



Witness to Hope

Seasonal Offerings for Journeys in Faith



A New Season: Lighting Our Path With Prayer

On December 3, we begin a new liturgical Church year with the Season of Advent. The year has passed so quickly. It has been a difficult year in so many ways especially due to climate change. We witnessed the hottest year on record with droughts, floods, and wildfires in our province and around the world. We also witnessed a continuation of the war in Ukraine and a new war in the middle East between Israel and Hamas. We need to pray for end to such conflict in our world. This Season of Advent provides us with the opportunity for prayer. Each week as we light a candle on our Advent wreath, we pray for peace, hope, joy, and love. As the candles burn brightly and light our path, let us live as those who have the Christ's light burning inside us today and every day.

Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

CELEBRATING ADVENT:

Opening to the Joy
Page 2

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Page 2

JUBILEE 2025:

Events, resources and invitations
Page 3

DATES OF NOTE:

Page 4

CONTACT US:

Jennifer Hatt, Communications
Jennifer@dioceseofantigonish.ca



**December 12:
Feast of our Lady of
Guadalupe,**
Patroness of the Americas

**National Day of Prayer
in Solidarity with
Indigenous People**

St. Juan Diego had already been baptized when the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to him, but through his openness and acceptance of the Christian message, and while

retaining his indigenous identity, he became the sign of, and catalyst for, how Christ can be brought to every race and culture. This day is also in the Catholic Church in Canada a National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples.

There are two shrines to Our Lady of Guadalupe in our diocese:

- In Johnstown, behind Sacred Heart Church
- In Monastery, at Our Lady of Grace Monastery

“All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love, and peace.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen”

Taken from Laudato Si by Pope Francis

To Learn More:

<https://www.cccb.ca/indigenous-peoples/prayer-and-spirituality/national-day-of-prayer-in-solidarity-with-indigenous-people/>



Advent: Dec. 3-24

Opening to the Joy in the Journey

The four weeks of darkness to light is often filled with shopping, baking, wrapping and planning ... anticipation of a practical sort. Amid it all are moments perfect to be with and celebrate the coming birth of Jesus ... anticipation of great joy. Here are some ways to journey this Advent, for you and your family:

Make a Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree is the family tree of Jesus; its ornaments are symbols of the lineage from Creation to His birth. This video tells more:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=9A4TFkSBeHI

Engage in Weekly Virtual Reflections

to help you in your spiritual journey.

www.ignatianspirituality.com/advent/

Offer a Nightly Prayer

while lighting your Advent wreath, a candle, or in a quiet moment.

ADVENT FAMILY PRAYER

God of Love, Your Son, Jesus, is your greatest gift to us. He is a sign of Your love. Help us walk in that love during the weeks of Advent, as we wait and prepare for His coming. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Saviour. Amen.



Jubilee 2025:

‘Pilgrims of Hope’

Jubilee is celebrated every 25 years, a time of celebration and rejuvenation for our faith and faithful. Preparation for Jubilee 2025 began this past year: The Holy Father requested that 2023 and 2024 be years of preparation for the Jubilee, each year with a distinct focus.



The Year of the Council

2023 is dedicated to the rediscovery of the conciliar teaching of Vatican II. The Dicastery for Evangelization has developed a series of Council Notebooks on each of the Four Constitutions of Vatican II. In response to the Holy Father's invitation to young people to learn more about Vatican II, the CCCB Office for Evangelization and Catechesis offered a webinar series on each of the four constitutions of the Council. To be notified when session recordings are available, please [register here](#).

The Year of Prayer

In 2024, a special emphasis on individual and communal prayer will be supported by a series of notebooks on prayer in development by the Dicastery for Evangelization and Catechesis.

TO LEARN MORE:

<https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/carta-del-pellegrino.html>

The official Jubilee website is now live, with an events calendar, Pilgrim Card, and more. Additional information about global, national, and diocesan events will be made available in the coming year.

The Jubilee Prayer

*Father in heaven,
may the faith you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed hope
for the coming of your Kingdom.*

*May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of
the Gospel.*

*May those seeds transform from
within both humanity and the whole
cosmos*

*in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil
vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.*

*May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.*

*May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.*

*To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.*

Amen

Synod of Bishops report

The XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops took place October 4-29, 2023, following a two-year engagement and preparation journey involving Christian faithful from around the world: clergy and religious, parishioners and those of other denominations, those who are devout and those no longer engaging with their faith.



In the late afternoon of Saturday 28 October 2023, the members of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops adopted the following **Synthesis Report**:

<https://www.synod.va/en/synodal-process/the-universal-phase/documents.html>

We as a Church and as a diocese continue to pray for the Synod.

The Synod of Bishops has ended, but the invitation remains to continue conversations, continue opening our hearts to the Holy Spirit and to continue our journeys together as the people of God.

Synod Prayer Cards are available from our Chancery Office for parishes, groups, and individuals wishing them.

Contact our Chancery Office, Monday through Friday, 9 am – noon, Ph 1-902-863-3335 or email: chancery@dioceseofantigonish.ca

The Synod Prayer

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions. Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.



Dates of Note

December 3:

First Week of Advent

December 8:

**Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

December 12:

**Our Lady of Guadalupe
National Day of Prayer in Solidarity
with Indigenous Peoples**

December 25:

Nativity of Our Lord
Octave of Christmas begins

January 1:

Mary, Mother of God
Octave of Christmas ends
World Day of Peace

February 14:

Ash Wednesday
Lent begins

See more events at:

<https://www.antigonishdiocese.com/events/>