

Each year on the second Sunday of Lent, the liturgy's gospel reading tells of the Transfiguration. This year we hear Matthew's account. Throughout our long Lenten observance, we are encouraged to keep in mind the triumphant glory of the Saviour that we are preparing to celebrate, and the challenge it brings to us. All three gospels link the Transfiguration with the warning of Jesus, that he was 'destined to suffer' in Jerusalem, and that those who are his true followers must 'take up their cross and follow him'.

What is the basis of this mysterious narrative, that is not easy to relate to the later attitudes displayed by the apostles as the story of the gospels unfolds? It had obvious importance for the Church of the beginnings, because it is given in all three synoptic gospels. Luke associates this experience of the three apostles - who were to witness the agony of Jesus in the garden - with a moment in which Jesus led them in prayer. Perhaps the narrative has its basis in an ecstatic prayer experience. Perhaps the more restrained presentation of Luke, the gentile convert, is significant. Luke avoids reference to a metamorphosis ('transfiguration'), a phenomenon associated with the gods of the pagan mythology. He merely states that 'the aspect of Jesus' face was changed'. No doubt, the early Church saw this narrative as an important expression of their faith in the Saviour - as sharing in the Father's greatness and glory, even in the obscurity of his earthly life.

Matthew's recounting of this tradition, with its many references to biblical themes familiar to the Jewish converts of his community, presents the Jesus of the Transfiguration as fulfilling what was prefigured in the history of old Israel: the 'mountain' reminds us of the defining moment of the Sinai covenant; 'Moses and Elijah', representing the Law and the Prophets, both have close links with Sinai; the 'cloud' recalls the 'shekinah' cloud that was an expression of Yahweh's presence during the face of Jesus reminds us of the face of Moses when he came down Peter's reference to the recalls the Jewish when the people lived their arrival in the promised land - a celebration of the kingship of Yahweh that came to be filled with messianic expectations. Matthew adds to the words of the Father from the cloud a reference to one of the songs of the Suffering Servant (Is 42.1), bringing us back to the association of the Transfiguration with the warning of Jesus - of the ordeal that lay ahead of him in Jerusalem, and the challenge of discipleship.

The term used by Mark and Matthew for the transformation that took place in Jesus - that we are accustomed to translate, 'transfiguration' - is also used in the New Testament to describe the spiritual transformation brought by life 'in Christ'. For the first Christians, it had overtones of the blessings of the final kingdom announced by Jesus. The journey begun so long ago - in the story of Abraham's heroic response to the call of God, and the promises that accompanied it - has brought God's people to the moment of fulfilment.

John Thornhill sm
www.theemausseries.com

Peter, James and John had a mountaintop experience with Jesus by witnessing His transfiguration. We too can have a mountaintop experience when we open our minds and hearts to following God's Will for our life

If God is calling you, contact Fr. Hansoo Park
416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT THIS LENT

Exodus; the shining us of the face of Moses from the mountain; 'three tents', or booths, feast of Tabernacles, in booths celebrating

Readings ~ Genesis 12.1-4 ~ 2 Timothy 1.8b-10 ~ Matthew 17.1-9

PARISH

Mass Intentions This Week — March 17 to 23

Please join us as we pray for the following announced intentions:

	Intention(s)	Offered by
Monday, 9am	✠ Don Goodwin	Mary Teresa Goodwin
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Dimitri Dimitrakoudas	Monica Lovell
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Stanley Nichol	Monica Lovell
Thursday, 9am	✠ Ida Settino	Rita & Don Greco
Friday, 9am	✠ Georgina Wall	Aline & Brian Wall & family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Gerard & Breda Dolan	the Dolan family
5:15pm	...of Mary V. Santoriello	
Sunday 8am	...the needs of our parish, faithful parishioners	
9:30am	✠ John Keane	Philip Keane & family
11am	✠ Lisa Ongaro	Jim Neilas
12:30pm	✠ Nicholas Fanuzzi	The family

Rosary Group — stay and pray daily, after 9am Mass + Fridays, 2pm

Five decades daily, fifteen decades on Fridays followed by the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

Stretch & Flex — all are welcome! — Tuesdays, 6:30—7:30pm in the parish hall

Come and enjoy gentle stretching, gain an awareness of breathing and embrace relaxation. \$10 per session. Bring a yoga-type mat, perhaps a bottle of water and wear comfy clothing!

Scripture Classes Wed., Mar. 19, 10am + Thu. Mar. 20, 7pm — all are welcome

We resume studies with the Gospel according to Matthew. Morning class to be held in the parish hall meeting room and evening class at OLS School, 32 Montgomery Rd., Room 411.

'Bundle Up Weekend!' — April 5, 8:30am—6:30pm & April 6, 7:30am—5pm

St. Vincent De Paul Society (OLS Conference) volunteers will be collecting gently used clothing and household linens (think: shoes, bedding, draperies and small household goods) in the truck in the parking lot. Please ensure goods are in securely tied bags! **Thank you for your generosity!**

Seasonal Parish Events — mark your calendars!

Fridays in Lent — Stations of the Cross — 7:30pm

This Week St. Patrick's Day Celebration — Mon., March 17
— stay for scones & Irish Coffee after the 9am Mass.

This Week St. Joseph's Day Celebration — Wed., March 19
— all are invited for zeppole and coffee after the 9am Mass.

All Day Lenten Confessions — Sat., April 12

— two priests available from 9:30am—5pm.

Catholic Input Sought — how will we respond as a parish community?

Several provinces, including Ontario, have decided not to prosecute violations of Canada's prostitution laws after the Supreme Court of Canada struck down as unconstitutional three prostitution-related offences last December, despite the Court's suspending the decision for one year to afford an opportunity to craft new laws. As Vancouver Archbishop J. Michael Miller has said, "We cannot ignore the fact that women, men and children are being objectified. It is a shameful state of affairs and it's going on under our very eyes. Any decision not to enforce laws that protect these victims is indefensible." To that end, we have prepared a petition (available at the main entrance to the church) to be sent to Canada's Justice Minister, The Hon. Peter MacKay. In addition, you may visit www.justice.gc.ca before March 17 and complete a survey.



MAKE LENT COUNT
PRAY • ACT • GIVE

COMMUNITY

Read Pope Francis' Lumen Fidei at www.sorrrows.ca today!

Working wonders in our livelihoods...

Andrew attended counselling at Catholic Family Services in Simcoe at the suggestion of his employer. He was experiencing a considerable amount of conflict at work which was affecting his job performance. Andrew realized that if he didn't get some help he was at risk of losing his job. Through counselling he learned more positive ways of interacting as well as some healthy stress management skills. Today Andrew has fewer conflicts at work and has learned how to separate his work and home life. He appreciated the help that Catholic Family Services provided to him when he needed it most.

Last year, ShareLife-supported Family Service agencies provided family counselling to over 5,100 people in the Greater Toronto Area.



ShareLife Sunday is March 30 — Please give generously. You can work wonders!

'The Gift of Years' Book Discussion — Tuesdays, Mar. 11—Apr. 8, 11am—12pm

Mark Twain said "Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been." Join in a discussion, focusing on the wisdom, dignity and beauty that comes with age. To be held at St. Basil's Parish, 50 St. Joseph St. Each discussion will be led by Fr. Norm Tanck and Fr. Jim Carruthers, CSB.

Regis College Celebrates Artists' Vespers — March 19, 7pm

This annual liturgy honours the solemnity of St. Joseph, the husband of Mary. Art Gallery of Ontario, Walker Court, 317 Dundas St. W. For more info, visit www.RegisCollege.ca/art, email inquiries@RegisCollege.ca or call 416-922-5474, ext. 221. No registration is required.

Christian — Muslim Dialogue: The Present Situation — March 19, 7pm

Father David Warren of the Scarboro Missionaries will explore for three consecutive Wednesdays the central issues in this important conversation. The Paulist Ministry Centre, 830 Bathurst St. For more info, call 416-534-2326 or email Fr. John F. Duffy, CSP at jfdcsp1@cs.com

Widow/Widower Support Group — 1st & 3rd Fridays, 7:30—9:30pm

Coordinated by the New Beginnings Program at Catholic Family Services of Toronto, this support group begins March 21 and welcomes widows and widowers to a gathering which is full of hope and faithful sharing of ideas. St. Gabriel's Church, 670 Sheppard Ave. E. The group is facilitated by Mary Muir. Please register with Deacon James Shaughnessy at 416-921-1163, ext. 2227 or by email at jshaughn@cfstoronto.com

Pathways to Clinical and Spiritual Wellness Retreat

Dr. Ken Fung will explore the pathways of Christian Spiritual Healing that restore wholeness, holiness and new life in accordance with God's will. The day includes presentation, discussion and prayer aimed at moving us away from false identities and forward toward the healing love of Jesus. Sat., March 29, 9:30am—2pm, St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 640 Glenholme Ave., at Eglinton Ave. W. A light lunch will be provided. Please register with Catholic Family Services of Toronto at 416-921-1163 ext. 2227 or 2235.



Becoming Gospel Women Today — a weekend of prayer & contemplation

Single women are invited to a retreat weekend on Lake Simcoe, in Orillia on May 2—4 or May 23—25. Given by a team of Sisters of St. Joseph, who "through (their) vows endeavour to develop a right relationship with God within us, within others and within our world." Registration deadline is April 23. For info and registration, contact Sr. Rosemary Fry, CSJ at rfry@csj-to.ca or 416-285-4166.

