

Palm Sunday

The passion of Christ helps us realise that there no outsiders where suffering is concerned. Entering into the painful sadness of ordinary happenings in everyday life calls for the taking up of our own cross with patience, acceptance and love. It makes us realise that we cannot avoid the pain and suffering that come our way. No one escapes the cross. We might try to avoid it, refuse to accept it or rebel against it, but we cannot remove it.

The great message of this week is that our destiny is bound up with that of Christ's. To all who are willing to take up their cross and follow him on the road that leads from darkness into light, from despair to hope and from death to everlasting life.



Mass Intentions

Monday	Soul of Winifred McKenzie
Tuesday	Souls of Susan Fashaw and Anna Cristinzo
Wednesday	Souls in Purgatory & deceased members of FOSS
Thursday	Soul of Con Conway
Friday	Good Friday

PRAYER REQUEST LINE

905 881-2786 ext. 250

WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

APRIL 21/22 – ST. LUKE'S PARISH

HALL

Please bring any items you wish to donate to the parish hall by April 19th.

LEARNING TO SUFFER LIKE JESUS IS SUFFERING PROOF THAT GOD DOESN'T EXIST?

A couple of weeks ago I was reading an atheist author. On his website he argued that if God exists and if he is loving, then he wouldn't allow suffering. In a separate article he argued that the universe is a result of indifferent laws of nature; therefore, categories of good and evil are subjective. This is a common "intellectual" argument posed against the existence of God. Without realizing it he undermined his own position. If we are all accidental products of nature, then suffering is *just the way things are*. Suffering is neither good nor bad because nature is indifferent so those categories can't exist. Imagine telling someone who's fighting cancer that their life is meaningless and nature has just gotten the best of them? That's just being out of touch with reality. Luckily, because God does exist, we are not mere accidents and our suffering is not meaningless.

God entering into our suffering.

"Fine, God does exist, but since he allows suffering he must not care," you might be thinking. This is why it is important that we focus on today's gospel. Today's Gospel is Mark's account of Jesus Christ's passion (suffering). There are two things we need to pay attention to: 1) Who Jesus is and 2) how he is responding to suffering.

First, in today's second reading, St. Paul writes to the Philippians that "though he [Jesus] was in the form of God...emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (2:6-8).

Jesus is God. He didn't have to abandon the comforts of heaven to take on human nature. But he did. More importantly he didn't just passively exist, but he *obediently* took on *unjust* suffering and death. What does this mean for you and me? Like a loving father, God has shown that he is willing to take on suffering himself and suffer alongside of us. This is what the crucifixes in our churches remind us of.

Suffering like Jesus

As I reflect on today's Gospel, Jesus also teaches me how to face suffering. First, pray. Before his passion Jesus spends hours praying in the garden of Gethsemane (Mk 14:32-42). He even prays that he might be relieved of the forthcoming suffering (v.35). God knows the past and the future and his mind cannot be changed, so what's the point of Christ's prayer? The point of prayer is to have our perspective of a situation aligned with God's perspective. After Jesus asks his Father to relieve him of the suffering he prays, "yet, not what I want, but what you want" (v.36). God's perspective of reality is not limited like ours. He is able to use a moment of suffering to bring about something much greater than that single moment, like the Resurrection.

This of course is not meant to be an exhaustive reflection on suffering. For further reflection I encourage you to read Christ's Passion and pay close attention to Jesus and Mary's reactions. Second, I encourage you to pick up the book *Why Suffering* by Vince Vitale and Ravi Zacharias.

Have a great Holy Week!

Greg Garda, *Youth Minister*



March 25, 2018

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Holy Thursday Mass of Our Lord's Supper
Thursday, March 29th 7:30 pm
Washing of the Feet
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 11:30 pm

Good Friday Service
Friday, March 30th
Children's Way of the Cross 10:30 am
Liturgy of the Passion of Our Lord 3:00 pm

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil Mass
Saturday, March 31st 8:00 pm
(includes Baptism, 1st Communion & Confirmation of adult candidates)

Easter Sunday Mass
Sunday, April 1st 8:45; 10:30 am & 12:15 pm



INTERNATIONAL NIGHT

SAT, APRIL 7TH - 6:00 PM - PARISH HALL

Our **International Night** will be held on **Saturday, April 7th at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall**. Tickets will be on sale after all the masses March 17/18 & March 24/25. \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children under 12.

The Social Committee requests that you bring in a food dish from your country of origin along with your ticket.

Anyone wishing to provide entertainment during the evening or for more information please contact **Shaila D'Sousa Tel: 905-707-9248; E-mail shailaflavy@hotmail.com**



THANK YOU!!!

from SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL and GEORGINA FOOD BANK

To everyone who donated so generously to our Easter Food Drive. We had another great collection! Saint Vincent de Paul also wishes to thank those who donate at our poor boxes. **You make it possible** for us to give food vouchers to needy people right here in Thornhill, to help our twin in the Dominican Republic & support the Society's Special Works in the GTA – shelters for abused women, homes for the developmentally handicapped and those with mental health issues, recovery homes for addicts, supportive housing etc. (www.svdptoronto.org).

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

6 Monday Evening Sessions 7:30 to 9:30 PM

April 9	April 30
April 16	May 7
April 23	May 14

Registration forms are available at the Parish Lobby or visit our website: <https://stlukesth.archtoronto.org> to print the registration form.

Please submit your completed registration in the Parish Office, or drop it in the dropbox at the Parish lobby, or email a copy to joaqs@rogers.com by April 1, 2018. Open to all adults 19 yrs. and above.

The Life In Spirit Seminar (LSS) is a seminar designed as an introduction to a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. It provides an opportunity for people to find out more about that life, and to be helped in taking the first steps towards a new relationship with the Jesus. For those who are not Christians at all, they can serve as an introduction to Christianity and a time to make a first commitment to Jesus Christ. For those who are already Christians, they offer help in finding a fuller release of the Holy Spirit to live a deeper Christian life.

This seminar is a series of talks and discussions which take place over a period of six weeks. In the fourth week of the seminar, there is an opportunity for people to be prayed with and to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. The three weeks before that time are devoted to an explanation of the basic Christian message of salvation and of what it means to be baptized in the Spirit. During the final two weeks, the teaching is oriented towards further growth in the life of the spirit.

We encourage you take this first step towards a deeper relationship with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit that is in you.

“Renew in our day, O Lord, your wonders as in a new Pentecost” – Pope John Pau II

“Share with all in the Church the grace of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit” – Pope Francis

2018 CHING MING REMEMBRANCE MASS

The 2018 Ching Ming Remembrance Mass will be held in the Holy Family Mausoleum at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Thornhill on **Saturday, April 7th at 2:00 pm**. The Mass will be in Cantonese and Mandarin with support of the Chinese Pastoral Council of the Archdiocese of Toronto. For further details, please see the poster in the lobby.