

Last Sunday, the liturgy invited us to see Advent as a time of preparation for the Saviour's birth, the dawn of salvation. Today we take up this theme again, in the gospel reading from Luke. John the Baptist is a prominent figure in the liturgies of Advent. After a long period in which the voice of the prophets was not heard, the Lord's Precursor – praised by Jesus as 'more than a prophet' (Mt 11:9) – made his appearance. Luke's introducing of John is dramatic and skilful. Situating John's heralding in the midst of the real world's history, he names contemporaries who foreshadow the tragic conflict that is soon to be enacted – Pilate who will authorize Christ's death, the petty rulers of the nation under occupation, the high priests whose hostility seals the fate of Jesus. But the gloom of this introduction gives way immediately to the vision of hope and promise that inspired John's mission. The Baptist – remembered as a man of the desert – is presented as inaugurating a new Exodus for God's people, as foretold by the prophet Isaiah.



All humanity will see the salvation of God

Because the first Exodus from Egypt was the defining moment in the destiny of the Chosen People, it is not surprising that old Israel sometimes looked forward to the final fulfilment of God's promises as a kind of new Exodus. Our first reading, from the prophet Baruch, takes up this theme – making part of today's liturgy, not only because it echoes the words of Isaiah, describing the making of a way through mountains and valleys 'so that Israel may walk in safety', but also because its message of hope is admirably suited to the mood of our Advent liturgies. Looking back on the return from the Babylonian captivity as a second Exodus, the prophet looks forward to God's final intervention on behalf of his people as a last great Exodus. It is an outstanding example of the boundless hopes of those among the Chosen People who were faithful to their Jewish faith, looking forward to the coming of the messiah, in the last years of Old Testament times. When God remembers his promises, and Jerusalem's children are reassembled, they will discard their mourning garments and 'put on the beauty of the glory of God forever'; God will make them a sign for 'every nation under heaven'; God will give them a new name, 'Peace through integrity'. We are challenged in this time of renewal, to match this remarkable faith and hope.

Last week, we saw how – as 'the Son of Man' foretold in the prophecy of Daniel – Jesus presented himself as the fulfilment of Israel's boundless hopes. In today's second reading, from Paul's letter to the Philippians, we see how this truth has become part of the faith of the first Christian Church. One of the principal themes of the prophets of old Israel, as they warned a wayward people to amend their ways, was the 'Day of the Lord', when all must face the judgment of God. Paul now takes up this old theme – but for him it is 'the Day of Christ Jesus', when the Saviour will return as Son of Man to be our Judge. Though it is a season of hope and joy, Advent is also a time in which we are called to a deeper conversion.

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

Could God be calling you to be a priest, deacon, brother or sister in order to help our world of today to truly "prepare the way of the Lord"?

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

Readings ~ Baruch 5.1-9 ~ Philipians 1.3-6, 8-11 ~ Luke 3.1-6

PARISH

Mass Intentions This Week – December 7 to 13

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ Denise Barouskas	Jim & Winnie Magee
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Alexander & Concetta Patullo	The family
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Donald Barrett	The family
Thursday, 9am	✠ Mary DiLella	Josie DiLella
Friday, 9am	✠ Matthew Vogtle	The family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Mildred Freyer	Connie DeWitt
5:15pm	☞ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ☞	
Sunday, 8am	✠ Lena Badali	The family
9:30am	✠ Antonio DeFaria	The family
11am	✠ Mairead O'Hanlon	The family
12:30pm	✠ Yong Tjan	The family

Stretch & Flex – Join us! – Running Room, 2nd Floor, Tuesdays, 6–7pm

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

ShareLife 2016 – Call for Volunteers!

Volunteers are needed to help with our ShareLife campaign. For more information or to participate, please call the parish office.



Toronto Right to Life Christmas Cards – now available



View the designs at www.righttolife.to and visit the parish office to purchase: \$8 per 10-pack, including envelopes. Proceeds go to TRTL's pro-life educational network.

THIS WEEKEND Campaign Life Christmas Cakes – December 5/6

In the past, your purchase of fruitcakes has raised over \$100,000 annually in support of CL's baby-saving efforts. Produced by a Toronto pro-life baker, these scrumptious 'traditional recipe' cakes are \$15/regular & \$25/deluxe.



THIS WEEK 75th Anniversary Concert – Tuesday, December 8, 7:30pm

Don't forget to join us for an evening of beautiful music! There is no charge for this event.

All Day Advent Confessions@OLS – Saturday, Dec. 19, 9:30am–5pm

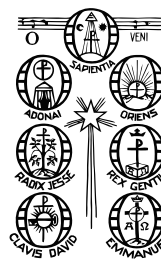
This wonderful parish tradition continues, with two priests available in the church to administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Prepare the Way of the Lord!

Rosary Group – mornings suspended; Fridays, 2pm, above Running Room

Take this opportunity to pray the Holy Rosary every evening at home with your family!

Advent Vespers@OLS – Sunday, December 20, 4:30pm

You are invited to invest some of your time to "prepare the way of the Lord" by attending this beautiful service. As part of the ancient monastic tradition of Holy Hours, the early evening observance of Vespers consists of carefully selected scriptural readings, psalms, choral motets, chants & hymns. Including a solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, you will experience 50 minutes of peace, tranquility & prayer. For more information, contact the parish office.



"Holiness doesn't mean doing extraordinary things, but doing ordinary things with love and faith." – Pope Francis

SCHOOL

Over the last several months Our Lady of Sorrows school participated in a School Accommodation Review along with St. Louis, St. Leo, Holy Angels and St. Mark. Each school was represented as part of the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) with the objective of addressing imbalanced enrolment. The ARC collected input from the parent communities and from the general community through the public consultation meetings.



Based on this information the ARC listed several recommendations in a report that was presented to the Board of Trustees on November 19th. The recommendation that will have a direct impact on OLS is a boundary change. The next step involves the Director of Education preparing a report in response to the ARC's report and this will be considered by the Board at the Corporate Affairs, Strategic Planning and Property Committee on December 8, 2015.

The public has the opportunity to provide input to the Director's report until January 2016.

The ARC's report and other related information are available for viewing on the Board website at www.bit.ly/1jpJ8jl

St. Michael's Cathedral Open House – December 8 & 9, 10am–7pm

His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, and Father Michael Busch, rector of St. Michael's Cathedral, invite the entire community to experience the beauty, architecture and unique historical journey of St. Michael's Cathedral. Extensive restoration has taken place over the last several years with the cathedral closed since June 2015 for major work. Two days of open houses during the Advent season will provide visitors with a preview of these efforts. From sculptors to brick layers and stone masons, restoration artists will showcase their expertise inside the church, with diverse exhibits highlighting the incredible efforts to restore the mother church of the Archdiocese of Toronto. A prayer service will take place each day at 12 noon. Come celebrate our faith in the city and meet the restoration artists of St. Michael's Cathedral. The cathedral is at 65 Bond St. Visit www.stmichaelscathedral.com



Archdiocese of Toronto

How Pope Francis Revived the Synod of Bishops 50 Years Later

The Faculty of Theology at the University of St. Michael's College hosts a talk by Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB, CEO of Salt & Light Catholic Media Foundation. Fr. Rosica has served as the English-language media attaché for the Synods of 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2015. This enlightening talk takes place on December 8 at 7pm at Madden Hall (inside in Carr Hall), University of St. Michael's College, 100 St. Joseph's St. For info, contact Catherine Mulrone at 416-926-7128

"The Annunciation" Advent Retreat – December 12, 9am

St. Francis Centre is hosting an Advent retreat with an in-depth consideration of the Mystery of the Annunciation. The retreat is guided by the Franciscans in residence and accompanied by visual aids and materials. A fraternal and abundant lunch is provided, followed by a meditated rosary within Holy Hour and personal free time during which the friars will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The retreat concludes with Holy Mass. Open to all. Takes place at St. Francis Centre, 208501 Hwy. 9, Caledon. Call 519-941-1747 for information.

Service of Nine Lessons & Carols with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

Enjoy music by Howells, Lauridsen, Poulenc and Willan. Takes place on Tuesday, December 22 at 7pm at the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, Paroisse du Sacré-Coeur, 381 Sherbourne St. For more information, visit www.thomasmorechurch.ca