

### Baptism by Fire



At his baptism, Jesus began a journey that would lead to the cross. It was a journey only God could accomplish for it meant washing away the sinfulness and healing the brokenness of humanity. Filled with the gift of the spirit, Jesus began his personal mission of preaching the good news, healing the sick, raising the dead and restoring sight to the blind. By emptying himself of power he, who was sinless, assumed our frail and limited nature in order to identify as far as possible with us in our plight. His passing through the murky waters of suffering and death on our account is an assurance that the things that are the death of us are no longer the end of us. His baptism was a statement that he was here with us and for us.

Today we celebrate Jesus' Baptism. Our liturgical calendar doesn't let Jesus spend much time dwelling on his youth as in just one week he goes from newborn baby to approximately 30. Jesus grows up pretty fast as he is baptised and begins his public ministry. The commencement of Jesus' public ministry coincides with our own calendar as we embark on a new year with a renewed sense of mission.

In the life of Jesus we see him face his greatest challenges of identity at the start of his ministry. If I were Jesus I would prefer to put off 40 days and nights without food, shelter or company, battling with the devil until later in my ministry but we see Jesus being led by the Spirit into the desert immediately following his baptism. It is literally a baptism by fire and it is through this initial experience and trial that Jesus becomes more deeply aware that God's words at his baptism were not just lip service and that He truly is his Son, the Beloved, with Whom God is well pleased.

I think there is some wisdom in this as we set out our own personal missions for the coming year. Most of us are procrastinators by nature and the most trying and difficult challenges in our lives like establishing healthier habits, reconciling with a family member or friend, following an uncertain dream or calling or giving up a destructive habit we tend to place at the bottom of our to do list that we may never end up reaching. But in avoiding such challenges we also avoid witnessing God's great power to handle our greatest fears and instead we task him with much more trivial challenges. In addition, by avoiding these primary fears they wreak havoc in both our conscious and subconscious minds.

At work or in school it is a great benefit that we have deadlines which force us to eventually get things done. I know there are times that I invite people over to my house to give me the motivation and urgency to clean it. The challenge is with many personal issues there is no deadline so they can linger on perpetually. Essentially, we need someone outside of ourselves who can journey with us and help us to place a deadline on these challenges and opportunities that most need to be faced, which can lead to our greatest growth. This person could be a fellow church-member, a spouse, a sibling, a spiritual director, a friend or perhaps a new group at St. Luke's. This person or group could keep us honest to what our true hopes and desires are and could help us to deepen our awareness that each of us are sons and daughters of God, are beloved and are pleasing to our Creator and together we can face and overcome our greatest challenges.

John Humphries



### Mass Intentions

Monday	Soul of <b>Manuel de Jesus</b>
Tuesday	Soul of <b>Shannon Stephens</b> Souls of <b>Agripino &amp; Cecilia Manalo</b> Soul of <b>Sabrina (Betty) Lombardo</b>
Wednesday	<b>Departed Soul</b>
Thursday	Soul of <b>Angelina Villacorta</b>
Friday	Soul of <b>John Frederick Jack Wilson</b>

**PRAYER REQUEST LINE**

905 881-2786 ext. 250



### **MOSAIC INTERFAITH**

*Annual Program in Honour of the Birthday of Dr.  
Martin Luther King Jr.*

**Sunday, January 13 - 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Temple Har Zion**

**7360 Bayview Ave.**

Faith and Social Justice:

The Story of the Interfaith Coalition to Fight  
Homelessness.

**Presenter: Rafi Aaron**

For more information please call  
Natalie at ext 235

### **ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE**

*TO CELEBRATE*

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019**

Theme: **JUSTICE, ONLY JUSTICE, YOU  
SHALL PURSUE** (Deuteronomy 16:20)

Organized by the Greater Toronto Area Christian Council of Churches, the prayer service will be led by Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox bishops, along with leaders from Christian churches in the GTA.

**WHEN:** Sunday January 27, 2019 AT 4:30 PM

**WHERE:** St. James Anglican Cathedral,  
106 King St. East, Toronto

### **CHURCH BULLETIN ADVERTISING**

Liturgical Publications will be setting up the advertisements for our church bulletin soon. The advertising will begin in April 2019 and supports the bulletin service. Please support the bulletin and advertise your product or service. Call Liturgical Publications at 1-800-268-2637.

### **York Catholic District School Board Kindergarten Registration**

Kindergarten registration begins **January 8, 2019** in all York Catholic Elementary schools. We look forward to welcoming your child into our schools, where we emphasize academic success using a curriculum that is infused with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You can register your child at your local Catholic School. For more information check the parish bulletin board or visit our website at [www.ycdsb.ca/adminissions](http://www.ycdsb.ca/adminissions)

### **FRIDAY AFTERNOON DROP**

**Will resume Friday, January 18th.**

**2:00 – 3:30 pm**

*All are welcome*

### **VILLANOVA COLLEGE**

#### **Open Houses**

Please join us for a personal tour at one of our upcoming open houses.

**WHEN: Jan. 18 at 10am and Feb. 1 at 10am** (public school PA Days).

As York Region's only independent, Catholic school, Villanova College offers an enriched academic program from Grades 4 to 12, focusing on the development of the whole child through the teachings of the Catholic Church and through extensive co-curricular programs. Please visit our website at [www.villanovacollege.org](http://www.villanovacollege.org) to register for one of our upcoming Open Houses or contact the Office of Admissions at 905-833-1909 or [admissions@villanovacollege.ca](mailto:admissions@villanovacollege.ca)



### **Society of Saint Vincent de Paul To Our Generous Parishioners**

The SSVP would like to thank our parishioners for their generosity toward our annual food drives and Christmas basket program. The Christmas Basket program was a huge success and helped numerous families celebrate the Christmas season with joy. The recipients of your generosity are humbled by your Christian charity.