

# Living the Gospel



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## *St. John the Evangelist Church*

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## FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

### Message from the Pastor

Peace to all of you! Today we celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Lent. This Sunday is called Laetare, which means Sunday of rejoicing. We are reminded that we are walking towards Easter and the Resurrection. The First Reading, from the First Book of Samuel, presents the call of David to be the future king of Israel. It was expected that to be chosen one needed to be strong and have wonderful qualities. Yet, God did not choose the strongest and tallest, but the youngest, who was David. To choose somebody, God looks mainly at the heart of the person and not at the human qualities. He elected David because he was humble and obedient. Later, God gave him all the qualities necessary to be a king. In a society in which we have to perform and be the best, it is consoling to realize that God calls us even though we have weaknesses and we are not perfect. If we answer His call, He gives all the graces that we need to fulfill our task. What is important is that we are humble and obedient, then God can do marvels in our lives. The Second Reading, from the Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians, offers us a teaching on being enlightened by Christ. When we used to follow our sinful desires and pleasures, we experienced darkness and anguish. We only saw our own selves and we could not see and love people around us. Once, God's grace has touched our hearts, He has transformed us by His Spirit. We have been enlightened and we can love other people, we live not for ourselves but at the service of others. In this time of Lent, Christ wants to enlighten us so that we may experience His mercy and being transformed we are able to love those around us. The Gospel, from St. John, gives us the account of the man born blind. Jesus encountered this person as He entered the temple. To manifest that He is the Lord of life, He opened the eyes of this person. He put mud and saliva in his eyes, he went to wash in a pool and he came back seeing. It is through God's word and His Spirit that we can be enlightened. All of us we have gone through difficult events that make us question God's goodness. These wounds cause us to live in fear and anguish. Through His mercy, Christ wants to heal us so that we may experience God's love. Therefore, we can live in peace and tranquility. Moreover, we feel grateful and can love those around us.

Let us open our hearts so that the Lord Jesus may enlighten us with His wonderful mercy so that we may experience fullness of peace!

Fr. Francisco Fernandez, Your servant and your Pastor

Pope Francis' Homily on the Fourth Sunday of Lent (March 22, 2020)

At the centre of the liturgy of this fourth Sunday of Lent is the theme of light. The Gospel (cf. John 9:1-41) tells the story of the man blind from birth, to whom Jesus gives sight. This miraculous sign is confirmation of Jesus' affirmation of: "I am the light of the world" (v. 5), the light that illuminates our darkness. This is who Jesus is. He operates illumination on two levels: a physical one and a spiritual one: the blind man first receives the sight of the eyes and then is led to faith in the "Son of Man" (v. 35), that is, in Jesus. It's all a path. Today it would be good if all of you took the Gospel of John, Chapter 9, and read this passage: it is so beautiful and it will do us good to read it one or two more times. The wonders that Jesus performs are not only spectacular gestures, but they are meant to lead to faith through a process of inner transformation.

The Pharisees and the doctors of the law – who were there as a group – refused to acknowledge the miracle, and ask the healed man insidious questions. But he disconcerts them with the power of

reality: "One thing I know: I was blind and now I see" (v. 25). Between the mistrust and hostility of those who surround him and question him in disbelief, he gradually takes a route that leads him to discover the identity of the one who opened his eyes and to confess his faith in Him. At first he considers Him a prophet (see 17); then recognizes Him as one who comes from God (cf. v. 33); Finally, he welcomes Him as the Messiah and prostrate himself before Him (see vv. 36-38). He understood that by giving him sight Jesus had "displayed the works of God" (cf. v. 3).

May we too have this experience! With the light of faith, the blind man discovers his new identity. He is now a "new creature", able to see his life and the world around him in a new light, because he entered into communion with Christ, he entered another dimension. He is no longer a beggar marginalized from the community; he is no longer a slave to blindness and prejudice. His path of enlightenment is a metaphor for the path of liberation from sin to which we are called. Sin is like a dark veil that covers our face and prevents us from clearly seeing ourselves and the world; the Lord's forgiveness takes away this blanket of shadow and darkness and gives us new light. The Lent we are living is an opportune and valuable time to approach the Lord, asking for His mercy, in the different forms that the Mother Church proposes to us.

The healed blind man, who now sees both with the eyes of the body and those of the soul, is the image of every baptized man, who immersed in Grace has been pulled out of the darkness and placed in the light of faith. But it is not enough to receive light, it is necessary to become light. Each of us is called to receive the divine light in order to manifest it with our whole life. The first Christians, the theologians of the first centuries, said that the community of Christians, that is, the Church, is the "mystery of the moon", because they gave light but it was not their own light, it was the light they received from Christ. We also must be "mystery of the moon": to give the light received from the son, who is Christ the Lord. St Paul reminds us of this today: "Be a child of light; for the fruit of light consists in all goodness, justice, and truth" (Eph 5:8-9). The seed of new life placed in us in Baptism is like a spark of a fire, which purifies us first, burning the evil that we have in our hearts, and allows us to shine and illuminate. With the light of Jesus.

May Mary Most Holy help us to imitate the blind man of the Gospel, so that we can be flooded with the light of Christ and walk with him on the path of salvation.



**Schedule of Stations of the Cross begin at 6:30pm in English and 7:30pm in Spanish**

Mar 24	Development & Peace Way of the Cross
Mar 31	Mary's Way of the Cross

### Archdiocese Day of Confessions in St. John's Parish

**Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

**10:30am – 12:00pm**

**2:00pm – 4:00pm,**

**7:00pm – 8:00pm**

### **Reconciliation Evening Service**

**Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 7pm in the church**

***Several priests available***

\*\*\*\*\*

MARCH 19, 2023

**Join us and celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner**

April 28, 2023, at 6 p.m.,

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This dinner is meant to raise funds necessary to continue the mission the Lord has entrusted to us. Tickets \$150 per person



Masses For The Week

**Sat Mar 18 – 5:00pm**

**+Kathleen Hutchings & Dave & Una Johnston**

*req. by The Johnston Family*

**Mon Mar 20 – 8:20am**

**+Yesudass**

*req by His Family*

**Tues Mar 21 – 8:20am**

**+Mario Veltri**

*req. by Nina Veltri & Family*

**Wed Mar 22 – 7:00pm**

**+Andrew Marioselva**

*req. by Christine & Children*

**+Oliver Pace**

*req. by Nina Veltri & Family*

**Thurs Mar 23 – 8:20am**

**+Craig Robertson**

*req. by Gary & Anne & Family*

**Fri Mar 24 – 7:00pm**

**+Matilda Costa Correa**

*req. by Noreen & Bobby*

**Sat Mar 25 – 5:00pm**

**+Teresa Smid**

*req. by John & Helen Ecker & Family*

**Installation of Archbishop Francis Leo  
Saturday March 25, 2023 @ 10am**

Given capacity restrictions at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica, this will be an invitation-only event. The Mass of Installation will be livestreamed through [www.stmichaelscathedral.com/live](http://www.stmichaelscathedral.com/live) and broadcast on Salt & Light Catholic TV and through their website: [www.slmedia.org](http://www.slmedia.org).

Recognizing that the cathedral will not be able to accommodate all of the faithful who may wish to attend the Mass of Installation, a regional Mass of Welcome will take place in the eastern region of the archdiocese at St. Isaac Jogues Parish, Pickering on Wednesday April 26<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. A reception will follow the mass in the parish hall.

Please keep Archbishop Leo in your prayers as he begins his ministry as our shepherd.



Show your love on the Feast of St. Joseph through ShareLife Today we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph and reflect on his holy life and the way he loved and cared for Jesus and Mary. Next week is ShareLife Sunday. May we emulate St. Joseph's example and share our blessings with the least of our brothers and sisters.

*Please give at the parish using a ShareLife envelope, online through our parish website, or at [sharelife.org/donate](http://sharelife.org/donate).*

**Totus Tuus is returning this Summer!**

The children and youth of the parish are invited to join us for Totus Tuus this summer. It is a fun and faith-filled program with catechesis, Mass, confession, songs and games!

**DAY CAMP (for students entering grade 1-6 in September) - \$80/child for the week**

Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup> to Friday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

**EVENING PROGRAM (for students entering grade 7-12 in September) - \$40/child for the week**

Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 9:00 PM

For more information about registration or volunteering to help with this program, please contact Cassandra at [cass.sullivan@archtoronto.org](mailto:cass.sullivan@archtoronto.org). More information is also available at [www.totustuustoronto.ca](http://www.totustuustoronto.ca)



**Stand for the Land**

Honduras's diverse ecosystems, fertile lands and rich natural resources attract many profiteering enterprises that overexploit the land with no benefit for local communities.

**Development and Peace — Caritas**

Canada supports Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación (ERIC, Reflection, Research and Communication Team), an organization that helps communities in their struggle for land and territory and investigates human rights abuses.

This Lent, meet our solidarity visitor Elvin Hernández, a human rights investigator at ERIC. Learn more at [devp.org/lent](http://devp.org/lent).

On Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> we will pray with the Station of the Cross prepared by Development and Peace. For more information contact: Estela Rios at [emr0001@hotmail.com](mailto:emr0001@hotmail.com) – 905-430-7753



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