

Our Lenten journey is drawing to a close; today's readings remind us of what lies ahead, with Ezekiel's vision of new life for a valley of bones and Paul's promise that the Spirit that will 'give life to our mortal bodies'. The gospel reading from John tells the story of the raising of Lazarus. This sequence – carefully crafted as a prelude to the passion narrative – prepares us for what is to come; Jesus confronts death itself and emerges victorious.

As the narrative opens, the Lord's coming death is called to mind, Mary the sister of Lazarus is identified as the one who, at this time, 'anoints the Lord with ointment' – for 'the day of his burial' (cf. Jn 12:7). The illness of Lazarus 'will not end in death, but in God's glory' and the glory of the Son of God. The death of Jesus, if he 'goes to Judaea' is a real and terrifying prospect for his disciples – leading Thomas to exclaim, 'Let us go too, and die with him'. The narrative highlights the 'friendship' of Jesus with the family of Bethany: soon to be caught up in the drama of the Saviour's rejection by the nation's leaders. Such a detail, we know, has significance in the meditative style of John's gospel. 'I call you friends, not servants' (Jn 15:15), Jesus will tell his disciples. And the repeated reference to 'the beloved disciple' in the narrative that follows brings out in graphic detail the implications of these words – an encouragement for all who follow the way of discipleship.



I am the resurrection and the life

We are left in no doubt that Jesus triumphs over death in all its horror. The mortal remains of Lazarus have been in the tomb for 'four days': 'He will smell', his sister warns. Numerous mourners have now assembled, not all of them well disposed towards Jesus – an intimation of what is soon to follow. 'Could he not have prevented this man's death', some of them ask.

This confrontation with death, Jesus makes clear, is a sign. As he sets out for Bethany, after the death of Lazarus, he declares, 'I am glad for your sake, because now you will believe'. And although he knows that the Father 'always hears him', he addresses the Father publicly, 'for the sake of those who stand around, so that they may believe that it was you who sent me' – the claim of his divine mission that is many times repeated in the course of John's gospel.

In the exchanges that take place between Jesus and the sisters of Lazarus, he leads them towards the fullness of faith that will unite them with him in his final victory over death – his Paschal Mystery. Like his other disciples, Martha has already found faith in Jesus as 'the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world'; now she is led to recognise the full implications of this coming, as she affirms her faith in the truth of Jesus' words, 'I AM the resurrection and the life' – the very source of 'eternal life'.

'Lazarus, here! Come out': the victory is complete and absolute. 'Unbind him, let him go free': words of promise for all who will believe in his coming triumph.

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

**"Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"
Do you believe that your plan is God's plan?"**

If God is calling you to serve His church in consecrated life, contact Fr. Chris Lemieux
416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

Readings ~ Ezekiel 37:12-14 ~ Romans 8:8-11 ~ John 11:1-45

PARISH

Mass Intentions This Week – March 14 to 20

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ members of the Mahoney family	
Tuesday, 9am	... of Angela Olkovich	Mike & Lydia Sherlock
Wednesday, 9am	✠ John Claude Burns	Paula Bates
Thursday, 9am	✠ Georgio Bubola	Josie DiLella
Friday, 9am	✠ Cecilia de Bernal	The family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Ann & Tony Dineno	Gloria & George Glover
5:15pm	✠ Teresa & Antonio Zicarelli	Pina Valle
Sunday, 8am	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ✠	
9:30am	✠ Theresa Gihlavsky	The Friday Rosary group
11am	✠ Rose Ciarallo	Carol Ciarallo
12:30pm	✠ Janina Krol	The family

Stations of the Cross – Fridays during Lent, 7:30pm in the church, 30–35 mins

Celebrate the feasts of St. Patrick & St. Joseph with your parish community!

Scones & Irish coffee will be served after the 9am Mass on St. Patrick's Day, March 17. March 19 is the feast of St. Joseph. Zeppole, traditional Italian pastries, & coffee will be served after the 9am Mass.

Tenebrae Responsories – Sunday March 20, 4pm@OLS – free admission

You are invited to join the Victoria Scholars as they present Msgr. J.E. Ronan's masterful 'Tenebrae Responsories'. The sorrow of Holy Week is conveyed in this beautiful service of readings and solemn, noble music intended to help us all "Prepare the way of the Lord".

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

"The family that prays together stays together" –Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. ("The Rosary Priest")

Stretch & Flex – \$10/session – Bring water & a yoga mat – Tues., 6:15–7:30pm

Takes place in the parish hall; moves to 2nd floor, Running Room, every 3rd Tues./month.

Gifts of Securities – a great option for all your church giving

If you have stocks or mutual funds that have gone up in value & you're not keen on paying capital gains tax on them, consider using them to make your offertory gift. You can also use securities to consolidate all your Church giving. If you make an annual gift to ShareLife, for example, we will arrange to have the parish credited with your gift. To learn more, please call the Archdiocese Development Office at 416-934-3411 or visit www.archtoronto.org/development

Working wonders by providing vital life-restoring needs...

"Agencies are lifesaving and life-restoring to those who regularly rely on them. Families are working through crises and are healing. People with developmental challenges are supported as they experience a sense of self-worth and fulfillment in their daily activities. Seniors are living independently, yet have access to the social services and care they need. Refugees and new Canadians are guided toward a stable, productive livelihood in their newfound home. Sometimes the results are obvious and sometimes they're invisible but, always, they make a tangible difference. Please prayerfully consider today how you can support ShareLife."

—Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto

This is ShareLife Sunday! Please give generously. You can work wonders!

"Ten more commandments": 6. Often when we lose hope and think this is the end, God smiles from above and says, "Relax, my beloved, it's just a bend, not the end!"

COMMUNITY

Assisted Suicide – Protect the vulnerable and those who care for them!

By June 2016, the Government of Canada is expected to pass legislation to legalize assisted suicide. Cardinal Collins encourages Catholics throughout the archdiocese to support the Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience by visiting www.CanadiansforConscience.ca today. The coalition represents a group of like-minded partners, including 5,000 doctors across Canada, who are committed to protecting conscience rights for health practitioners and facilities. You can use this website to write directly to your Member of Parliament, respectfully expressing your concerns. Given tight timelines for this legislation, please take action no later than April 1. **Thank you for helping to protect the vulnerable and those who care for them!**

Catholic Family Services of Toronto – New Beginnings – Upcoming Events

You are invited to attend the following upcoming inspirational talks which will be held at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, 1155 Yonge St., 4th floor. We gather at 6:30pm.

► **Monday, March 14** – "Journey Through Life: The Pilgrim's Way."

► **Monday, April 18** – "Living with Loneliness"

ALSO The New Beginnings Spring Retreat, entitled, "Nurturing Seeds of Hope in all the Seasons of Life" will take place on Saturday, April 23 at The Franciscan Church of St. Bonaventure, 1300 Leslie Street from 9:30am–3:30pm.



Tenebrae Service – Friday, March 25 (Good Friday), 7:30pm

You are all invited to come to this special service of music and scripture for Good Friday. Enjoy this moving experience, featuring a men's chorus of over 30 voices singing the music of Msgr. John Edward Ronan, founder of St. Michael's Choir School. **Our Music Director, Gordon Mansell will be at the organ.** Bring friends and family with you to St. James Catholic Church (Annette and Jane). **There is no charge for this event.**

Jesuit Provincial's Dinner April 13



Come join the Jesuits in honouring Betty Bujold, Michael & Barbara McManus and Bishop Jean-Louis Plouffe with the "Magis Award" for their outstanding work & dedication to Jesuit ministries. The evening begins with Mass at The Church of The Good Shepherd in Thornhill, followed by dinner at Le Parc. To order tickets, call 416-481-9154 or email jdo@jesuits.ca

Celebrate Your Marriage with a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend!

Celebrate your love and take a fresh look at your marriage! Spend a very special weekend together. A weekend of discovery... a lifetime of love! Worldwide Marriage Encounter is a weekend getaway that helps married couples rediscover themselves as individuals and as a couple. The weekend format helps couples communicate openly and honestly without group sharing, therapy or marriage counselling. Upcoming weekend: April 15–17 (Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre, Mississauga) For more info & an application, please visit www.wmme.org or contact Gerard & Marge McCauley at gerard.marge@rogers.com or (905) 792-1925



"Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy" Pilgrimage

Join this pilgrimage to the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts from Friday, April 22 through to Sunday, April 24 for an unbeatable price of \$499. Includes double occupancy with 2 nights at the Holiday Inn, 2 full breakfasts, one lunch, and coach transportation. Please note that registration closes on March 31. To view the flyer, visit www.blessedtrinity.ca or call Mary at 416-497-7059 for more information or to register.