**The Christmas Crèche**

Standing before the Christmas crèche, we are reminded of the time when we were children, eagerly waiting to set it up. These memories make us all the more conscious of the precious gift received from those who passed on the faith to us. At the same time, they remind us of our duty to share this same experience with our children and grandchildren. It does not matter how the nativity scene is arranged: it can always be the same or it changes from year to year. What matters is that it speaks to our lives. Wherever it is, and whatever form it takes, the Christmas crèche speaks to us of the love of God, the God who became a child in order to make us know how close he is to every man, woman, and child, regardless of their condition

Dear brothers and sisters, the Christmas crèche is part of the precious yet demanding process of passing on the faith, Beginning in childhood, and at every stage of our lives, it teaches us to contemplate Jesus, to experience God’s love for us to feel and believe that God is with us and that we are with him, his children, brothers and sisters all, thanks to that Child who is the Son of God and the Son of the Virgin Mary. And to realize that in that knowledge we find true happiness. Like Saint Francis, we may open our hearts to this simple grace, so that from our wonderment a humble prayer may arise: a prayer of thanksgiving to God, who wishes to share with us

Him all, and thus never leave us alone.

~ Pope Francis

**Reminder about Receiving the Eucharist**

We are reminded that the Holy Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you are a Catholic not properly prepared to receive Holy Communion or are not a member of the Catholic faith, you are welcome to remain in your place and unite yourself in prayer or join the procession with your arms folded over your chest indicating that you wish to receive a blessing.

A **second collection** will be taken at all **Christmas Eve Masses and Christmas Day** for **Pay Down the Debt.**

**Confirmation Class # 2 – 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 6th**

**First Reconciliation Class 2A – 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 8th**

**2020 Donation Envelopes**

Sunday Offering Envelopes for the new year (displayed alphabetically) are now available for pick up by parishioners. Weekly contribution envelopes are only good for the year they are printed as numbers may change. Therefore, please DO NOT USE YOUR 2019 ENVELOPES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE MADE IN 2020. If you currently do not use envelopes and wish to do so, please contact the parish office by phone or email. Parishioners also have the option of donating thru automatic bank withdrawal (once a month) (Forms are at the back of the church)

**Paperless Bulletin**

Are you looking for ways to increase your care for the environment? Reducing the amount of paper that is used to produce our bulletin is one way that you can contribute. To receive your paperless bulletin email [St.vitalchurch@shaw.ca](mailto:St.vitalchurch@shaw.ca).

**NO 24 Hour Adoration on January 3rd**

**Please note: The Parish Office will be closed Dec. 24 -January 2, 2020**

**Voicemail and e-mails will still be answered during this time.**

**NEW YEARS MASS TIMES**

**Holy Day of Obligation**

***New Year’s Eve ( Holy Mary, Mother of God)***

Tuesday, December 31 - 5:00pm Mass

***New Year’s Day ( Holy Mary, Mother of God)***

Wednesday, January 1, 2020 - 10:00 am Mass

**CHURCH ETIQUETTE**

For the comfort and sensitivity/allergies of other parishioners, PLEASE REFRAIN from wearing/spraying anything with a strong scent. Please turn off cell phones and electronic devices.

**For those planning Marriage in 2020**

So that we are more closely following the policies of the Archdiocese of Edmonton, couples wishing to marry at St. Vital’s are to contact the Fr. Arlan at least six months prior to the anticipated marriage (Policy numbers 703-705). This is to ensure that both parties are free to marry and to allow a sufficient time period for all other pre-marriage requirements to be met. The date for the wedding will be set during the first meeting with the pastor.

**Baptism Preparation Course**

Are you expecting a child in the near future? Consider taking Baptism Preparation while you are waiting for the birth of your child. The classes are for parents and godparents. Attending now eliminates the need to find baby-sitters, rearrange feeding schedules etc. plus it adds to the joyful anticipation of your new arrival.

Parents wishing to register for the next course which be held on **Monday, February 10th**. Please call the parish office to register.

**Thinking about Camp?**

Maybe it's cold outside, but it's not too early to be thinking about camp! Catholic camping is a sacred space and time where community is created, Christ is encountered, and lives are transformed. If you are looking for a safe, caring and faith-filled camping experience for your children or grandchildren, please consider Our Lady of Victory Camp at Gull Lake, northwest of Red Deer. OLVC will reopen for Summer 2020, and registrations will open early in the New Year. Watch for more news in 2020, including ways you can support the

needed renovations to both OLVC and Camp Encounter. Thank you for your prayers!

**Are you registered at St. Vital’s?**

Being a registered member of the parish makes it much easier for us to help you, we are better equipped to serve you & respond to your needs. Please do not assume that you are automatically registered if your child has completed Sacramental Preparation here. To register please fill out a registration available on our website.

**Help keep our Parish database up to date! Let us know if:**

-you moved or you are planning a move

-you cancelled your landline phone

-you changed your email

-you have a new addition to your family