

There is often a time in a long journey when we find the going hard. The enthusiasm with which we set out has faded, and there is still a long way to go. At this stage in our Lenten journey we may be inclined to identify with Nicodemus of today's gospel – not daring, as a well known Pharisee, to consult Jesus openly, he came 'by night', weighed down in his heart, no doubt, by an interior darkness of confusion and embarrassment.

In our disappointment with our lives, the darkness seems so real and overwhelming. The first reading, telling the story of old Israel – a story of unfaithfulness, stubborn selfishness, destruction and exile – reminds us how often human history has been filled with darkness, right down to our own day. In the second reading from the letter to the Ephesians, Paul confidently confronts this darkness: for him reliance upon false and selfish securities is to embrace 'death'.



The Son of Man must be lifted up, so that we may have eternal life in Him

If we are inclined to feel demoralised at this point in our Lenten journey, we are invited by today's readings to find again the source of new energy and encouragement. In the midst of the deepest darkness the true Light shines! Old Israel finds that God's designs will not be frustrated by their foolishness and selfishness – the conqueror of the Babylonians sends them back to rebuild the temple. Paul announces to those who are in danger of losing their way the astounding truth at the centre of our faith – God's free gift to a lost world of new life in Christ: our redeemed humanity is God's 'work of art', we each have our part to play in the realisation of God's great designs.

But it is especially in climax of today's readings, the words spoken to Nicodemus, by Jesus – the Light of the World – that all our darkness is dispelled! These words are perhaps the most quoted of the Gospels. Let us not take them for granted, but take them to heart and rejoice in the new life they bring: 'God loved the world so much that he gave his own Son, so that everyone who believes in him ... may have eternal life'. A world weighed down by the darkness of failure and selfishness must know, Jesus says, that he came from the Father, not 'to condemn' but to bring reconciliation and life.

As we take our bearings in the middle of a long journey, we often find new purpose and energy. Reflecting at this point in our journey of Lent, on the burdens we carry, can bring us to find again, in a more personal way, the essential truth of our Christian faith, the great truth we celebrate at the end of our journey.

John Thornhill sm  
www.theemmausseries.com

St. Paul reminds us that we are "created in Christ Jesus for good works".  
If you think God's plan for you could be a vocation in His Church, call Fr. Chris Lemieux  
416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

**Working wonders for people locally and around the world...**

ShareLife provides for everyone in our archdiocese to have access to a Catholic Family Services counselling office, regardless of their background or religious affiliation. Housebound seniors receive care from Society of Sharing volunteers. Our brothers and sisters in Christ receive assistance overseas through Development & Peace, Canadian Food for Children and the Pastoral Mission Fund. Immigrants and refugees are helped through Catholic Crosscultural Services and the Office for Refugees. ShareLife supports the education of our priests and deacons at Serra House, Redemptoris Mater and St. Augustine's seminaries. ShareLife creates a happier and safer community for us all.

ShareLife's campaign continues – Please give generously. You can work wonders!

PARISH

John 9.1-41 ~ Ephesians 5.8-14 ~ 1 Samuel 16.1b, 6-7, 10-13



**Mass Intentions This Week – March 16–22**

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ Carmen Garavito	The family
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Pat Murray	The Brennan family
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Arturs & Romualds Dubrovskis	The family
Thursday, 9am	✠ Joseph Hazel	Carmela Langlois
Friday, 9am	✠ Linda Gagnon	Marjorie Feheley
Saturday, 9am	✠ Joseph Parise	Raymond Jalea & family
5:15pm	✠ Giuseppe Pecoraro	The family
Sunday, 8am	✠ Maria DiRocco	The DiPierdomenico family
9:30am	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ✠	
11am	✠ Isilda Gonsalves	The family
12:30pm	✠ Bruce & Alice Rolston	Patrick Sullivan

**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.

"Give me an army saying the Rosary and I will conquer the world."

– Blessed Pope Pius IX

**Stations of the Cross Celebrated Fridays During Lent at 7:30pm in the Church**

This 20–25 minute dialogue between Christ and the congregation urges us to carry on His unfinished business & unite our human will with that of God. Each meditation is an authentic application of Jesus' suffering to our personal lives. A great way to prepare for Easter. **Well worth your time!**



**Feasts of Saints Patrick and Joseph – March 17 & 19, Following 9am Mass**

You are invited to the parish hall for Irish coffee and scones, then Italian zepole and coffee!

**OLS 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – We need YOUR energy and ideas!**



A planning meeting for volunteers will be held on Tuesday, March 24 from 7:30–9pm in the parish hall. The list of proposed activities includes a dinner/dance, lecture series, ministry retreat, commemorative pictorial book, parish picnic & more.

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

\$10 per session. Bring a yoga-type mat, perhaps a bottle of water and wear comfy clothing!

**Chocolate Easter Eggs for Sale – Weekend of March 21/22**

Help support FertilityCare Toronto, a ShareLife charity supporting women & couples with natural family planning and women's health. Chocolate Easter egg lollipops (\$2) and chocolate covered almonds (\$5) will be on sale at the back of the church after all Masses. For more, visit fertilitycare.ca

**A Reminder – Your Tax Receipt Covers Offertory & Special Collections**

All credit card and Capital Campaign donations will be receipted directly by the Archdiocese.

**Parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land November 9–17, 2015**

This voyage under the spiritual leadership of Fr. Matthew Furguele marks the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of OLS Parish. Cost is \$2,490 pp. Contact Halina at 905-886-0232, ext. 315 or 647-294-4116.

COMMUNITY

LOVE LIFE ☺ LIVE LENT TRANSFORM YOUR WORLD

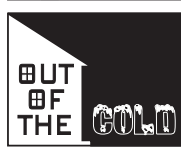
**KofC Kingsway Council – Fish & Chip Dinner – St. Clement Church, Mar. 20, 5:30pm**

Tickets will be sold at St. Clement Church after the 4:45pm Mass on Mar. 14 & after the 9:30 and 11:30am Masses on Mar. 15. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$7 for children under 13 (\$2 more at the door). Tickets can also be ordered by leaving a message at 416-799-0445. All proceeds to St. Francis Table.

**Afternoon Q&A Dementia & Alzheimer's Disease – Mar. 24, 1–3pm**

Takes place at Bloordale United Church, 4258 Bloor St. W. (north side of Bloor, west of the West Mall. TTC users can catch the #49 Bloor West Bus from Kipling Station.) Call 416-621-1710 or 416-620-4098 or visit www.bloordale.ca for more information. There is no charge for this event and no pre-registration is required. Parking is available.

**14<sup>th</sup> Annual OOC Art Show – Mar. 28, 10:30am–3pm + Mar. 29, 11am–12:30pm**



Every Friday since the season opened in November, Out of the Cold guests have been working to produce original art which will be proudly displayed and offered for sale. These unframed paintings will be sold for \$25 each, with proceeds going directly to the artists. Takes place at All Saints' Kingsway Church, 2850 Bloor St. W at Prince Edward Dr. (enter by King's Lynn).

**Tenebrae Holy Family Church, 1372 King Street West – Wed., April 1, 8pm**

Enjoy 3 nocturns of chanted lessons & psalms, with polyphonic lamentations and responsories, followed by lauds. You can follow along in your Liber Usualis. Featuring music by Lassus, Victoria, Allegri, Palestrina, along with Gregorian chant. Visit www.oratory-toronto.org

**Pilgrimage to the (U.S.) National Shrine Of The Divine Mercy – Apr. 11–13**

Join Fr. Martin Pereira on a memorable journey! Given a near-perfect 4.9 out of 5 by reviewers on Google, the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA is a "stunning and very moving...oasis of peace"; most worthy of your time. Cost is \$475 pp. Call 416-251-9944 for info.

**Hurting as a Result of an Abortion? Healing & Reconciliation is Possible!**

Project Rachel is a sensitive, private and confidential experience for women and men that lets you speak with someone who understands and cares. We invite all whose lives have been affected by abortion to a journey of healing and reconciliation with God, their church community and themselves. **You are not alone! We can help. Together we can begin anew.** The next retreat date for women May 22–24. Take the first step – call us 416-629-8264 or email projectrachel@stmarysrefuge.org



**Congratulations to Parisioner Jay Mandarin**

Jay Mandarin, a regular at the Sunday 12:30pm Mass, has been recognized for his exceptional long-term contributions to the community. Mandarin is one of 13 citizens who received the 2014 Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship. The Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lt. Governor of Ontario, presented the award at a ceremony held at the Ontario Legislature on Nov. 5, 2014. "This year's recipients (...) are truly representative of what can be achieved by taking initiative and aiming high," Dowdeswell said. Along with founding the not-for-profit C.J. Skateboard Park and School, a 28,000 square-foot facility for at-risk youth, Mandarin sits on the board of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario and has raised over 50 million dollars for a range of likeminded charities. **Congratulations, Jay!**

**Are You Caught Up With Salt + Light? – Visit their Website Today!**

It's worth a virtual trip to www.saltandlighttv.org – there's much to watch, read and experience. From Lenten resources & interesting interviews to videos from Rome, the site is brimming!