

Today's scholarship helps us to understand how the first three gospels were put together. Though they are not biographies in today's sense, they tell the story of Jesus, incorporating material deriving from recollections of Jesus circulating among the first Christian communities, within the well known sequence of his life - his baptism by John; his teaching and healing ministry in Galilee; his journey to Jerusalem; and his passion and its aftermath. We have already seen that Matthew presents Jesus to an audience with a Jewish background. The abundant material contained in this - the longest of the gospels - alternates narrative sequences with long passages containing the teaching of Jesus upon particular themes. Today's gospel concludes the gospel's introductory narrative section - concerning the birth of Jesus, his baptism by John and his temptations in the wilderness. It serves as a solemn prelude to the next three chapters, in which the heart of the teaching of Jesus is presented as The Sermon on the Mount.



The people that lived in darkness have seen a great light

Jesus inaugurated his public ministry, as the events that were to lead to the death of John the Baptist brought an end to Old Testament prophecy. Matthew underlines the significance of this development by invoking his theme, 'This was to fulfil the words of the prophet'. As we have seen, Matthew does not claim to be giving a rigorous interpretation of the prophet's text; he is expressing the conviction that, read with faith in Christ, the writings of the Old Testament resonate with an anticipation of what is to come. The passage Matthew cites is the first reading of today's liturgy. Speaking to his contemporaries, Isaiah is referring to contemporary events - probably expressing the hope that the northernmost territories of the old kingdom of David will be recovered by one of David's descendants, so that the 'yoke' of Assyria would be 'broken'. Coming from Isaiah, the courtier who urged the king to trust in the promises made to the descendants of David, this hope certainly had messianic overtones. The ministry of Jesus, 'Son of David' - in Galilee - is seen by Matthew as fulfilling these expectations.

The fact that the life and ministry of Jesus took place in Galilee helps us to situate him in his world, and in the designs of God. This northern extremity of the old kingdom, 'Galilee of the Gentiles' (district encircled by Gentiles) was a cosmopolitan crossroads of cultures, including many pagans in its population. Its people were bilingual, speaking both Greek and Aramaic - the common language of Palestine in the time of Jesus. Galileans were, not surprisingly, looked down upon by the nation's establishment, centred in Jerusalem. In the designs of God, the world's Saviour came among us as one who shared the lot of a composite population with little standing and influence - 'Can any good come out of Nazareth?' (Jn 1.46).

As we shall see, the Church is to be one of the key themes of Matthew's gospel. This is anticipated in the fact that his solemn prelude to the Sermon on the Mount includes the calling of the four apostles who will be prominent in the ministry of Jesus.

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Are you willing to proclaim the coming of the kingdom as a priest or a religious?

If you think God is calling you to ministerial service, contact Fr. Chris Lemieux, Vocations Director, Archdiocese of Toronto. 416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

PARISH

Readings ~ Isaiah 8:23 - 9:3 ~ 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17 ~ Matthew 4:12-23

Mass Intentions This Week — January 23 — January 29

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ Barbara Wright	Marie Clarke
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Stella McDonald	Coba Clancy
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Jeanne LaRose	Jimmy & Winnie Magee
Thursday, 9am	✠ Ted McConvey	Passarelli family
Friday, 9am	✠ Graham McConnell	Hugh & Laura MacKinnon
Saturday, 9am	✠ Rosa Giannone	Ainslie & Pat Harvey
5:15pm	✠ Lorne Harper	Carmina & family
Sunday, 8am	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ✠	
9:30am	✠ Margaret de Ga	family
11am	✠ Josephine & Anthony Morrell	J & L Sheppard
12:30pm	✠ John Drohan	family

Reminders for Sacramental Preparation

CONFIRMATION SESSION 2B meets on Wednesday, January 25, 7-8:30pm, Parish Hall.

FIRST COMMUNION CATECHISM FOR PARENTS meets on Thursday, January 26, 7-8pm, Parish Hall.

SINGING OPPORTUNITIES

If you have an interest in singing, please contact Gordon Mansell, OLS Music Director for a no-obligation chat by email at gmansell@sympatico.ca.

- 1) Our **OLS 11:00 Choir** would like to grow. If you have a love of sacred music, consider joining this choral ensemble.
- 2) The **MOSAIC Canadian Vocal Ensemble** is a concert and touring choir which rehearses at OLS. Performing concerts and events with OLS choirs at OLS and elsewhere in Toronto, this choir also tours and has performed in the Cathedral's of Ottawa, Kingston and in Europe at Basilica churches in Florence, Assisi and Rome and three occasions at the Vatican.

Children's Liturgy of the Word — We welcome children ages 4-10 years old to come celebrate a modified Liturgy of the Word for Children every Sunday during the 9:30am Mass in the Parish Hall.

Rosary — prayed daily at 8:30am prior to the 9am Mass. The **Rosary Group** meets every Friday at 2pm in the Parish Hall and prays fifteen decades followed by the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. All are welcome to join in prayer.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2017

Dear Heavenly Father,
As we celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity this month, we pray that all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching on unity. May we, with prayer and fraternal charity, strive to restore Christian unity and collaborate to meet the challenges facing humanity.

~ January 2017 Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

COMMUNITY

Lectio Divina with Cardinal Thomas Collins: Merciless and Merciful (Matthew 18:15-35) Sunday, February 12, 2017, St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica. We begin with Vespers (Evening Prayer) at 7 p.m., followed by Lectio Divina from 7:30 to 8:15 p.m. Lectio Divina ("divine, or sacred, reading") is the name given to a spiritual tradition among Christians over the last two thousand years, in which they attentively and prayerfully read the word of God. It is intended to draw us closer to God, and to transform our attitudes and behaviour. All are welcome!

Prayer Service for Christian Unity - Sunday, January 29, 3:30pm, St. Michael's Cathedral. The theme for the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is "Reconciliation — The love of Christ compels us" (2 Corinthians 5:14-20). Join us in an ecumenical prayer service, led by His Eminence Cardinal Thomas Collins, Chaldean Catholic Bishop Emanuel Shaleta, Coptic Orthodox Bishop Anba Mina, Anglican Suffragan Bishop Peter Fenty, and accompanied by other city-wide religious leaders. Homilist: Rev. Dr. Peter Holmes Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Paid parking is available | Refreshments to follow. For further information, please contact the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs at (416) 934-3400 ext. 344 or ext. 527 or vkwok@archtoronto.org

TAIZE PRAYER INVITATION - The Presentation Brothers & The Franciscan Friars of the Atonement invite you to a TAIZE PRAYER SESSION Venue: The Friary - 15 Laxton Avenue in Parkdale (Queen & Lansdowne) January 25th @ 6:30pm February 22nd @ 6:30pm. March 29th @ 6:30 p.m. "So you had not the strength to keep awake with me for one hour"? LK. 26:40 Light refreshments will be served. (You are invited to bring a non-perishable item for the Missionaries of Charity) Telephone: 416-537-0327 Limited Parking Available

The Source - Come experience the peace and healing of Jesus. Thursdays in 2017: January 26, February 23, March 30, April 27, May 25. HOLY HOUR WITH MUSIC LED BY THE SISTERS OF LIFE, 7-8 pm (Confession Available), 8-9pm Social, new location St. Peter's Church, 840 Bathurst Street / Toronto, ON MSR 3G1 (across from Bathurst subway). For more information: 416.463.2722 / sistersoflife.org

MARRIED LOVE - A practical course to help you achieve greater marital happiness TOPICS: The Love Bond, Conjugal Love Money Matters, Work-Life Balance, A Vibrant Family Life, The Art of Communication. METHODOLOGY: The topics will be discussed using the case-study-method (pioneered by Harvard Business School). This provides you and your spouse with a practical and objective framework with which to approach a variety of situations in your marriage. DATES + LOCATION: Feb 11, Mar 4, - Mississauga Valley Community Centre, 1275 Mississauga Valley Blvd., Mississauga, ON L5A 3R8 REGISTRATION + INQUIRIES: Family Enrichment Toronto | fetoronto.ca | familyenrichmentgto@gmail.com COST: \$275 per couple.

EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES TO HELP INTEGRATE SYRIAN NEWCOMERS
A Workshop for Church and Community Sponsors presented by ECULINKS Etobicoke and Islington United Church. Join us to learn how to create a strategy that should help your sponsored family find a road to appropriate employment. Dennis Bradley, Islington United Church, Eddie Alkemade, Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church *Sponsor Experiences*, Mahmoud Allouch, Employment Strategist *How to Create an Employment Strategy that Works*. Small Group Discussion led by table co-ordinators Saturday, February 4, 2017 10:30 am — 1:30 pm Lunch included. Our Lady of Sorrows Church - Downstairs Hall. Let us know if you are joining us by registering at www.eventbrite.com. For information contact: Peter Lindsay — peterlindsay101@gmail.com