

WHY ARE THERE TWO VERSIONS OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY?

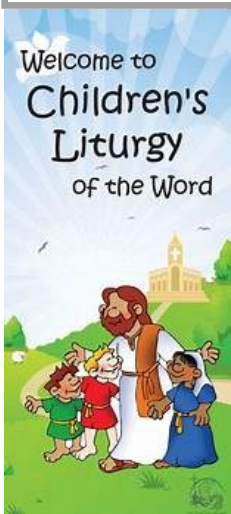
It can be quite confusing for many people when they discover that there are two versions of the Christmas story in the Bible. They often ask, "How is that possible? What are the differences?" Well, one version is found in the book of Matthew, while the other is in Luke. Although they may vary in certain details, the essence of the teachings remains the same.

In both versions, Mary is depicted as a virgin who is engaged to Joseph but not yet living with him. The conception of Jesus is attributed to the power of the Holy Spirit. Additionally, both accounts agree that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. However, there are a few distinctions worth noting.

According to Matthew, it was an angel who appeared to Joseph to announce the birth of Jesus. On the other hand, Luke tells us that Mary received the announcement. As for the naming of Jesus, Matthew states that it was Joseph who gave him his name, while Luke tells us that Mary was the one who named him.

The most significant difference between the two versions lies in the visitors who came to see the newborn Jesus. In Matthew's account, we learn about the Magi, who were wise men from a pagan nation. They recognized Jesus as King, Priest, and Savior and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. In contrast, Luke, who often emphasizes the plight of the poor, introduces us to shepherds who bear witness to Christ.

It is important to remember that these variations exist because the authors of the two accounts had different audiences and perspectives. However, getting caught up in the minutiae is unnecessary. Instead, I encourage you to read both versions and allow the grace of God to deepen your faith.



We have restarted the Children's Liturgy Program! Every Sunday, during the 9:00 am Mass, children are called forward after the opening prayer, and they will follow the liturgy teacher to the gathering room where they will hear the Word of God at their own level.

The children will return to the Church during the Offertory.

You may contact the parish office at 416-767-7054 for more information.

Sunday Missals for the next Liturgical Year are still available at a cost of \$5.00 each. Pick up your copy from the Church or Parish Office during office hours.

VOCATION REFLECTION From the angel Gabriel, Mary heard God's plan for her life and she said "Yes!"...and so the Saviour came into the world. Pray to know God's Will for your life, so as to help bring Jesus to our world.

If you think God is calling you to do this as a priest, religious or deacon, call Fr. Matt McCarthy, Director of Vocations, Archdiocese of Toronto at 416-968-0997.

vocations@archtoronto.org www.vocationstoronto.ca

CHANGE IN VIGIL MASS SCHEDULE

Please be advised that effective **Saturday, January 6th, 2024**, the vigil mass that is presently at **5:30 PM** will be at **4:30 PM**. This change will last for **six months**, after which we will evaluate its impact and feedback.

If you have any questions or concerns about this change, please feel free to contact us.

We appreciate your support and participation in our parish life. We look forward to seeing you at the new vigil mass time beginning in January 2024.



Grace Before Meals

Lord, we thank you for this food
And for the joy of Christmas mood
We praise you for your love and grace
And for the gift of your embrace
Bless this meal and our fellowship
And fill our hearts with hope and peace
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Prayer for Those Who are Ill:

Heavenly Father, we lift up to you
Those who are suffering from illness
Especially in this season of Christmas
We ask you to comfort them with your presence
And heal them by your power and mercy
We pray that you would restore their health
And renew their strength and hope
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Prayer for Those Who are Grieving:

God of all comfort, we come to you
With broken hearts and tears
We remember those who are no longer with us
Especially in this season of Christmas
We thank you for their lives and memories
And we entrust them to your care
We pray that you would comfort us with your love
And fill us with your peace and joy
In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.