

Jesus proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom, by preaching and by the healings that signalled the Kingdom's mysterious coming in his own person.

Critical studies of the miracle narratives of the four gospels have produced important conclusions. They concern a relatively small number of events – about 30 in all. These narratives offer a distinct contrast to the characteristics of typical 'wonder stories'. Though part of the Christian message from the beginning, they are constantly associated with a concern that they not give rise to a superficial popular enthusiasm, but be understood as signs of the coming of the Kingdom. We have already recognised the importance of this concern of Mark. His account of the healing of the leper, as Jesus begins his Galilean ministry presses home the point.

What a magnificent encounter with which to introduce the missionary journeys of Jesus. It would be hard to find a more telling symbol of the human miseries that Jesus was sent to overcome, than the plight of the leper who threw himself at the feet of Jesus – 'If you want to you can cure me'. It was a situation produced in large part by human ignorance and fear, accentuated by traditions of ritual cleanness. Our first reading from Leviticus describes this pathetic condition in graphic detail – obliged to wear torn clothes, with hair dishevelled, and sounding the warning cry, 'Unclean!', that ostracised the leper from normal society. What the biblical writings called 'leprosy' included not only the dread Hansen's disease, but many other skin disorders, many of which modern medicine recognises not to be contagious.



Say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priests

As the Saviour is moved with compassion in the presence of this human misery, we are reminded that the Servant of God of the late Isaian writings, who embodied God's saving designs, by 'bearing the sorrows' of the people, is described as assuming the condition of a leper – 'Despised, familiar with suffering, one from whom we averted our gaze' (Is 53:3). In fact, Jesus made an astounding gesture of solidarity with the man in his misery. As he healed the leper with his word of prophetic authority, he 'stretched out his hand and touched him'. In doing so, according to the Law, he had made himself ritually unclean.

Those who claimed the power of healing were not uncommon in the world in which Jesus lived. Being seen as one of their number could seriously compromise the evangelising mission that had been so tellingly expressed in the healing of the leper. Jesus urged the man, therefore, to go off quietly, fulfilling the Law's prescription by having the priests verify his cure. But the man who had been cured could not contain himself. So important, however was it to Jesus – that the notoriety his healing had attracted be minimised – that he was forced to keep away from the towns. Nevertheless, the people were still drawn to him – Who is this man?

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

Today's Gospel says that "Jesus was moved with pity when He saw a leper". Are you moved with love and compassion when you see the outcasts of today's society? Jesus continues to call forward men and women to minister as he did.

If you think God is calling you to a Church vocation, contact Fr. Chris Lemieux 416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

Together we are continuing to work wonders...

We are all called to care for those who are vulnerable in our community. The ShareLife parish campaign gives us an opportunity to reach out in justice and love. Last year, ShareLife's 42 agencies and grant recipients provided over 381,000 services to over 114,000 people here in our archdiocese, and assisted countless others in developing countries around the world. In 42 municipalities, and in more than 20 languages, those in need received support and care as a result of our generosity. My prayer is that you will join me as together we work wonders to lovingly care for those who are in need around us.

—Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto

ShareLife Sunday is March 1 — Please give generously. You can work wonders!

PARISH

Readings ~ Leviticus 13:1-2, 45-46 ~ 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1 ~ Mark 1:40-45



Mass Intentions This Week — February 16–22

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ William O'Meara	Joanne & John Longo
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Charles & Louise Lecours	Gail Weiler & Dave Tyrell
Wednesday	Ash Wednesday <i>Masses at 9am (celebrated by Bishop Boissonneau) and 7:30pm</i>	
Thursday, 9am	✠ Patricia Murray	Eugene & Elaine Hall
Friday, 9am	✠ Cesar Antonio Sanchez	The family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Barbara Gorecka	Teresa & family
5:15pm	✠ Steve Fedchak	Peggy & Eugene Werhun
Sunday, 8am	✠ Anastasia Coutinho	The Coutinho family
9:30am	✠ Patricia Murray	The Stapleton family
11am	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ✠	
12:30pm	✠ Michalina & Peter Dziuma	The family

Pancake Tuesday Returns! — Feb. 17, Continuous Buffet Service, 5–7pm

► This week! The ShareLife committee will again be hosting this 'tasty' event in the parish hall. Enjoy pancakes & sausages, along w/coffee, tea or orange juice... maple syrup, anyone? Cost: \$5 children/\$7 adults until Monday; Tuesday and/or at the door \$7 children/\$9 adults.

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. "One day, through the Rosary and the Scapular, Our Lady will save the world." —St. Dominic

Victoria Scholars: Songs of Love — Sunday, March 1, 7:30pm @OLS

Enjoy this musical examination of love's many forms. This concert features works by Brahms, Fauré, Rutter, Tallis, & Vaughan Williams. Tickets (\$30/\$25) at the door or www.victoriascholars.ca

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

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



► This Weekend Chalice — Will You Help a Child in Need?

Thanks to Deacon Philip Allard for speaking to us about the Chalice sponsorship program. For more information or to sponsor a destitute child, visit www.chalice.ca

An Invitation to Serve — Help Lead the Whole People of God Into His Presence!

Do you feel God is calling you to serve but are too nervous or unsure? Please, have no fear. Contact Altar Server Coordinator, Kristen Wilson at kristen@sorrows.ca and take the first step!

Capital Campaign Every Donation Still Being Matched! Every Donation Counts!

Thank you to everyone who has participated in this effort, and to the generous family from our parish who will match your donation through next weekend. We encourage every family to make a gift/pledge. Let's all be a part of this most worthy project.

75th Anniversary Planning Committee — Call for Volunteers

We're looking for 'a few good people' to assist with the planning and organization of some special events for this celebratory year in our parish. Please contact the parish office if you can help!



COMMUNITY LOVE LIFE ☺ LIVE LENT TRANSFORM YOUR WORLD

Cardinal Collins Invites Feedback In Preparation for 2015 Synod of Bishops



Cardinal Collins invites Catholics throughout the Archdiocese of Toronto to offer insights & feedback on issues that will be considered as part of the 2015 Synod of Bishops on "The Vocation and the Mission of the Family in the Church and in the Contemporary World." **The deadline for feedback is February 16.** More information available at www.archtoronto.org/synod

Ecumenical Bible Study Winter Session Begins Tuesday, Feb. 17, 9:30–11:30am

Sister Judith Kidd, I.B.V.M., who holds degrees in sacred theology from the Universities of Toronto and Windsor, will continue to lead us through The Women in the Bible. Takes place at Islington United Church (25 Burnhamthorpe Rd., just north of Dundas St.). For further information please call Helen Matich at 416-234-1770. **All are welcome!**

FertilityCare Toronto — Free Introductory Session — Evening, February 19

NaProTECHNOLOGY is a very specialized reproductive science that assists with various gynaecological issues, including PCOS, endometriosis, PMS, and infertility. This free session will be held at St Christopher's Church, Mississauga. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Medal at jennifer@fertilitycare.ca or visit www.fertilitycare.ca or call 416.465.2868.

The Embracing Christ of the San Damiano Cross Feb. 28, 9:30am–3:30pm

Those who have experienced loss are invited to attend a Lenten retreat led by Capuchin Franciscan - Brother Ignatius Feaver at St. Clare's Church (1118 St. Clair Ave. W.) in the parish hall. A light lunch will be provided. All are welcome. Please pre-register for this event by calling Mary at 416-921-1163, ext. 2235 or by emailing mberincasa@cfstoronto

Las Mañanitas: A Baroque High Mass In New Spain — February 28, 7:30pm

Toronto's Tallis Choir present this recreation of the Mass of the Virgin of Guadalupe (A.D. 1650) at St. Patrick's Church (McCaul & Dundas). Tickets & information at www.tallischoir.com

37th Annual St. Patrick's Mass and Celebration — Sunday, March 1, 3:30pm

His Eminence, Cardinal Collins will be principal celebrant & homilist at this festive celebration. Takes place at St. Cecilia's Church, 161 Annette St. with an informal reception to follow in the parish hall. For info, call 416-769-8163 or email stceciliatoronto@gmail.com

Lift Jesus Higher Rally March 7, 9am–5:30pm, Metro Convention Centre

Enjoy compelling talks, uplifting music, prayer ministry, inspiring personal testimonies, confession, a Divine Mercy celebration & Eucharistic procession. Closing Mass celebrated by Cardinal Collins. Tickets are \$20. A youth rally (13-18 year-olds; \$10) will be held simultaneously next door. For info, call 416-251-4255, email LJHR@rogers.com or visit www.lift-jesus-higher-rally.org

2015 Conference — March 14, 8:30am–5:00pm

A Catholic Women's conference with speakers including Cardinal Collins, Dr. Josie Lombardi, EWTN personality Gary Zimak, Ellen Hrkach, president of Catholic Writers Guild & authors Moira Noonan & Dorothy Pilarski. Visit www.dynamicwomenfaith.com or call 905-279-7702.



ALSO ► March 13, 7–10pm A special evening for Catholic mothers and their daughters.

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

Join Fr. Martin Pereira on a memorable journey! Given a 96% rating by TripAdvisor.com members, the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA is a "stunning and very moving...oasis of peace" and most worthy of your time. Cost is \$475 per person. Call 416-251-9944 for more info.