

During this time of pilgrimage, sinfulness in the life of the Church obscures the reality of our life in Christ – a common life that should be a sign of hope for struggling humanity. It is not without reason that we begin the Church's most solemn liturgies with an acknowledgement of our sinfulness. It should not surprise us, therefore, that the passage of Matthew's gospel from which we are reading - concerning our life in the Church - is in large part about problems associated with the sinfulness of members of the Church. Last Sunday's reading discussed the reconciliation of members guilty of public crimes destructive of the community. Today's reading concerns the forgiveness called for within the community at a personal level.

As was so often the case, Peter's impulsiveness gives rise to an important lesson. Peter has received a commission that involves considerable power in the life of the community of disciples. He thinks he is expressing what Jesus expects of him in the exercise of his authority. The question he puts to Jesus implies that he will be ready to forgive 'seven times'. His round number really hints at an indefinite readiness to forgive. Apparently, the scribes of the day taught that one was not obliged to forgive after the third or fourth time. But the response of Jesus declares that this vagueness is not enough: 'Not seven, but seventy seven times' - there should be no limit to our readiness to forgive! Perhaps, as we hear this gospel, we are tempted to think that it has little to do with us - because we have never faced up to the ill will and resentments we have towards other members of our community, and to the gossiping and factions these attitudes give rise to. Though these attitudes may not seem seriously sinful, they can be very damaging, making it impossible for our parishes to live the kind of life that leads others to share in our faith. Resentment and the vengeful spirit have been part of the human story since the beginning. Living in covenant with living God, and learning God's ways, old Israel came to accept that vengeance must be left to the Lord. For peoples who did not know the covenant, there was no limit to the spirit of revenge. In fact, the response of Jesus reminds us of this spirit, as expressed in book of Genesis, where Lamech boasts that he will exact 'vengeance seventy-seven fold' (Gen 4:24). Jesus is reminding us of his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew's text, Jesus is remembered as teaching, 'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Mt 5:48). Because the meaning of the word, 'perfect', in the biblical tradition has not been properly understood, one contemporary Bible renders this verse, 'Set no bounds to your love, just as your heavenly Father sets none to his'. The parable of the unforgiving manager drives home this lesson. Clearly, the ruler's generosity brings to mind the generosity of God. The debt forgiven was a fantastic amount, defying the imagination of Jesus' audience, impossible to repay. We are invited to compare our unforgiving spirit with the boundless generosity of our God.

Let us examine our attitudes to others in our worshipping community. Have we failed to face up to our antagonisms, and tended to justify them by being judgmental of the attitudes of our fellow Christians? The great Church Father, John Chrysostom, has good advice for us as we examine our conscience. If we are not aware of our destructive attitudes we shall never grow up spiritually. On the other hand, he tells us, awareness of our own failings helps us to find the wisdom, gentleness and compassion that should be ours as true followers of the Saviour.

John Thornhill sm
www.theemmausseries.com

"If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's."

Consider service as a priest, deacon, brother or sister.

Contact Fr. Chris Lemieux, Vocations Director, Archdiocese of Toronto.
416-968-0997 vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca



Lord, how often must I forgive my brother?

Readings ~ Sirach 27:30 - 28:7 ~ Romans 14:7-9 ~ Matthew 18:21-35

PARISH

Mass Intentions This Week — September 18 to 24

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

	Intention(s):	Offered by:
Monday, 9am	✠ members of Grogan family	
Tuesday, 9am	✠ Margaret Fraser	Heather Ellis
Wednesday, 9am	✠ Doris McKenney	Sonja DeVerteuil
Thursday, 9am	✠ Don Reilly	Jimmy & Winnie Magee
Friday, 9am	✠ Katie May McCarthy	Brennan family
Saturday, 9am	✠ Madeleine Harris	Jean & Oscar Estrada
5:15pm	✠ John DeLazzari	Teresa Foran
Sunday, 8am	✠ Lena Badali	family
9:30am	✠ Jack Marchand	family
11am	✠ For the needs of our parish and faithful parishioners	
12:30pm	✠ Thaddeus Wisniewski	family

Children's Liturgy of the Word — This program for young parishioners (4-10 years of age) takes place on Sundays at the 9:30am Mass. Please note that access to the hall is through the west glassed-in stairwell or the basement northeast Cliveden stairwell.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION FOR 2017/2018 (September 23/24)
First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation — Registration Weekend PLEASE BRING YOUR CHILD'S BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE. Volunteers will be available in the parish hall to process registrations and collect fees on Saturday, September 23 after the 5:15pm Mass and on Sunday, September 24 after all the Masses.

General Notes: The Sacraments of Initiation are significant milestones in the faith journey of our young parishioners. The Archdiocese notes that preparation for initiation is the shared responsibility of parents, the local Catholic school and the parish community. To be eligible to receive a sacrament at OLS, participants and their families must fulfill 3 conditions:

- They must be registered as parishioners of OLS (NB: registration at OLS School or family history of sacraments received at OLS do NOT constitute parish registration);
- They must regularly attend Sunday Mass;
- Parents & children must participate in the relevant aspects of the program.
- Those not attending a Catholic school must attend the 7 year Monday night Religious Education program.

If your family does not regularly attend Sunday Mass at OLS and/or is not officially registered with a parish, you are welcome to register with a parish at this time and begin attending regularly. All other families should, at their earliest convenience, contact the parish nearest their home or the parish they regularly attend, for information on sacramental preparation.

Young Singers Welcome! — Our Lady of Sorrows is blessed with 2 vibrant choirs for young people. The Youth Choir is for grades 3-6 and rehearses Thursdays from 4-5pm. The Chamber Choir, for grades 7-12, rehearses Thursdays from 5-6pm. Each choir sings alternating Sundays at the 9:30am Mass. For more information, please contact Michele DeBoer at micheledeboer@yahoo.ca or call 289 521 3710.

Rosary prayed daily prior to the 9am Mass. You are also welcome to join the Rosary Group at 2pm on Fridays in the Parish Hall meeting room.

Weekly Drop-in Bridge — Thursdays, 1-3:30pm, Parish Hall meeting room. Partners are not required. Please contact Gail Weiler at 416 239 5337 or Rena Guerard at 416 236 0728 for further information.

Hearing Assist Headsets — Parishioners who have trouble hearing at Mass are welcome to request a Hearing Assistance device from the ushers when they enter the church. They are available on a 'first come-first served' basis. The headsets pick up the feed directly from our sound system and can be used with or without hearing aids.

COMMUNITY

OLS PARKING LOT POLICY - We would like to remind everyone of the Parking Lot Policy here at Our Lady of Sorrows which is now being strictly enforced.

- The OLS Church parking lot is private property and is intended for the use of those attending Mass or a parish function. Anyone else using the parking lot for any other reason will be asked to leave at the discretion of the parish office.
- Unauthorized VEHICLES** in the Church parking lot will be TAGGED/TOWED at owners' expense.
- Unauthorized VISITORS** using the parking lot will be asked to remove themselves and/or their car from the lot.
- LOITERING** in the church parking lot and on church grounds is strictly prohibited and those refusing to leave will be reported to the police.
- ILLEGAL PARKING** within the lot which blocks other cars will not be tolerated. Those parking in aisles or blocking the entrance or exit to the lot may be towed. This is a safety issue.

Phase II Renovation is underway. The entire Cliveden south stairwell is closed during construction. Basement washrooms can be accessed through the Cliveden North exterior staircase and through the glassed-in stairwell on the west side of the church.

While access is limited, please contact the parish office if you wish to receive Communion at home.

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, or if your adult child, are planning to apply to teach in a Catholic School, it is **highly recommended** that you contact Fr. Nino this month. Plan to have a conversation with your pastor early in the process and you will avoid disappointment and stress at a time when applications are to be submitted.

NEXT WEEK Special Collection — Needs of Canadian Church / September 24
The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) is involved in national and international areas of pastoral activity, including social justice, ecumenical and interfaith relations, collaboration with Aboriginal Peoples, life and family issues, liturgy, catechesis, doctrine and relations with Catholic associations and movements. Each year the CCCB is asked to speak out, give leadership, or provide guidelines for the faithful on a wide variety of topics. In order for our bishops to make proper judgments on modern topics, they must have the benefit of research, expert advice and capable administration which is also funded by this collection. In addition to contributions, we are also asked to pray for the work of the bishops and to participate in, and cooperate with the various projects of the CCCB.

Retreat for Men and Women — September 22 to 24
Spend a weekend of peace and spiritual joy at the Holy Ground Manresa — "To do justice, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God". Retreat time 8:30pm on Friday, September 22 to 1:00pm Sunday, September 24. For more information and reservation, call 416 494 0560 or email aasalv@yahoo.ca.

Sistine Chapel Choir Concert — Tuesday, September 26, 2017 — 7:30 p.m.
For the first time in its history, the Sistine Chapel Choir (commonly known as the Pope's Choir) will visit Canada. The first stop of the Canadian tour will take place on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica. This internationally renowned group of 30 boys and 22 men sing for the Holy Father's celebrations at the Vatican and tour the world to share the gift of sacred music. The Sistine Chapel Choir is considered one of the most prominent and oldest choirs in the world, dating back to the 7th century. A limited number of free general admission tickets (maximum 2 per person) will be made available online at: bit.ly/sistineTO beginning Monday, September 11, 2017 at 10 a.m. The concert will also feature a performance by the students of St. Michael's Choir School, one of only six choir schools in the world affiliated with the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome.

Merrymakers: Afternoon program for children, 3-5 years old
Mary, Mother of God School is now registering children for 2½ hours of enriched programming on Monday and Thursday afternoons, 1:00-3:30 pm. Join us for stories, music, drama and lots of play. For more information or to register, call 416-531-7897.