

Pastor's Note

Jesus instructs his followers (that's us) to be "perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." This is a most astounding and intimidating teaching. As its expression, the Lord says that we are not to resist the evil doer; to offer one's cheek if one has been hit on the other; to go the extra mile with a person; to give to anyone who begs; and, to love one's enemies and pray for those who persecute or hurt you. If I were look at his teaching and seek to put it into practice, I would soon realize that it is beyond my strength and some, even outside of my desires. How can I live his teaching, how can I be perfect as my "heavenly Father is perfect"? The answer to my question is "I can't." I can't turn the other cheek. I can't love and pray for those who treat me badly. I can't be perfect as the Father is perfect. All I do is trip and fall, all I do is make mistakes and give into temptation. So what's the use, what's the point? I always make the same mistake – I forget that I do not seek to follow the Lord alone, but rather I'm always with the Lord and the Lord is with me. And we seek to follow the Lord by a faith that may be fragile, is stronger in its desire than our discouragement of our failures. The movement within our hearts is stirred and enflamed by the witness of what he has done for us.

St. Paul poses a question in the Second Reading. He asks us, "Do you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" I may think of myself in many different ways, but the notion that I'm God's temple is not my usual first thought. Instead, I tend to think of myself as a disappointment to God. I may have moments of fidelity, but they are short lived. I'm like dead weight to the Lord and his more faithful followers. Yet, God has identified each of us as his temple. So much so that the Father has sent the Holy Spirit to dwell, to live within our hearts. It is amazing to comprehend that God refuses that there be an unbridgeable gap between himself and us. And so God lives within us and we are his temple. God's identification does not permit debate or other possibilities. In our hearts we simply repeat those most beautiful words: God has chosen me to be his temple. It is from the acceptance of God's will and judgement that we seek to follow the Lord and strive to be perfect. We come to know in our minds and hearts, little by little, that we are loved by the Father by a perfect love, a love that is eternal, is limitless. And so

we put one foot in front of the other, seeking to love God back with a love that only grows and expands, to "be perfect, therefore, as your Heavenly Father is perfect."

God Bless and Take Care! *Jn. John*

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday | Wed, Feb 26 | Masses at 8am, 12:10pm, 5:15pm and 7pm.

The symbol of ashes is a reminder of our humanness and of the passage of time. Ashes symbolize our desire for God's mercy and compassion. They are an expression of our sorrow for our sins and of our desire to resist temptation in the future. Ashes will be distributed during each of our Masses on Wednesday, February 26th – see timings above.

Fasting & Abstinence | Fasting is about how much or how little food we take in over a period of time. Abstinence has to do with the kinds of foods we deny ourselves. Fasting for religious purposes is used as an aid to concentration in prayer and helps develop a sensitivity to those in need. As a Church abstinence calls us (aged 14 years or older) to refrain from the eating of meat. Fasting allows only 1 full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food in the morning and the evening. In addition, eating between meals is prohibited. Fasting applies to those between the ages of 18 – 59. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are the required days of fasting and abstinence.

Lent 2020

Way of the Cross | Fridays throughout Lent at 7pm beginning Fri, Feb 28.

Lenten Penance Service | Wed, March 18 at 7pm.

Lenten Parish Mission | March 23, 24, and 25 at 7pm each evening in the Church | Theme: "Written on my Heart" Presenter: Michael Swan.

Development & Peace Way of the Cross | Monday, March 16th, at 6pm in the Church | A Way of the Cross evening in solidarity with the defenders of the Amazon people and lands. All are welcome.

Mass Intentions

Monday, February 24

8:00 am CAROLYN LOMBARD + [K. Wilkinson]
 12:10pm MARIA CHUNG + [David Chin]
 5:15 pm Holy Souls in Purgatory [Henriette Cudmore]

Tuesday, February 25

8:00 am Laboratorio Family's Intention [Lyra Laboratorio]
 12:10 pm Special Intention [Anonymous]
 5:15 pm Thanksgiving [Jason & Lovlyn]

Wednesday, February 26

8:00 am Thanksgiving [Joaquin Malabanan]
 12:10pm NANCY NICHOLLS' Intention [Anonymous]
 5:15 pm PAULY, MARY, CHRISTY + & All Souls [Silva Family]
 7:00pm Arnold Farias + [Namita Farias]

Thursday, February 27

8:00 am Glicerio Macaraig + [Fides Quilantang]
 12:10pm William Davidson + [Eileen Casey]
 5:15 pm CECILIA SLEGHEL + [Carina Sleghel]

Friday, February 28

8:00 am Stephen MacNeil + [Peter MacNeil]
 12:10pm All Souls in Purgatory [Oliver Family]
 5:15 pm Fabrizio Marastoni + [Stephen Marastoni]

Saturday, February 29

8:00 am Thanksgiving – SALVA MAGTIBAY [Family]
 12:10pm LOURDES UNITE's Birthday [Lourdes]

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED:

*Manuel San Pedro, Ambrosio Escañan
 Julia Hammond*

Social Outreach

Volunteer Tax Clinic | Sat, March 14, 10am-3pm | Please call the Parish Office at 416-924-6257 for an appointment. A drop-off service is also available for the homebound – please contact the office.

New Day Hospice Program in the Parish Seeking Volunteers | In partnership with Hospice Toronto we are currently exploring co-creating a day program for those with palliative diagnosis or a chronic illness. The program is tentatively scheduled for Thursdays 10am-3pm in the Parish Halls, beginning mid-April. If interested, please contact: bill@lourdes.to or 416-924-6257 x2556. Thank you.

Bulletin Corrections

We value the accuracy of the information printed in the weekly bulletin. If you notice an error or typo, we would be grateful if you let us know by emailing bulletin@lourdes.to so that we can update the online version (available at lourdes.to/bulletin) and rectify the error in the following week's print bulletin. Thank you!

Black History Month – Thank You from the African/Caribbean/Canadian Community

Thank you! The African/Caribbean/Canadian community wishes to express very sincere gratitude to ALL members of the Lourdes community including our Pastor Father John who concelebrated, all who assisted, supported and participated in sharing a truly beautiful celebration for our African Heritage/Black History Month. Once again the Choir, along with the active participation of the Chief Celebrant, Father Michael, was superb in uplifting the congregation with joyous melodies. We are always grateful to our sisters and brothers from the Motherland who always bring a taste of Africa in the Songs and Readings in various African languages as well as in their unique participation in the Offertory Procession.

To God be the glory and our gratitude always to Our Father, Son and Holy Spirit and to our Blessed Mother for a wonderful Celebration and for the beautiful weather. Thanks so very much.

Parish Events

Alpha | Tuesdays 6-8pm in Lynch Hall.

Catholic Women's League Spring Sale | Saturday, March 7 | 9am-2:30pm, Lynch and Bernadette Hall | Donations to the sale, such as small appliances or knick knacks, are most welcome. | Sorting of items will take place March 5 and 6. | Please bring donations to Lynch Hall on those days. | Please, no books or clothing.

Seniors Day Program | Ages 55+ | *Third Fridays of every month* | Next event: Friday, March 20 | Includes lunch (\$2) and a different fun activity every month. Meets 1-3:30pm, Lynch Hall.

Beauty from Our Faith

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook
 @LourdesToronto for inspiration through the week

“Put into practice the teachings of our holy faith, it is not enough to convince ourselves that they are true; we must love them. Love united to faith makes us practice our religion.”

~ St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori