

# Saint Edith Stein Roman Catholic Church

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**Rev. Constantin Siarapis**

Administrator



## ADVENT

Advent has a twofold nature: It prepares us for Christmas, when we recall Christ's first coming among us, and it is also a time when we look forward to His second coming at the end of the ages. Advent is a season of joyful expectation.

During Advent, each Sunday's gospel has a specific focus. The Old Testament readings, especially those taken from Isaiah, are prophecies about the Messiah and messianic times. The selections from the writings of the apostles present exhortations and instructions on different themes of this season.

## BE VIGILANT IN ANTICIPATION OF THE MASTER'S RETURN

The season of Advent calls us to be vigilant in anticipation of the Master's return so that we live each day according to the teachings of Christ. Could God's "particular task" for you be a call to a Church vocation?

If God is calling you to the priesthood, diaconate or consecrated life, contact

**Fr. Matt McCarthy,**

Vocation Director, Archdiocese of Toronto at 416-968-0997.

Email: [vocations@archtoronto.org](mailto:vocations@archtoronto.org)  
[www.vocationstoronto.ca](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca)

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**  
**SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**  
**SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE**

- all by appointment only

**SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK AND HOLY COMMUNION**

Have your health care team page a Catholic priest if you have a family member in hospital needing anointing of the sick.

Communion to those homebound is suspended at this time.

**For information on Catholic education in our community or to reach your local school board trustee, contact the Toronto Catholic District School Board at 416-222-8282 or [www.tcdsb.org](http://www.tcdsb.org).**

**Schools in the area:**

<b>St. Anselm</b>	<b>416-393-5243</b>
<b>Holy Cross</b>	<b>416-393-5242</b>
<b>Canadian Martyrs</b>	<b>416-393-5251</b>
<b>St. John XXIII</b>	<b>416-429-4000</b>



The Advent Wreath

The **four candles** represent the four weeks of Advent. The **unlighted candles** represent the dark ages before Christ's coming. The **lighted candles** represent Christ, the Light of the World. Each week we light one more candle and that represents the idea that the coming of Christ is closer.

## The Challenge of Advent

Advent places before us three challenges: **watch, wait, pray**. The readings of this first Sunday of the new liturgical year underline them. "Stay awake", counsels Jesus in today's gospel (Mk.13:33-37), "Come quickly", prays Prophet Isaiah in the 1st reading (Is. 63:16b-17, 64:1,3-8). "You lack no spiritual gift as you wait", Paul reminds us in the second reading (1Cor 1:3-9).

**To affirm the importance of our responsibilities of watching, waiting and praying, the following story from the ancient sagas of the Cherokee people may prove helpful.**

*When the plants and trees were first created, the Great Mystery gave a gift to each species, but set up a contest to determine which gift would be most useful to whom. "I want you to stay awake and keep watch over the earth for seven nights", said the Great Mystery. The young trees and plants were so excited to be entrusted with such an important role that they did not find it difficult to stay awake the first night. However, the second night was not so easy and a little while before dawn, a few fell asleep. On the third night, the trees and plants*

*whispered among themselves in the wind to try to keep from nodding off, but the challenge was too much for them. On the fourth night, even more fell asleep.*

**By the time the seventh night came, only the cedar, the pine, the spruce, the fir, the laurel and the holly were still awake. "What wonderful endurance you have", exclaimed the Great Mystery. "You shall be given the gift of remaining green forever.** You will be the guardians of the forest. Even in the seeming dead of winter, your brother and sister creatures will find life and shelter in the protection of your branches". Ever since that time, all the other trees and plants lose their leaves and sleep all winter while the evergreens stay awake.

This tale departs from the usual and customary Advent symbols of light and darkness to speak of greenness in the midst of barrenness and associates this greenness with the ability to remain watchful, alert and awake. Remaining green means remaining aware of our life-giving connection to divine realities even amidst evil forces.

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### POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

We pray with Pope Francis that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of society's attention, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their participation.

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