



# AD ORIENTEM MASS

## — ST. PAUL ON THE LAKE —

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>

7:00 p.m. Eucharistic Benediction

7:15 p.m. Recitation of the Holy Rosary

7:35 p.m. *Ad Orientem* Mass with Gregorian Chant

“Look toward the east, O Jerusalem, and see the joy that is coming to you from God!” (Bar 4:36)

### **What is an Ad Orientem Mass?**

*Ad Orientem* literally means “to the east”. The time honored tradition of the *Ad Orientem* Mass is one celebrated with both the priest and the people facing the same direction, symbolically “to the east”, for certain parts of the Mass.

The *Ad Orientem* Mass is the Ordinary Form of the Mass using English. The difference is that during certain parts of the Mass, the priest and the people face the same direction. Also, certain parts of the Mass are sung using Gregorian chant.

### **Why doesn't the priest face the people?**

The priest offers Mass facing the same direction as the people, symbolizing that he and the people look toward the Coming of the Lord. The priest is not turning his back on the people to exclude them. Rather, as a Christian community, all are facing *ad orientem* (i.e. toward the east) symbolically (not geographically) waiting in joyful expectation for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will return at the second coming.

### **Why Advent?**

In the season of Advent, we are reminded to be prepared for Christ's coming. Facing the east together is witness to Christ's imminent return. In modern times, when it is easy to forget that Christ is coming—and easy to be complacent in our spiritual lives and in the work of evangelization—we need reminders to keep our focus on Christ, the King that is to come.