



## THE SFSC MESSENGER

**St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi Parish**

*We are a welcoming community of Jesus' disciples who journey together in right Faith, certain Hope, and live out His Love in Word and Deed*

**January 07, 2024**

### **Weekend Mass Schedule**

**Saturday 4:00pm**  
St Stephen

**Sunday 9:30am**  
St Stephen

**Sunday 9:30am**  
St Patrick

**Sunday 11:00am**  
St Catherine of Siena

**Sunday 1:00pm**  
St Catherine of Siena  
(Polish - English Mass)

**Sunday, 7:00pm**  
St Catherine of Siena

### **Live-Stream Mass:**

**Sunday January 7**  
9:30am Mass  
St Stephen

### **Weekday Mass Schedule**

Tuesday—Friday 7:00am  
Tuesday—12:00pm  
Saturday—9:00am  
St Catherine of Siena Church

Friday—9:00am  
St Stephen Church

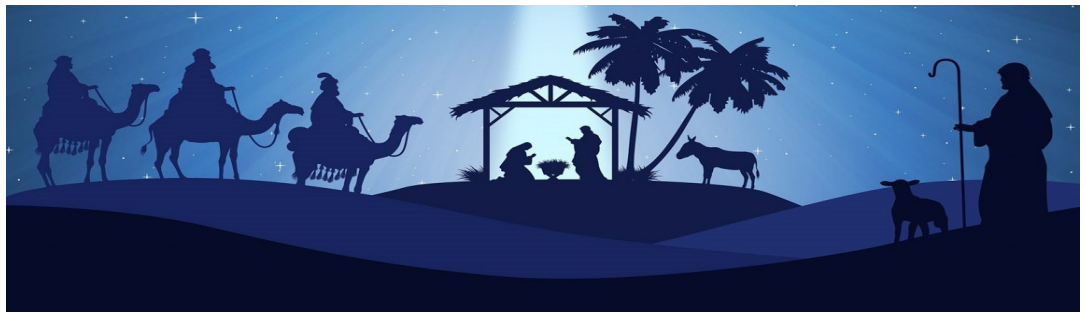
### **CONFESSION TIMES:**

First Wednesday of the month  
7pm (includes a Holy Hour)  
St Stephen Church

Thursday 7 & 21 December  
7:30pm (**not Dec 14th**).  
(includes a Holy Hour)  
Saturdays 9:30am  
St. Catherine of Siena Church

### **Epiphany of the Lord**

**“Behold the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.”**



Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany! This feast has perhaps lost some of its prominence because we celebrate Christmas in such a big way that by the beginning of January, we feel ready to “get back to normal”. However, as Catholics, we do not simply recall one aspect of the life of Christ (such as his birth) but we acknowledge and meditate on his whole life. This is the reason Epiphany is so important! This feast, in some cultures, is the day that gifts are exchanged (instead of Christmas) because it more closely connects the gifts brought by the magi. The gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh are symbols: gold for the kingship of Christ, frankincense for the divinity of Christ and myrrh for the death and resurrection of Christ. This feast celebrates Jesus revelation to the world and the reality that he came to save all people.

To commemorate the visit of the magi (or wisemen as they are often referred to) some families inscribe (using blessed chalk) the first part of the year, followed by the letters, “C+M+B+” and then the last numbers of the year on top of every door in the house. The letters stand for the names traditionally given to the wise men – Casper, Melchior and Balthazar – as well as for the Latin phrase “Christus mansionem benedicat,” or, “Christ, bless this house.” So, it looks like this:  
20+C+M+B+24

Epiphany which is followed by the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord marks the end of the Christmas season and we return to Ordinary Time in the liturgy of the Church. One final tradition of Epiphany is to announce the movable feasts of the coming year:

Ash Wednesday February 14<sup>th</sup>  
Easter Sunday March 31  
Pentecost May 19  
First Sunday of Advent December 1



## SVDP Food support

St Catherine of Siena  
902-455-6525

St Patrick  
902-405-3806  
St Stephen  
902-3686

St Theresa  
902-414-4625

## Adoration and Confession

1st Wednesday  
of the Month  
7:00pm - Holy Hour of  
Eucharistic Adoration,  
Confession available  
St Stephen's Church

Wednesdays/Fridays  
Eucharistic Adoration  
8:00am—4:00pm  
St Catherine's Church

Thursdays  
7:30pm - Holy Hour of  
Eucharistic Adoration,  
Confession available  
St Catherine's Church

## Mass Intentions

Tuesday, January 9th  
David Driscoll+  
Noon St Catherine of Si-  
ena

Friday, January 12th  
Gary Doucette+  
9:00am St Stephen

Saturday, January 13th  
Betty and Teresa Mantin+  
9:00am St Catherine of  
Siena

Pat Arsenault+  
4:00pm  
St Stephen



## Religious Education

**(GRADES PRIMARY TO SIX)**

**St. Catherine's Church**— We hope all families enjoyed a wonderful Christmas Season. Classes will resume this Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00-10:45 am in the Church Hall.

**St. Stephen's Church** – Sunday School resumes Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> following mass. It is not too late to enroll children.



Youth Group is on Christmas break and will resume on January 17. For more information or to register, please contact Anna Irish ([annamichelleirish@gmail.com](mailto:annamichelleirish@gmail.com)).

The parish website continues to be worked on and cleaned up. Please check out our website and see what is going on.

<https://stfrancisandstclareparish.ca/>

### Options for Giving to our Parish

1. Request weekly Sunday envelopes through our Parish Office.
2. E-Transfer to [office@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca](mailto:office@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca) (include your name and church).
3. Sign up for pre-authorized payments through our Parish Office.
4. Mail your donation to our Parish Office.

Please be assured that any donations received will be assigned to your account and income tax receipts will be issued. Thank you for your continued generosity!

### What are pre-authorized payments?

The Parish has a Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) plan to assist you in your support of the work of our community. It allows you to give intentionally, proportionally, and faithfully to your community by having your offering automatically withdrawn from your bank account each month.

### Why should YOU participate?

- Convenience. No more scrambling for the right change, writing a cheque, or forgetting your envelope at home.
- Continued support of your Church when you are away.
- Allows for regular, dependable flow of contributions to the Parish.
- If you wish to have something to place in the collection basket, you can still receive your box of numbered envelopes. They have been pre-printed to allow you to indicate that you give through PAD.

Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

**SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL—**

Blessed Mother Theresa's Conference would like to congratulate Pat Currin on winning the Gift Basket drawn on Dec. 20, 2023.



We would like to thank all those who purchased tickets. We raised \$624.00.

A reminder that the work of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul at all four churches goes on all year long. If you would like to help this worthwhile and important ministry financially or by your service, please contact the parish office.



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is an important part of Christian life. It is vital to the life of any parish! Our parish offers a number of opportunities for us to sit before the Lord in prayer (see the left side of this page for times and locations). Even if you have never been before, you are always welcome to spend even a few minutes with the Lord.



Thank you to all our young parishioners who participated in the Christmas Eve pageant. We had a full cast of family, shepherds, and wisemen.

**THANK YOU**



Thank you to everyone who came out for our parish skate party on December 31st. Great fun was had by all!!

A note of thanks to the knights of Columbus #1097 whose financial donation helped pay for the rental and food; they also set up and served everyone at the after party. A note of thanks to the knights of Columbus #8666 who also helped with the after party! We are truly blessed by such caring support.

**COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS**

Healing Mass  
 Thursday,  
 January 25<sup>th</sup>  
 7:00pm  
 St Stephen's Church  
 Celebrant with Fr Mark  
 Cherry of Sacred Heart  
 Evangelization  
 and Healing Ministry.  
 All Are Welcome

Bringing Holy Communion to those who are ill, shut-in, or unable to attend Mass is a great gift to those who have served the church for many years, especially our elderly. St. Catherine's Church needs additional volunteers to make these visits. The commitment would be for one Sunday a month. If you feel you may be called to this ministry, please contact the Parish Office at 902-454-8221 and leave your contact information.

## PARISH NEWS

### SVDP Contact #s for food support

St Catherine  
902-455-6525

St Stephen  
902-405-3686

St Patrick  
902-405-3806

St Theresa  
902-414-4625

### FOLLOW US ON



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### MEET OUR TEAM

Fr Nathanael DesRoches  
Administrator

Fr Robert Nicholas  
Associate Pastor

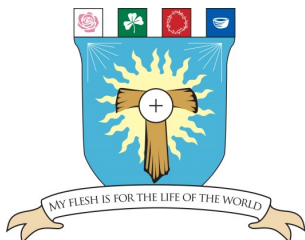
Rev Mr Len Moore  
Rev Mr Paul Carnell

Brent Hopkins  
Operations Manager

Sr Rita Hanna, FoH

Sr. Teresa MacDonald  
Office Manager

Cheryl Delaney  
Administrative Assistant



### Pastoral Council Seeking New Members Aged 18-35

The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body of a fully initiated practicing members of the parish whose task is to assist the pastor and other parish leadership for the parish's growth in mission, formation and as a community of faith. We are seeking to add two new members, aged 18-35, ideally one male and one female. Candidates should be active members of our Parish, willing to give of their time, talent and wisdom in a collaborative manner, and interested in being engaged in pastoral planning work and initiatives.

If you or someone you know is interested, please reach out to the Parish office at [office@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca](mailto:office@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca) to submit an expression of interest or nomination. A reminder that if nominating someone else, it is always a good idea to first approach that person to ensure that they are in fact interested in having their name put forward. Thank you for considering!



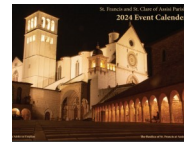
The donation envelopes for 2024 are at the entrance of each church. If you cannot locate your envelopes please contact the parish office 902-454-8221. Once we have your name and address we can locate you box and have it sent to the church of your choice: St Stephen, St Catherine of Siena or St Patrick. If you are new to the parish and would like to get envelopes please contact an usher at the entrance of the church or the parish office. You can also arrange direct debit or e-transfer through the parish office.

### BAPTISM OF THE LORD



A special Parish Mass for The Baptism of the Lord will be celebrated on Monday, January 8th, at 7:00 pm at St. Patrick's Church.

### 2024 Parish Calendars are still available



for purchase! The cost is \$10.00. Each month contains images of our parishioners enjoying the many events and festivities hosted throughout

the past year.

Calendars will be available at our the three churches as well as the parish office during regular business hours.

### ROSARY CENACLE



The Rosary is a beautiful devotion and is easy to pray – even if you have never prayed it before. You are invited to join us praying the rosary together **every Monday evening 7:00pm at St Stephen Church in the Marian room in the hall. Please enter via the Robie St entrance.**

Anyone wishing to submit announcements for the bulletin is asked to send them to [bulletin@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca](mailto:bulletin@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca) by 9:00am each Tuesday morning. Thanks kindly!

St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi Parish

PARISH WALK-IN HOURS: MON/WED/FRI 9:00AM TO 12NOON  
(voicemail will be checked every day)

Email: [office@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca](mailto:office@stfrancisandstclareparish.ca)

Parish Office: 902-454-8221

Address: 6351 North Street, Halifax, B3L 1P7



# St Francis and St Clare of Assisi Parish

Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth  
St. Catherine of Siena, St. Patrick's, St. Theresa of Lisieux and  
St. Stephen's Churches

January 4, 2024

Dear Parishioners of Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi Parish:

Since its creation by amalgamation in 2020, our parish has continued to operate from our four existing church buildings. In 2023, as part of the assessment of our parish's building needs moving forward, we commissioned engineering studies of all our churches to better understand the current physical state of our buildings and to determine the repair and maintenance costs associated with them.

The results of the engineering reports were presented in detail at two public meetings in November 2023, and are available on the parish website. The reports concluded that St. Catherine's and St. Stephen's are generally in a state of good repair, subject to manageable maintenance costs over the next 5 to 10 years. However, the reports found that St. Theresa's and St. Patrick's have significant issues that are anticipated to cost more than \$10 million to address in each case.

Besides these reports, members of our parish leadership also reviewed parish attendance data and financial information. In short, our attendance is well below the capacity of our four churches, such that one or two churches would be adequate to serve our current needs. From a financial standpoint we are operating at a loss, and our increasing building costs are drawing resources away from the pastoral programming and missionary outreach that is vital to our continuing forward as a vibrant faith community.

Having reviewed all this work and analysis, the leadership of our parish – including myself and the members of the parish leadership team, pastoral council, and finance council – are facing the prospect of recommending permanent closure of St. Patrick and St. Theresa churches to the Archbishop. The reality is that the costs associated with bringing St. Theresa's and St. Patrick's to a safe and healthy state suitable to ongoing use by parishioners are beyond our capacity to undertake.

Before submitting any recommendation to the Archbishop, it is important for us to hear from you, the parishioners, and particularly those who attend St. Theresa's and St. Patrick's, who will be most impacted by these developments. Consequently, listening sessions are planned for January and February, which all are invited to attend. These facilitated sessions offer you a chance to speak, be heard, and pose questions about the situation in front of us. Times, locations, and how to register will be shared in the bulletin, on the website, or by calling or emailing the parish office.

While this process is happening, the Archdiocese has undertaken work to address several immediate safety considerations at St. Theresa's and St. Patrick's. This includes adding fencing around St. Theresa's church to help keep the site secure and removing the steeple at St. Patrick's per the engineers' recommendations. Over the coming weeks we will provide further updates on these immediate measures, the status of the church buildings generally, and the listening sessions, in order to keep everyone informed.

We have had many challenges up to this point in our parish journey, and we can expect that there will be more to come. I ask you to keep this process, the parish leadership, and one another in your prayers. Let us continue to open our hearts to where God is leading us and ask the Holy Spirit to pour out the gifts and graces we need for the road ahead.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Desroches". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a large, loopy, hand-drawn oval shape.

Fr. Nathanael Desroches, FoH