

# Saint Edith Stein Roman Catholic Church

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**Rev. Constantin Siarapis**

Administrator



## 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 **circular form** of the wreath symbolizes that God has no beginning and no end.

The **green of the boughs** indicates hope--just as the green of spring indicates new life.

The word **Advent** means the coming of promise.

## ON STEWARDSHIP...

John the Baptist's call to repentance is echoed in the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship: "Christians must beg God for the grace of conversion: the grace to know who they are, to whom they belong, how they are to live — the grace to repent and change and grow, the grace to become good disciples and stewards."

### 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>



## Prepare the Way of the Lord

Most Catholics rarely open their family Bible. And even fewer Catholics study what it really means. It is with this perspective that this week's scripture reflection is given.

The readings for the second Sunday of Advent have a very different tone and message from the readings for the first Sunday of advent. *Last week Isaiah offered harsh words bemoaning the human condition. This week Isaiah offers words of comfort, Israel's "guilt is expiated".* And Isaiah offers words of assurance, God no longer hides his face, "Here is your God!" Last week Jesus warned his disciples to be watchful for an hour unknown. This week the watching is over: God's messenger has arrived announcing the coming of ' the mighty one'.

In the days of Second Isaiah, the Israelites were well into a second generation of exile in Babylon. Suddenly God announces through his prophet the time of Israel's exile was coming to an end. *"Comfort, give comfort to my people --- Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated."* These were no doubt words of unimaginable joy for a people who had long since lost hope in the God of Israel rescuing them from captivity in Babylon as he once had done in releasing Israel from slavery in Egypt.

The Gospel reading for this second Sunday of Advent is taken from the opening words of the Gospel of Mark. *Mark begins with linking the words and activities of John the Baptist with two of Israel's*

*greatest prophets, Second Isaiah and Elijah.* The original audience of Mark's Gospel would have easily seen this literary illusion. Mark's physical description of John recalls the historical Elijah (see 2 Kings 1:18). And Mark's quotation of Second Isaiah (see Isaiah 40:3) links the words and prophecies of John to the historic event of God releasing Israel from captivity in Babylon.

We see in the opening words of Mark's Gospel a theologian at work. By connecting the figure of Elijah and the words of second Isaiah to the activities of John the Baptist, Mark has recontextualized Israel's sacred scriptures. Elijah was one of God's greatest messengers. And Second Isaiah spoke of ' making straight the path', from Babylon back to Jerusalem, a journey that God Himself would guide for exiled Israel back to her Promised Land. *Mark is telling his audience that once again God is present leading and guiding his people through this new "messenger", John the Baptist.*

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### ON VOCATIONS...

John the Baptist is sent by God to prepare the way for His Son. In our present time God sends priests, religious and deacons to prepare the people to receive His Son. If you think God is calling you to a Church vocation, call

**Fr. Matt McCarthy**  
**Vocation Director,**

**Archdiocese of Toronto**  
**416-968-0997**

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