

In today's gospel reading we continue Luke's account of the mission of John, the precursor of the Saviour. It reflects the life of a community that has come to recognize that, though the final moment of God's plan has come through the Risen Lord's Paschal Mystery, how that moment will unfold in the world's history is God's secret. They know that they must get on with their ordinary lives. Luke presents the preaching of John as 'Good News', foreshadowing important elements in the teaching of Jesus himself. It is 'tax collectors' and 'soldiers' – representing those looked down upon by respectable society in old Israel – who are open to John's message of repentance: the very ones who will respond to the message of Jesus. 'What must we do?', they ask John. It is not an easy question to ask with a humble sincerity that is open to hearing the truth. It reminds us of Advent's call to a deeper conversion and commitment. Luke's community remembers how John replied to this question, as calling them to get on with their ordinary lives, asking themselves whether they recognize Christ himself in their needy brothers and sisters, and whether they serve the Lord by the integrity with which they carry out their role in life. Traditionally, the liturgy of the Third Sunday of Advent overflows with the theme of the joy of believing. This is one of Luke's favourite themes, and the gospel reading's reference to the 'feeling of anticipation' John's preaching aroused, and his foretelling of the Lord who 'will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire' chime in with this theme. Clearly, our liturgy's other readings have been chosen with this tradition in mind. 'I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord', Paul writes to the Philippians; and he recommends practical ways that lead to authentic happiness 'in the Lord': tolerance towards those whose ways are not our own, and a prayer that unites trust in the Lord for the future with thanksgiving for his many blessings in the past. No doubt, taking seriously his faith in the one who has baptized us 'with the Holy Spirit and fire' has given Paul a personal experience of the 'peace' of which he speaks, the peace that only God can give. Something has gone wrong if our faith never brings us deep joy. Joy is the experience of what we were made for. The faith that the Baptiser heralded, the faith that is the gift of the Risen Lord, and the faith that unites Luke's community and so many other communities after them, is a personal knowledge of God's love and mercy. It brings a joy and peace 'that the world cannot give' (Jn 14:27). Even for old Israel, as our first reading from the prophet Zephaniah reminds us, joy was one of the hallmarks of authentic faith. In this astounding text, the prophet calls the people to 'rejoice' with all their hearts, because 'the Lord' of Israel's hopes is 'in their midst', victorious, 'renewing them by his love'. Their joy should mingle with the Lord's own rejoicing, as he 'dances with shouts of joy over them'. This text is doubly appropriate in these weeks of Advent – its words ('Rejoice, daughter of Zion, the Lord, your God is in your midst') may well have inspired Luke's Annunciation narrative.



He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

Could God be calling you to be a priest or religious and announce the Good News to His People as John the Baptist did?

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 ~ Zephaniah 3.14-18 ~ Luke 3.10-18 ~ Philippians 4.4-7

PARISH

Mass Intentions This Week – December 14 to 20

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ Janina & John Ryczko	The family
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Lorraine Redmond	The family
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Ken Morgan	The family
Thursday, 9am	✠ Nick Villani	L. Villani
Friday, 9am	✠ Angelina & Giuseppe Gesualdi	The Mclvor family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Enio Biason	The family
5:15pm	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ✠	
Sunday, 8am	✠ Lena Badali	The family
9:30am	✠ Steve Montador	Michael Foran
11am	✠ Patrick Guillemette	The family
12:30pm	✠ Sam Arrigo	Mom

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.



Christmas & New Year's Schedule

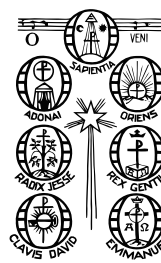
Christmas Eve – 5pm, 7:30pm, 11pm • Christmas Day – Regular Sunday Mass schedule
December 31 – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – 5:15pm vigil Mass
January 1 – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – Regular Sunday Mass schedule

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!

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.



75th Anniversary Parish Photo Directory

OLS|75 If you have not already had a sitting and would like to be included in the parish photo directory, call the parish office for an appointment to have your photo taken. There is no cost and you will receive a photo directory at no cost. If you love your photo(s) there is an option to purchase them but please note: **there is no obligation to do so.** Sittings are available Friday, December 18 to Monday, December 21. Call the parish office to book your sitting or to indicate that you are interested in being contacted if more sittings are offered at a later date.

Victoria Scholars Concert@OLS – "Christmas Echoes" – Sunday, Dec. 20, 7:30pm

The weather is getting chilly, the birds have headed south... it's time to join the Victoria Scholars for a festive and spirited celebration. Expect to be thrilled and transported by familiar carols and hymns, selections from our two Christmas CDs, and a number of gems from past seasons. Purchase tickets at the door or via this website with an online discount: www.bit.ly/1jMprCN

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

COMMUNITY

St. Leo's Parish – Bake & Floral Sale – Sunday, December 13, 9am - 1pm

Featuring baked goods, Filipino spring rolls, floral arrangements, baskets, honey, raffle, treats and more. 277 Royal York Rd. in the parish basement hall (use Stanley ave. entrance).

The Role of Music in Times of Loss – Monday, December 14, 6:30pm

Music speaks to the heart. At times when words are difficult, music can help to evoke expressions of consolation, joy, and sorrow. This New Beginnings Inspirational Talk by Connie Price, M.Div., PhD will explore the role of music during times of loss. Takes place at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, 1155 Yonge St., 4th floor. All are welcome.

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

"Theology of the Body is the Answer" – Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 10am-4pm

Of special interest to teens, young adults, parents and catechists! Why is St. John Paul II's life-changing teaching "The Theology of the Body" the answer to today's hottest issues? Theology of the Body is the New Evangelization and the new catechesis! Know your stuff. Today's culture is all about the body, beauty, sex, love and relationships. So are God and the Church. Takes place at Pauline Books & Media, 3022 Dufferin St. Cost: \$40 (pre-registration required). Visit www.tinyurl.com/T0B2016 or call 416-781-9131, ext. 226 for more information

Bioethics from a Roman Catholic Perspective – Tuesdays in February

Dr. Moira McQueen, from the University of Toronto, appointed by Pope Francis in October 2015 to audit the Synod on the Family in Rome, will be presenting a series of four lectures entitled "Bioethics: where science and medicine meet moral and ethical dilemmas". The series covers ethics, reproductive issues, stem cell therapies, end-of-life issues, euthanasia and physician-assisted dying. Takes place at All Saints' Catholic Church, 1415 Royal York Rd. from 7–9pm every Tuesday in February, 2016. Reserve your seats for this important series by sending an email to franca.gallucci28@gmail.com

200th Anniversary of Missionary Oblates of Mary – January 18, Mass@7pm

St. Maximilian Kolbe Church, 4260 Cawthra Rd. Solemn Mass with Cardinal Thomas Collins.

"Christmas is a gift of love wrapped in human flesh and tied securely with the strong promises of God." – Unknown