



October 28, 2025

**Dear Parishioners of St. George:**

We will soon be entering the season of Advent and once again the St George Community is sponsoring several programs, whereby our Parishioners can show love and mercy to those in need. We are reaching out to our St. George Family to respond as Christ has asked us to do in Matthew 25: **"...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me."**

Many children in the Sunday School are packing "shoeboxes" for **Operation Christmas Child**, a program sponsored by "Samaritan's Purse". This organization is a nondenominational Christian organization that offers spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world. The shoeboxes will be delivered to needy children in developing countries providing them with a message of love and hope. If you would like to participate, shoeboxes and instruction materials can be picked up from the Sunday school downstairs. Boxes must be returned to the church by **November 16**, and a volunteer will deliver them to a drop off location. This activity provides a hands-on opportunity for your children to give and show love to other children. They can help by choosing age-appropriate items to fill the box with, draw a picture and/or write a personal note to the child and also say a prayer for the child and their family. This is truly such a special and meaningful way of sharing the love of our Lord!

Our annual **Prison Ministry "Angel Tree" program** will be launched around the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> week of November. Through Angel Tree, Christmas gifts are provided for prisoners' children who might otherwise have none. Prisoners often feel helpless during this time of year, as they have neither the resources nor the mobility to provide gifts for their children. When the child receives a gift from their parent, sent with their love, they are reminded that mommy or daddy is with them in spirit and has not forgotten them during this special time. The child is the innocent victim in these circumstances, but a personal note from the imprisoned parent in their own handwriting helps to bring them closer. This program assists in maintaining the family relationship so that when the prisoner is released, he or she will have their family's support to return to society without falling into the elements that led to their imprisonment. The imprisoned parent chooses a gift of approximately \$35 value that he/she feels would be appropriate for their child. Parishioners may choose one or more angels from our tree and purchase and wrap the gift on behalf of the parent. If your budget does not allow you to spend this amount, we would gladly accept any donation that could be put towards purchase of the gifts. It would be an invaluable experience for your family if you could also deliver the wrapped gift to the caregiver at a pre-arranged time prior to Christmas. However, if you are unable to deliver, we have volunteers who are eager to do so! As well, we have requested applications for children living in isolated areas of Canada where the gift must be mailed. We are grateful for any help you can give.

Finally, we will once again be preparing "loot bags" for the people who frequent **St. John the Compassionate Mission** and their sister organization **"Good Neighbours drop-in"** located in Scarborough. Sadly, there continues to be a great need for these bags of necessities – things which most of us take for granted. We have been asked to prepare 150 bags for men, 75 for women and 300 for children. Included in the loot bags are personal care items such as soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, etc. as well as hats, mitts and socks to help keep them warm over the winter. I've been told the excitement and wonder shown by the people upon receiving their bags is indescribable. They are overwhelmed by this display of love, generosity and unselfish kindness. We will be packing the bags towards the end of November and welcome your help. Details will be announced when a date and time are decided upon.

Every day, we hear about poverty and unrest around the world. Our Lord has blessed us with so much; let us return His love and "Glorify Him" by helping to bring joy to the hearts of these needy men, women and children. In the Troparion of St. George we hear that he was the **"...deliverer of captives and defender of the poor"**. Please follow in the footsteps of our beloved Patron Saint by assisting with our programs. If you would like to sponsor an angel or donate to our mission loot bags, please speak with Joanie Younes (416-402-7424), Ted Alexopoulos (416-823-0884), or Laila Scott (416-450-6697).

Chucrun and God Bless!