday, at 10:00 am**, in the library of St. Martha’s Church. All are welcome!

Bereavement Group

Bereavement Group will meet on **Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1pm to 3pm**. Coffee/snacks, speakers, videos are part of the program. For more info, or to register for the upcoming meeting, contact the office, 403-381-8891 or ruth.mcmillan55@gmail.com

Called to serve!

Our parish needs people of good will to volunteer in any of the Ministry you are called to serve: **Lectors, Singers/Players for the choir, Sacristans, Hospitality team members and Eucharistic Ministers** for our Sunday Masses.

Plenary indulgence by praying before a Nativity scene

Catholics will be able to receive a plenary indulgence from Dec. 8 to Feb. 2, 2024, by praying before a Nativity scene in a Franciscan church; more info: <https://tinyurl.com/mpzh88k6>

Events at Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre

To register call 403-932-2012 or write to mtfrancis@shaw.ca
Christmas at Greccio, Christmas at The Mount St. Francis Christmas Pageant, Sunday, **December 10**, 2:30 pm – 5:00 pm; Sleigh Rides (weather permitting), Hot Chocolate and Snacks, Pageant at 3:45 pm -This is an outdoor pageant, please dress for weather. Accepting donations for Cochrane Food Bank. No registration - Open House

Mixed Retreat, Friday to Sunday, **January 5 - January 7**, 2024

Young Adults (ages 20 to 40)

Maritza Chouza, 778-533-1736, maritzachouza@gmail.com

Men's Retreat, Friday to Sunday, **January 12 - January 14**, 2024

Paul Valentine C.403-862-4206 paul@valentinevolvo.com & Bill Locke 403-874-1814 billilocke@gmail.com

Mental Health Learning Sessions by Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

Every session will take place in-person at the **Sandman Signature Hotel** in Lethbridge, **Essie's Ballroom** |Online sessions will be available on Google Meet. Doors open at 5:00pm, dinner served at 5:30. Presentation will start at 6pm and go to 7:30pm |RSVP by email: wilistone@holyspiritab.ca

Jan 16: *Resiliency and Self-Care* -Ft. Lethbridge Family Services

Feb 15: *Healthy Relationships* -Ft Lethbridge Family Services

Mar 20: *ADHD - Understanding the Diagnosis and Treatment Strategies* -Ft. Aleigha from True Balance Counselling

Apr 18: *Emotional Regulation - How to help our kids when they have big feelings* -Ft Allic and Bailey from True Balance Counselling

May 14: *Digital Detox* - Ft Lethbridge Family Services

Advent Mission at St. Ambrose

All are welcome! 3 members of the Seeds of the Word community will join us to speak on our Diocesan Renewal theme "You are Called. You Matter. You Belong"

Sunday, Dec. 10, 7—8 pm: presentation by Seeds of the Word.

Monday, Dec. 11: Mass at 7 pm then presentation by Seeds of the Word. Coffee to follow.

Tuesday, Dec. 12: Mass at 7 pm then presentation by Seeds of the Word. Coffee to follow.

L'Arche looking for committee & board members

The L'Arche Lethbridge community consists of 3 homes and 12 "core members". We are part of an international community that believes in people with and without intellectual disabilities sharing life in communities; learn more here: www.larchelethbridge.org
Current opportunities: Fundraising Committee, Public Relations Committee, Board of Directors. Connect with Tim Wiebe, Community Leader: twiebe@larchelethbridge.org

1 bedroom basement suite for rent wanted

A single young working woman is looking for a place to call home at an affordable price. Pls contact the parish office if you can help.

Advent Penitential Service

Wednesday, Dec. 13, 7pm at St. Peter, Milk River

Thursday, Dec 14, 7 pm. at St. Martha

Saturday, Dec. 16, 10:00am, All Saints at Assumption

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division Christmas Events

St. Patrick Fine Arts Elementary School: Christmas Concert, Wednesday, December 13, Southminster Church (6:30 pm concert – call school for tickets)

Father Leonard Van Tighem School: Christmas Family Fair Wednesday, December 20, at 6:00 pm

Meaningful gifts

Lisza Bruder is selling really good quality beeswax Advent candles. She was a very active member of St Martha's and All Saints before needing to stay home due to chronic illnesses. Her website has many handmade items from candles to rosaries to greeting cards: <https://tinyurl.com/262jeuz6>

Hand made rosaries

Give a call to BERNIE; he also sells other religious items; 403 942 7413

Christmas cards

If you have Christian themed Christmas cards you'd like to donate to inmates thru the Prison Ministry, please drop them off at the parish office.

Sacraments

Baptism Infant baptism is celebrated following the completion of our parish baptism preparation program. New and expectant parents are invited to contact Zachary Hampton, our Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

First Holy Communion, Confirmation: To register; fill out registration form on our [website](#). Contact Zachary Hampton, Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults): RCIA started on Tuesday, October 10, following the 7 PM Mass. If you are interested in becoming Catholic or know anyone who is, please register on the parish website as soon as possible. For more information, call the office or email: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

Marriages/Marriage Preparation: Couples registered within the parish are required to make arrangements at least **six months prior, no exception**, to the date of marriage by calling the office to schedule interviews with Fr. William and completing the marriage preparation program. Couples complete the marriage preparation course AFTER their first interview with a cleric. Calgary diocese marriage preparation courses: catholicyc.ca/marriage_prep. There are also classes available at All Saints Parish, Lethbridge.

Anointing of the Sick If you have a relative who has been admitted to hospital please call the parish office.

Our parish relies on your Sunday offerings for maintenance and growth. By making your pre-authorized offertory gift, you are providing crucial support to care for your parish.

Contact our parish office to set up a direct debit deposit.

Please prayerfully discern where you are called to serve Our Lord at St. Martha's.

Maranatha

If the season of Advent, which the Church now celebrates, were to have a sound-track, the reading we just heard would be the refrain: *"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."* We prepare. Christ was born away in a manger well on 2,000 years ago . . . too late to prepare for that. Christ will come again in glory at the end of time . . . there's time to prepare for that, but it may be hard to keep on task. Christ is born in the heart of each and every man and woman, who bears his name – who dares to answer to the name "Christian" . . . now that is something we can prepare for! "Preparing the way of the Lord," means preparing ourselves for the birth of the Savior, who takes flesh in us, when we allow Christ's Spirit to form us, to breathe into us, to make us over into the image of Jesus. Christ is reborn in every Christian – in everyone, who can put away their old lives of living for themselves and put on the new life of living in Christ for others.

The season of Advent is a vigil. The word "vigil" means to keep watch during normal sleeping hours, to pay attention when others are sleeping. It comes from a very old Indo-European word "weg," which means "be lively or active." So to keep vigil or to be vigilant does not mean passive waiting but active, restless waiting, expectant waiting for the Lord. It means paying attention to what is going on in the world around us, and not being asleep. It means acting, living out our mission to be God's agents in the world.

The Advent tradition of the Church is vigil and prayer.

There are two places in the New Testament — 1 Corinthians and Revelation — where we find a prayer in the Aramaic language, the Semitic dialect spoken by Jesus. Since this prayer is in Aramaic it must come from the very earliest days of the Church. The prayer is "Marana tha" and means "Lord, come!" St. Augustine tells us that God is indebted to us, not because of anything we have done, but because of His promises. God always keeps His promises. So we call on Him to come again.

Our Advent prayer is "Lord, come!"

Lord, come — into our world!

Lord, come — into our lives!

Lord, come — and purify our longings!

Lord, come — to free us from our compulsions and sins!

Lord, come — into our relationships!

Lord, come — into our work!

Lord, come — into our sufferings!

And into the darkness of our troubled world.

We speak these words — "Marana tha" — with a real and confident urgency, not only for ourselves and our personal lives, but also for our Church and our nation.

Advent events in our parish

St. Martha's Advent retreat: on Wednesday, **December 20** and Thursday, **December 21 at 7 pm**. Adoration will follow.

Simbang Gabi Filipino Novena Mass on Sunday, **December 17** and **Monday, December 18 at 7 pm**. Social will follow.

St. Martha's Giving Tree: our giving tree in the gathering space is decorated with gift tags. Please pick up a gift tag (or more!) from the tree. Each gift tag lists an item on the Christmas wish-list at the food bank. Purchase that item and return it with your gift tag under the tree.

Donations are accepted **till December 12**.

SFXC Christmas outreach program: St. Francis Xavier Chaplaincy is collecting non-perishable food to stock up the University pantry. A list of what is needed is by the box at the entrance of the church, where you can drop off your donation. The program runs until **7 January**.



Celebrating Christmas

at
St. Martha's
parish

Christmas Eve - December 24

Sunday Mass at 10:00 am

Vigil mass at 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm,
10:00 pm

Christmas Day - December 25

Christmas Mass at 10:00 am

All are welcome to join us in
celebrating the Lord's Resurrection
every Saturday at **5:00 pm**
Sunday at **9:00 am**
and **11:00 am**

New Year's Eve - December 31

Sunday Mass at 9:00 am and 11:00 am

Adoration at 5:30 pm, Mass at 6:00 pm

New Year's Day - January 1

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Mass at 10:00 am

