

We are all familiar with today's gospel. It tells us something fundamental about our life as Catholics. This text portrays Peter as the one authorised by the Saviour to lead his disciples in professing their faith in him. In this age, when God calls believers to work for Christian unity, it is important that we understand it well. When we compare Matthew's account of Peter's confession with that of Mark (Mk 8.27-33), we see that the two evangelists present Peter in very different ways. In Mark's account, to the questions of Jesus, Peter responds, 'You are the messiah'. Then, when Jesus begins to explain that his role will be very different from that of the messiah of popular expectations - 'The Son of Man is destined to suffer and be put to death' - Peter can not accept what Jesus is saying; and he is sharply rebuked by Jesus, 'Get behind me Satan! You are not thinking as God thinks'. When Matthew is writing his gospel, long after this incident, Peter has long been recognised and venerated as the one who was appointed by Jesus, as the leader of the chosen disciples who were to carry on his mission. In order to celebrate the role given to Peter by the Saviour - a role that he has carried out with great faith and courage - Matthew combines two incidents that took place at different times. He uses Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi as an introduction to what is his main point - the commission that was given to Peter by the Lord, so fundamental for the life of the first Christian community. The gospels make it clear that Peter received such a commission. This commission may well have been referred to by Jesus in different contexts, in view of its basic importance in the carrying on of the mission of Jesus. The change of name recalled by Matthew in this text is so remarkable (Jesus used the Aramaic word for 'rock', kephas, never before used as a name, translated as Petros in Greek) that it obviously had far-reaching significance. Luke refers to the commission of Peter as being made in the highly charged atmosphere of the Last Supper: 'I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail, and once you have recovered, you in your turn must strengthen your brethren' (Lk 22.31). In John's gospel, the risen Lord's three questions to Peter on the shore of the lake - reminding us of Peter's three denials - lead on to his great commission, 'Feed my lambs, feed my sheep'. This whole tradition is filled with reminders of Peter's frailty - a great lesson for the whole Church, faithful and pastors.



You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church

In its totality, Matthew's text is a magnificent summary of the self-understanding of the Church of the first generation, and of Peter's leadership role in that Church. Matthew alone of the evangelists used the term 'church' (in this and a later text). This term, that Paul used so frequently - echoing the Old Testament term for the community of faith of old Israel - refers to the New Israel inaugurated by Jesus. The 'gates' of the cities of antiquity were the embodiment of their strength. The Church founded on the ministry of Peter, the 'rock', will triumph over the dark forces of the kingdom of death; and, under Peter's leadership, open the way to the final Kingdom announced and inaugurated by the Saviour. The words of Jesus make clear the practical implications of the authority given to Peter. 'Binding and loosing' referred to the authority of the teachers of old Israel, to legislate and determine policy, and the exclude from the community. If this pastoral authority is shared with the other apostles (cf. Mt 18.18), it is only under the leadership of Peter that they can effectively carry out this pastoral responsibility.

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

**"For who has known the mind of the Lord?"
Sometimes our mind is not necessarily the mind of the Lord.**

If God is calling you to serve as a priest, deacon, sister or brother, contact Fr. Chris Lemieux
416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

Readings ~ Isaiah 22:15, 19-23 ~ Romans 11:33-36 ~ Matthew 16:13-20

PARISH

Mass Intentions This Week — August 25 to 31

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ Members of the Mercado and Ferik families	Eredina Ferik
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Angelo & Carolina Albertini	The family
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Isilda Gonsalves	The family
Thursday, 9am	✠ Patrick, Ellen, & Joan Brennan	The family
Friday, 9am	✠ Lena Badali	The family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Jeremija Urosevic	Delia Urosevic
5:15pm	✠ Theodore Alex Ray	The Della Rocca family
Sunday, 8am	✠ Daniella Bratty	Kevin Fioravanti & Diana Ciccale
9:30am	✠ Rudy Fundarek	Anne Fundarek & the Medal family
11am	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ✠	
12:30pm	✠ Lister & Bea Sullivan	Patrick Sullivan & 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.

The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet are "a spiritual medicine... good for your heart, for your soul, for your whole life."

Franciscans

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!

Volunteer Required — Can you spare 30 minutes per week?

A volunteer is needed to help supervise members of our youth choir on Thursdays, prior to rehearsals, from 3:15 until 3:45pm. If you're able to assist, please contact the parish office.

2014 ShareLife Campaign Results — Congratulations and thanks!

We should all be very pleased with our Parish's final total in the 2014 campaign.

We raised a healthy **\$373,362.64** in support of ShareLife's many worthy programs! **Well done!**



Update: Iraqi Refugees — Love and commitment can make a difference!

To ignore the suffering of the tens of thousands of refugees in the Middle East and Africa is impossible. They are driven from their homes and forced into a frightening, desperate and dangerous existence. Children are especially vulnerable; they do not understand why their house was destroyed and how it is that their friends have gone away.

Some have asked about the refugee family that we sponsored a few years ago. The members of your parish's Refugee Team are very happy to report that the family is doing well. After a difficult start they continue to integrate into the fabric of the city. Amer has a full-time job in a downtown restaurant and Wadea is at home, attending ESL classes and staying in contact with the extended family in the Middle East and in Toronto. Their son Mark begins high school next month and daughter Mirna will enter grade 4. **Please continue to pray for them every day!**

'Final Fridays' Fellowship — last Friday of each month, after 9am Mass

Everyone is invited to the parish hall for coffee, tea and breakfast rolls. Take advantage of this special opportunity to get to know your neighbour. **All are welcome... bring a friend!**



COMMUNITY

Drop-In Bridge — Declarer? Dummy? Palooka? Get your opening bids ready...

Drop-In Bridge resumes on Thursday, September 4, 1–3:30pm in the parish hall meeting room. Everyone is welcome to join and no partner is required. For more information, contact Rena Guerard at 416-236-0728 or Gail Weiler at 416-239-5337.

Planning to be a Catholic teacher? — Information you need to know!

It is critical for you to know that to be hired to teach in any Catholic school board in Ontario, as part of your application for employment there must be a letter of reference from your pastor. If you are planning to apply to teach in a Catholic school, it is **highly recommended** that you plan to have a conversation with Fr. Nino early in the process to avoid disappointment and stress at the time when applications are to be submitted.

Prayers for Peace — An Interfaith Service — Sunday, Sept. 7, 3pm

Cardinal Thomas Collins invites you to join him and other believers of many faiths as we pray for peace in areas of conflict around the world and, in a special way, for the Middle East. This interfaith prayer service will take place at St. Paul's Basilica, 83 Power Street. Plenty of free parking is available.



Archdiocese of Toronto

Do you love to sing? The Let There Be Music Choir is looking for singers!

We have been in existence for over 25 years and provide a wonderful environment for singers to realize their musical talents. Our choristers sing for the sheer love of singing. We boast over 70 members and are always looking to augment our ranks. Opportunities await for singers in all vocal categories: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass.

Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 9:30–11:30am and we perform two concerts annually. For more information, email choppertini@hotmail.com or call 416-621-8966.

Attention: Graduates of Holy Name of Mary Schools — 1964–2014

As we start a new school year on September 2, Holy Name of Mary Schools will be celebrating 50 years of leadership & contribution to Ontario Catholic Secondary Education. Holy Name of Mary College School on Mississauga Road and Holy Name of Mary Catholic Secondary School in Brampton continue to offer the Felician Sisters' tradition in the education of young women.

Graduates of both schools are invited to a planning meeting for our 50th Anniversary celebrations on Wednesday, September 17, 7pm at the College campus, 2241 Mississauga Road. For additional information call 905-891-1890 or 905-458-5541.



Faith Connections — Events for Young Adults (18-39)

For more information call Vanessa Nicholas-Schmidt at 416-467-2645 or point your browser to www.faithconnections.ca — a ministry of Fontbonne Ministries, Sisters of St. Joseph, Toronto.

► 7th Annual MIX & MINGLE — Sept. 21, 4–8pm, 15 Laxton Ave.

FC & the Religious communities of Toronto invite young adults (student, working professional, single, married, young parent) to Sunday Mass followed by our house party and barbecue! It's a chance to meet with men and women religious and explore how their spiritualities can nourish your faith journey. **RSVP required by September 12.**

► THEOLOGY ON TAP: Pornography — Sept. 22, 7–9pm, Duke of York Pub, 39 Prince Arthur Ave.

An evening of thought-provoking theological discussion in a comfortable & relaxed setting, with special guests: Dr. Moira McQueen, Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute, & Denis Costello, Catholic Family Services of Toronto. **Munchies provided, cash bar, come and bring a friend!**