

**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK:**

On the last day of school in my first year in Jamaica, I remember an interaction I had with a student. As exams were coming up and religion was not high on their priorities, I lost my temper with this young man who was studying for some other course. I had made judgments about him and so I spoke harshly towards him in front of others. After the fact, I felt bad. The next school year, on the first day, I noticed that he was in one of my classes. At the end of class, I asked him to stay back. I reminded him of what I had said and apologized for being so harsh and unfair. He said, "No problem." I was grateful for his forgiveness. In today's Gospel, with the man born blind, we can see how we can make judgments of others and how we can seek to always keep them in the same position or status. Such consistency makes our lives easier – it allows our relationships to be the same, it allows our judgments to go unchallenged, and it allows our actions and responses to be, in a way, unreflective. While it may make our lives easier, it limits the revelation of God. The man born blind was blind because of his sins or the sins of his ancestors. Everyone understood that and accepted that. Jesus, however, refused to accept such an easy way of living. And he refused to accept the limiting of God's revelation. Jesus said, "Neither this man or his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him." When the man's sight was restored, the Lord had moved him from darkness to light. I'm sure, for most of his life he lived in fear and deference to the religious authorities, as they had identified him as the result of sin. But now he began to see himself in a different way. He began to accept that maybe the judgments of others and even his own might not be true. Rather than being a child of darkness, perhaps he was really a child of light. This can also be seen from the first reading in which Samuel is searching for the one to anoint. Jesse brings all his sons, beginning with the most impressive, and yet it is the youngest, the least likely, who was God's choice. As Samuel says to Jesse, "The Lord does not see as the human sees; the human looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

One of the most beautiful moments in our Lenten Mission with Sr. Beverley was when she spoke of an experience that made her feel that it would be better to have died than to live. In response, however, she decided to do something very different. She told us and showed us some physical movements that she had created and, at the same time, sang the Take, Lord Receive prayer. The movements and the song, in a time of great pain for her was a proclamation of faith, of hope, and incredibly, of gratitude! In the lives we live, are there not moments in which we feel dead inside? Are there not times when we feel the darkness is too much for us? The blind man thought his life would always be the same. He thought he couldn't live as freely as others and that he would never be accepted and loved because of the judgment of sinfulness upon his life. And yet the Lord came, spat on the dirt, making mud, and greatly pressed it to his eyes. The man was reborn – he could see the life around him and he could see the life within him. Just as Jesse was wrong in his judgment of David, so was the blind man and all the others wrong about him. He was not condemned because of sinfulness; rather, as Paul says, he was a child of the light. In David, the smallest brother was to be God's anointed.

The cross tells us who we are. We are not perfect angels; in fact we are so much more. We are the children of God. And so, as we move through Lent we are freeing ourselves more and more to receive the proclamation of how God sees us through love. Judgments about ourselves should be silenced. Judgments others have of us should be ignored. Instead, we should listen to what God is saying and see what God is showing us. Life is not limited, it is eternal. And it is eternal, because God is love. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul."

God Bless and Take Care,

*Fr. John*

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**Holy Thursday & Good Friday Choir Information:**

Calling all singers who would like to participate in the choirs for our Holy Thursday 7 pm Mass and Good Friday 3pm Service, we want you to help raise our voices. Several rehearsals have been scheduled:

*Thursday, April 3 at 7 pm (for both Holy Thursday and Good Friday choirs);*

*For Holy Thursday: Tuesdays-April 8 and April 15 at 7 pm;*

*For Good Friday: Wednesdays-April 9 and April 16 at 7pm.*

All rehearsals take place in the Library upstairs. It is very helpful if you can attend all scheduled rehearsals. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Sr. Mary Babic at 416-924-4539.

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**Altar of Repose:** At the end of the Holy Thursday Mass the Blessed Sacrament is carried in procession through the church. The church is emptied of the Eucharistic bread which is carried and placed in an Altar of Repose where we will enter into a period of solemnity and adoration before the Eucharist. After midnight on Holy Thursday, solemnity ends and a time of private and personal prayer begins. This year, our Altar of Repose will be placed in the Library upstairs throughout the Easter Triduum. Everyone is invited to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament in private prayer and silent adoration as a way of deepening both our love of Christ's gift of himself to us in the Eucharist and our experience of the Easter Triduum. We want to ensure that the Blessed Sacrament will be accompanied throughout the days and so we ask you to sign up for an hour of prayer before the Altar of Repose. **Available times: Good Friday 9am – 3pm & 5pm – 9pm and Holy Saturday 9am – 8pm. You can sign up through the Parish Office at 416-924-6257 or e-mailing [parish@ourladyoflourdes.ca](mailto:parish@ourladyoflourdes.ca).**

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**A Morning Retreat:** Join Fr. Doug McCarthy, S.J. and Ann Keating for a Morning Retreat on Saturday, **April 12 from 9am to 12 noon.** This time of prayer and reflection will take place in Lynch Hall. The theme of the Retreat is "Lord, I want to see your face." The Retreat is free, but we ask you to please sign up by calling the Parish Office at 416-924-6257 or email us at [parish@ourladyoflourdes.ca](mailto:parish@ourladyoflourdes.ca)

**MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**

**Monday, March 31**

8:00 am Margarita Tolin + [Lisa Tolin]  
 12:10 pm Jose Garcia + [Warlyn Irwin]  
 5:15pm Ophelia Miranda + [OLOL 1pm Choir]

**Tuesday, April 1**

8:00 am Vilma Sayas + [OLOL 1pm Choir]  
 12:10 pm Diego Tankoua & Hizola Toovi's Intentions [Diego]  
 5:15 pm Gene Lara + [Lara Family]

**Wednesday, April 2**

8:00 am Isabella Jasa's 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday [Parents]  
 12:10 pm Anto & Mara Santic + [Ana]  
 5:15 pm Joseph Kaposi's Intention [Mike & Lydia Sherlock]

**Thursday April 3**

8:00 am Roberto Rama + [Eva Caldillero]  
 12:10 pm All Souls in Purgatory [Violy Balayo]  
 5:15 pm Deo Siewdass + [Maria Jayag]

**Friday, April 4**

8:00 am Ophelia Miranda & Francis D'Silva + [Legion of Mary]  
 12:10 pm Thanksgiving [Joseph Johnson]  
 5:15 pm Mike O'Brien + [Una & Friends]

**Saturday, April 5**

8:00 am Fr. Bert Foliot's Intention [Amy Federis]  
 12:10 pm Thanks to St. Vincent [Joseph Kaposi]

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED:**

**Rosario Antonio, Elenita Rosero & Jose Umali**

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The **Development & Peace** group here at Lady of Lourdes invites you to join in a Discussion Group on Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* (Joy of the Gospel). The conversations will take place in the Oratory, upstairs from 12:30pm – 2pm on Sundays April 13, May 11 and June 8. All are welcome!

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**Pre-Passover Seder:** Tickets are still available for the pre-Passover Seder in the Library to take place on Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Admission is free, but a ticket is needed, as seating is limited. Participants are asked to please bring a Pot-luck Passover meal.... *food may **not** contain yeast, yeast products, pork or pork products in keeping with Jewish Seder and Jewish dietary requirements.* If you have any questions,, please contact Cenona through the parish office at 416-924-6257.

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**Marygrove Camp for Girls & Camp Ozanam for Boys**

Marygrove Camp is a residential camp situated on Georgian Bay, open from June 26 to August 28 for girls 6 -13. Marygrove provides an 8 day camping experience for children who may not otherwise have the opportunity to enjoy a camping adventure. Camp Ozanam, located at the Scouts Canada Woodlands Trails site in Stouffville, July 31 to August 28, is open to eligible boys ages 7-12. Families who are experiencing financial or domestic hardship at this time may register by calling St. Vincent de Paul through the Parish Office at 416-924-6257.



This weekend, for those of you who wish to contribute, there will be envelopes available for the first of 3 ShareLife collections. Your contributions help care for single parents and their children, the elderly, homeless, youth, those facing pregnancy alone, those suffering with psychiatric disorders, as well as victims of disasters in other parts of the world. We are grateful for your generosity.

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**THE WAY OF THE CROSS**

**Every Friday at 7:30 pm during Lent** (except April 4) the Way of the Cross will be celebrated in our Church. This is a wonderful way to deepen intimacy with Jesus and to be in solidarity with suffering people in our world. Come and pray with us.

**Tamil Community Way of the Cross:** Every Tuesday during Lent (except April 15) the Way of the Cross in Tamil language will be prayed in the Church. This devotion begins at 6pm and finishes at 6:45pm. All are welcome.

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**Did You Know .....**

*What is Laetare Sunday?*

The Fourth Sunday of Lent has traditionally been known as Laetare Sunday, named after the first words of the Opening Antiphon of the Mass: *“Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.”* (Isaiah 66:10-11). The Latin word *Laetare* means ‘rejoice’. This Sunday brings us to the half-point of Lent and this small respite and call to rejoice in the penitential season is marked by the option to use rose vestments instead of violet. There is also a joyful note at this point in Lent because of the ancient practice of “handing over” the Creed to catechumens, the last decisive step for those preparing for Baptism at Easter. At first it may seem odd in this season of fasting and penance that we should be called to rejoice. But joy is what each Christian is called to each and every day even in moments of sadness, remorse and self-denial. It is the mark of the Spirit within us and springs from our faith and trust in the risen Lord. The celebration of Laetare Sunday encourages us to rejoice in the love God has for us as we progress through Lent and prepare ourselves to celebrate the great joy of Easter.

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**BEAUTY FROM OUR FAITH**

*“Mercy is to fasting as rain is to the earth. However much you may cultivate your heart, clear the soil of your nature, root out your vices and sow virtues, if you do not release the springs of mercy, your fasting will not bear fruit. When you fast a thin sowing of mercy will mean a thin harvest. When you fast what you pour out in mercy overflows into your barn. So do not lose by saving, but gather in by scattering.” ~ Peter Chrysologus, 5<sup>th</sup> Century*

<b>Lourdes @ a glance: the week of March 30 – April 5</b>						
<b>Sun 30</b>	<b>Mon 31</b>	<b>Tues 1</b>	<b>Wed 2</b>	<b>Thurs 3</b>	<b>Fri 4</b>	<b>Sat 5</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent ~ Laetare Sunday RCIA 1pm		Faith Formation: Prayer & Life Workshop 7pm	Pre-Passover Seder	Holy Thursday/ Good Friday Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Library)	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	