

The destination of our Lenten journey is clearly to be seen in today's readings: the mystery of the Cross, in which the father 'did not spare his own Son', and the glory which was to be the Risen Christ's in his final triumph, glimpsed on the mountain.

The testing of Abraham is one of the masterpieces of the Old Testament. The story echoes a brutal age in which the sacrifice of children was not uncommon – in fact, the people of the old Israel were taught to sacrifice an animal in place of their offspring, to turn them away from this horrendous temptation.



God did not spare his own Son

But the real point of the story, made so wonderfully, is the absolute trust that is asked of Abraham, making him the model of all true believers. To the people of Abraham's world there was nothing more important in life than descendants who would remember and honour them. Long after the age when he could expect a child, God gave Abraham a son. If he gives up Isaac, he has nothing left but his trust in God. That trust is rewarded – those who will call him their father will be countless; all the peoples of the earth will be blessed in his name – through the salvation brought by the Cross of Christ.

This heart-rending story of the testing of a father's love is linked in today's liturgy with the basic truth of our Christian faith, proclaimed by St Paul, in the second reading. The eternal Father, who for our sake 'did not spare his own Son', will not refuse anything to his people in their need.

The promise made to Abraham was to be fulfilled in the victory of the Saviour's resurrection. As he undertakes the journey towards the Cross and its glorious aftermath, he gives the chosen three among his followers a glimpse of the triumph in which he would fulfil the promise of the Law (Moses) and realise all the hopes of the prophets (Elijah). Again the Father's love shines through: "This is my beloved Son – listen to him!"

It was a long journey from Abraham's testing to the final fulfilment of God's promises. We are privileged that the route our journey must take is so clearly marked out for us.

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

If you need examples of persons responding to God's call, look at Abraham and Sarah - called in old age to leave their country and have a child. Then Abraham was asked to sacrifice that child. What faith! Answering God's call to be a priest, brother, sister or deacon is also taking a great risk.

If you are willing, and think God is calling you, contact Fr. Chris Lemieux 416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca

Working wonders in our livelihoods...

"The services provided by ShareLife 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, with access to the care and services 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." —Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto

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

PARISH

Mark 9:2-10

Romans 8:31b-35, 37

Readings ~ Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18

Mass Intentions This Week — March 2 — 8

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ Martina Ben	
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Crucita Rebeil de DelValle	
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Stephen Rakoczy	The family
Thursday, 9am	... of Mary Purtle	The Brennan family
Friday, 9am	✠ members of the Goseco, Feliciano & Valencia families	Linda Feliciano
Saturday, 9am	✠ Allan Carr	Theresa Darmody
5:15pm	☞ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners ☞	
Sunday, 8am	✠ Connie Broden	Gord Sammon
9:30am	✠ Patricia Murray	Thelda Walsh
11am	✠ Stan Pizon	His goddaughter
12:30pm	✠ Janina & John Ryczko	The 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 is a powerful weapon to put the demons to flight and to keep oneself from sin... If you desire peace in your hearts, in your homes, and in your country, assemble each evening to recite the Rosary. Let not even one day pass without saying it, no matter how burdened you may be with many cares and labors." —Pope Pius XI

Stations of the Cross — Celebrated each Friday of Lent at 7:30pm in the Church
"Grant that I may love Thee... then do with me what Thou wilt." —St. Alphonsus Liguori

Parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land — November 9—17, 2015
This voyage under the spiritual leadership of Fr. Matthew Furguele marks the 75th Anniversary of OLS Parish. Cost is \$2,490 pp. Contact Halina at 905-886-0232, ext. 315 or 647-294-4116.

An Invitation to Serve — Help Lead the Whole People of God Into His Presence!

Do you feel God is calling you to serve? Are you nervous or unsure? Please, have no fear! Take the first step in your amazing learning & faith journey as an OLS altar server by emailing Kristen, altar server coordinator, at kristen@sorrows.ca today! Keep your heart right with God, be a disciple, join this important youth ministry.

75th Anniversary Planning Committee — Call for Volunteers
We're looking for 'a few good people' to assist with the planning and organization of some special events for this celebratory year in our parish. Please contact the parish office if you can help!

Special Opportunities for Confession @OLS
In accordance with the Day of Confessions being held throughout the archdiocese, the sacrament will be available in the church from 9:30—10:30am on Wednesday, March 4. Visit www.archtoronto.org/confession to see confession schedules at neighbouring parishes. While you're there, discover resources for making a good confession, including a 'how-to' guide and suggestions for an age-appropriate examination of conscience. Our traditional parish all-day confessions will be celebrated on Saturday, March 7. Two priests will be available from 9:30am—5pm. "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight"

COMMUNITY

LOVE LIFE ☺ LIVE LENT TRANSFORM YOUR WORLD



Lenten Retreat Day at SAS — March 7, 9:30am—2:30pm
Join Rev. Charles Anang, Asst. Professor, Systematic Theology & Director of Spiritual Formation at St. Augustine's Seminary, on this day of "Ascent to the Pure Love of God". Cost: \$40, includes lunch. To register or for more info, email iftsas@rogers.com or call 416-261-7207, ext. 235.

Teopoli Celebration Dinner — March 8, noon, Rizzo Banquet Hall, 1941 Albion Rd.
The United Society cordially invites you to the annual Teopoli Celebration Dinner. Admittance by donation made to Società Unita. Funds raised from this evening will be used for the development of the Teopoli Catholic Spiritual Centre in Muskoka. To attend, call 416-243-7319 or email info@teopoli.com

2015 Dynamic Women of Faith Conference — March 14, 8:30am—5:00pm
A Catholic Women's conference with speakers including Cardinal Collins, Dr. Josie Lombardi, EWTN personality Gary Zimak, Ellen Hrkach, president of Catholic Writers Guild & authors Moira Noonan & Dorothy Pilarski.

ALSO ▶ March 13, 7—10pm An evening for Catholic mothers and their daughters featuring Canadian Catholic song writer and singer Maggie Wang, radio producer Laura Cirami, Gary Zimak, a EWTN personality, Catholic authors, Moira Noonan and Dorothy Pilarski. Visit www.dynamicwomenfaith.com or call 905-279-7702 for more info.

The Annunciation and Lent: Road to New Life — Wed., March 25, 7:30—9:30pm
Prepare for the resurrection and new birth in your life by entering into the Paschal Mystery of the Risen Lord. Nativity of Our Lord Parish, 480 Rathburn Rd., in the parish hall. To register, contact Brenda Voisin at 416-934-3400, ext. 523 or visit www.archtoronto.org/discipleship

Pilgrimage to the (U.S.) National Shrine Of The Divine Mercy — Apr. 11—13
Join Fr. Martin Pereira on a memorable journey! Given a near-perfect 4.9 out of 5 by reviewers on Google, the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA is a "stunning and very moving...oasis of peace"; most worthy of your time. Cost is \$475 pp. Call 416-251-9944 for info.

Statement & Resources — 2015 Health & Physical Education Curriculum
On February 23, the Government of Ontario released its revised Health & Physical Education Curriculum. Visit www.archtoronto.org to view a statement from Cardinal Collins in addition to a resource answering questions regarding implementation from a Catholic school perspective.

Taizé Prayer at the Friary March 25, 6:30pm, 15 Laxton Ave. (Queen/Lansdowne)
The Presentation Brothers invite you to the Friary for their monthly Taizé prayer session. Light refreshments will be served and you are invited to bring a non-perishable item for St. Francis Table. Call 416-537-0327. For information on the Taizé Community, visit www.taize.fr

Pope's Message for Lent 2015 — "Make your hearts firm"
"Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each community and every believer. Above all it is a 'time of grace'. God does not ask of us anything that he himself has not first given us. "We love because he first has loved us'. He is not aloof from us. Each one of us has a place in his heart. He knows us by name, he cares for us and he seeks us out whenever we turn away from him. He is interested in each of us; his love does not allow him to be indifferent to what happens to us. ..."

To read the Holy Father's entire Lenten message, scan the QR code or visit the Official Vatican Network at www.goo.gl/Tsfvij