



Star of the Sea

STELLA MARIS PARISH NEWSLETTER

The Spirituality of Waiting



Father Rob Reflects...

In this month's newsletter, we will hear stories of waiting...and who likes to wait? In the military we had the expression, "Hurry up and wait." It seemed fitting. Advent invites us into the sacred practice of waiting—a quiet, hope-filled longing of God's people for the Messiah. Waiting, though challenging in our fast-paced world, is an important act of faith. It teaches us to trust in God's perfect timing, even when His plans remain hidden. Sometimes we just need to slow down, or to stop altogether, and wait.

In our waiting, we learn patience, humility, and reliance on God. The Blessed Virgin Mary is a model for this spiritual posture. Her "yes" to God initiated a journey of quiet trust, carrying the promise of salvation within her. She waited in joyful hope, even amid uncertainty.

Advent reminds us that God is always working, even in the stillness. This Advent, let us focus on making room in our hearts for Christ; waiting not with anxious impatience, but with peaceful trust, confident that Emmanuel—God with us—will arrive in His time. Waiting thus become sanctified, a time of sacred encounter with grace.

In Christ,

Fr. Rob Elford

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The One We Wait For

Written by Fr. Francesco Pirisi



Waiting... what are we waiting for?

Whom are we waiting for?

As December approaches, we enter the season of Advent, soon followed by Christmas. This time of year often brings us a sense of expectation, especially as we look forward to celebrations that hold a special place in our hearts. Christmas is a season filled with joy, especially for children and families. For many, it brings back fond memories. And for those who might not share in such memories, we hold them close in our prayers, because Christmas is a time when everyone should experience joy and peace.

Waiting is often accompanied by anticipation, especially during Advent. Similarly, in Lent, as Easter approaches, we find ourselves awaiting brighter and warmer days, a season filled with new life and hope as spring emerges. This kind of waiting fills our hearts with an eager desire, and it's seldom a passive experience. The greater the significance of what we're waiting for, the stronger our feelings become.

Consider waiting for a bus on a cold January day. If it takes longer than expected, our emotions may run high! But this raises an important question for us: How do I wait as a Christian?

When I'm waiting in line at the grocery store or for results from my doctor, my waiting may look much like anyone else's. Hopefully, as a Christian, I'm able to manage my frustrations with patience and kindness, showing a witness to God's peace. Yet, patience and kindness are not uniquely Christian virtues—they belong to everyone. So, what makes my waiting Christian?

As a Christian, I believe all my waitings fall within a greater waiting—the anticipation of Jesus Christ's return, as He promised. While I may be waiting to pay at the checkout, deep in my heart, I am also waiting for Christ. Every small, everyday wait reminds me of my deeper longing for the One who will one day return.

Perhaps we can understand this by remembering a time we were in love, when even waiting in line could not distract us from thinking of that person. Similarly, our hearts are called to wait for Christ with a love that keeps us focused on Him, regardless of what we may be waiting for in the moment.

Lives Transformed: Nora's Story



As many of us know a major illness diagnosis is a life changing experience. It also involves a lot of waiting.

My most profound waiting experiences came in the waiting room of the radiation treatment centre. The fear and anxiety was so profound that I could feel it. This moved me to pray, silently at first. Soon I was prompted to reach out to people and ask if they wanted to pray with me. Almost everyone said yes. As a result of comforting others I was being comforted. God is good that way.

I was also given a strong prompting to pray for the faithful departed waiting to see the face of God. Imagine their joy when our prayers for them open their eyes and they see God as He is in His radiant presence.

As we wait in expectant hope for the birth of Jesus at Christmas, the reality is that he is already with us. When we reach out to him in prayer or receive him in the Eucharist, He is there for us always.

So as we persevere in prayer, especially for the souls in purgatory, may we always keep in mind that heaven is the ultimate home for everyone.



Stepping Out

INVITATIONS FOR YOU:

1. Reconciliation Day: December 12th, 12-7pm.

As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, the parish will have an afternoon/evening dedicated to the healing sacrament of reconciliation, where by confessing our sins we experience the merciful love of God. All the parishioners are invited to attend.

2. Simbang Gabi Mass: December 19th, 7pm.

Join us for a special Mass that is a part of a beautiful Filipino tradition: Simbang Gabi, a Novena of Masses that is said leading up to Christmas. This Mass will be part of the novena that is being said with other parishes in the Archdiocese. All are welcome.

The Bulletin

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE:

This year, the Christmas Mass Schedule will be:

- Christmas Eve: 6pm and 9pm
- Christmas Day: 10am

EVENTIDE: Returning January 28, 2025!

While there will be no Eventide this month, it will be returning on Tuesday, January 28, 2025.

MEMORIAL FLOWER DONATION ENVELOPES:

A reminder that the Memorial Flower Donation Envelopes will be placed in the Church this month leading up to Christmas.

ALTAR DECORATING MINISTRY: Volunteers Needed!

The Altar Decorating Ministry is looking for volunteers. If you are able to help with decorating throughout the liturgical year please contact Queen at queen.ojiemudia@gmail.com.

FOOD BANK: Christmas Hampers

The food bank is always in need but they are preparing for their annual Christmas Hampers and could use extra help with the following items: canned soup, canned vegetables, canned cranberries, stovetop stuffing, liters of juice and cereal. All donations can be dropped off inside the church.

PLEASE SUBMIT BULLETIN ITEMS FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE BY DECEMBER 16th, 2024

PARISH RESOURCES

Funeral Information and Bookings: funerals@stellamarishalifax.com

Immigrant Support Committee: newcomers@stellamarishalifax.com

Community Outreach: outreach@stellamarishalifax.com

Home Communion: homecommunion@stellamarishalifax.com

Responsible Ministry: office@stellamarishalifax.com

St. Vincent de Paul: 902-479-0630

Giving: e-transfer to the Parish at: giving@stellamarishalifax.com

GET CONNECTED

Facebook: facebook.com/stellamarishalifax

YouTube: youtube.com/@stellamarishalifax

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MEET THE TEAM!

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WANT TO RECEIVE TEXTS ABOUT PARISH UPDATES?

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