

# EL MOTIVO DE LA ALEGRÍA

IV DOMINGO DE CUARESMA — 10 DE MARZO, 2024

Este cuarto domingo de Cuaresma la liturgia eucarística comienza con esta invitación: «Alégrate, Jerusalén...». (cf. Is 66,10). ¿Cuál es el motivo de esta alegría? En plena Cuaresma, ¿cuál es el motivo de esta alegría? Nos lo dice el evangelio de hoy: «Tanto amó Dios al mundo que dio a su Hijo único, para que todo el que crea en él no perezca, sino que tenga vida eterna» (Jn 3,16). Este mensaje gozoso es el núcleo de la fe cristiana: el amor de Dios llega a la cumbre en el don del Hijo a una humanidad débil y pecadora. Nos ha entregado a su Hijo, a nosotros, a todos nosotros.

Es lo que se desprende del diálogo nocturno entre Jesús y Nicodemo, una parte del cual está descrita en la misma página evangélica (cf. Jn 3,14-21). Nicodemo, como todo miembro del pueblo de Israel, esperaba al Mesías, y lo identificaba con un hombre fuerte que juzgaría al mundo con poder. Jesús pone en crisis esta expectativa presentándose bajo tres aspectos: el del Hijo del hombre exaltado en la cruz; el del Hijo de Dios enviado al mundo para la salvación; y el de la luz que distingue a los que siguen la verdad de los que siguen la mentira. Veamos estos tres aspectos: Hijo del hombre, Hijo de Dios y luz.

Jesús se presenta en primer lugar como el Hijo del Hombre (vv. 14-15). El texto alude al relato de la serpiente de bronce (cf. Nm 21,4-9), que, por voluntad de Dios, fue levantada por Moisés en el desierto cuando el pueblo fue atacado por serpientes venenosas; el que había sido mordido y miraba la serpiente de bronce se curaba. Del mismo modo, Jesús fue levantado en la cruz y los que creen en Él son curados del pecado y viven.

El segundo aspecto es el del Hijo de Dios (vv. 16-18). Dios Padre ama a los hombres hasta el punto de “dar” a su Hijo: lo dio en la Encarnación y lo dio al entregarlo a la muerte. La finalidad del don de Dios es la vida eterna de los hombres: en efecto, Dios envía a su Hijo al mundo no para condenarlo, sino para que el mundo se salve por medio de Jesús. La misión de Jesús es misión de salvación, de salvación para todos.

El tercer nombre que Jesús se atribuye es “luz” (vv. 19-21). El Evangelio dice: «Vino la luz al mundo, y los hombres amaron más las tinieblas que la luz» (v. 19). La venida de Jesús al mundo determina una elección: quien elige las tinieblas va al encuentro de un juicio de condenación, quien elige la luz tendrá un juicio de salvación. El juicio es siempre la consecuencia de la libre elección de cada uno: quien practica el mal busca las tinieblas, el mal siempre se esconde, se cubre. Quien hace la verdad, es decir, practica el bien, llega a la luz, ilumina los caminos de la vida. Quien camina en la luz, quien se acerca a la luz, no puede por menos que hacer buenas obras. La luz nos lleva a hacer buenas obras. Es lo que estamos llamados a hacer con mayor empeño durante la Cuaresma: acoger la luz en nuestra conciencia, para abrir nuestros corazones al amor infinito de Dios, a su misericordia llena de ternura y bondad. No olvidéis que Dios perdona siempre, siempre, si nosotros con humildad pedimos el perdón. Basta con pedir perdón y Él perdona. Así encontraremos el gozo verdadero y podremos alegrarnos del perdón de Dios que regenera y da vida.

Que María Santísima nos ayude a no tener miedo de dejarnos “poner en crisis” por Jesús. Es una crisis saludable, para nuestra curación; para que nuestra alegría sea plena.





## **GROW AS A DISCIPLE** | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

“The floor is lava!” We used to play this game as children, and it still seems popular today: you arrange furniture and other objects in such a way as to make it from point to point, and even room to room, without touching the floor. There may be more than one way to go, but the crux of the matter is that you have to use these waypoints to stay alive in the game. Following Jesus is somewhat similar, although obviously infinitely more serious and important! He himself, through his sacrifice on the cross, opened the doors of salvation to us – he has provided the ways and means to live free from death. His sacrifice is the only thing that makes it possible for us to enter heaven. In other words, he has arranged the spiritual furniture, made clear those waypoints, and, differing from children who play the lava game, is ready and willing to help us at any time to move safely and confidently along the journey. St Paul writes, “we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.”

## **GO EVANGELIZE**

**PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT**

St. Paul also writes, “by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God.” And in today’s Gospel, St. John writes these words we know so well. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.” Both testaments include words of comfort, but John here also includes a call to action. Notice the word “might.” Like “may,” which is found in other translations, it indicates possibility, probability, and contingency. In other words, it is offered – freely given! – but we must accept. And acceptance means, just as the prophets shared with the Israelites, we need to follow God’s commands. It means that in our words and deeds we act from and in love of God and love of one another. For “whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.”

**ENGAGE** Today we are about halfway through Lent. If you haven’t yet taken advantage of the rich opportunity to pray the Stations of the Cross with your family, do so this week. Most parishes pray the stations on Fridays during Lent, and perhaps other days as well. This ancient tradition of our Church is a beautiful and meaningful way to walk the Way of the Cross with our Lord.

*We adore you, O Christ, and bless you. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the whole world.*



## THROUGH THE DESERT GOD LEADS US TO FREEDOM

In his [message for Lent 2024](#), Pope Francis invites us: “Let us welcome Lent as the great season in which he reminds us: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex 20:2). Lent is a season of conversion, a time of freedom. Jesus himself, as we recall each year on the first Sunday of Lent, was driven into the desert by the Spirit in order to be tempted in freedom. For forty days, he will stand before us and with us: the incarnate Son. Unlike Pharaoh, God does not want subjects, but sons and daughters. The desert is the place where our freedom can mature in a personal decision not to fall back into slavery. In Lent, we find new criteria of justice and a community with which we can press forward on a road not yet taken.”

**JOURNEY THROUGH LENT:** The [Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) presents “Journey through Lent” with the Most Rev. Stephen Hero, Bishop of Prince Albert, and the Most Rev. Mark Hagemoen, Bishop of Saskatoon.

Join us as we reflect on the Scriptures for the Sundays of Lent 2024.

**MASS OF CHRISM 2024:** The Mass of Chrism will take place at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King at 2pm on *Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>*. Bishop Crosby will consecrate Sacred Chrism and bless Oil for the Sick and Catechumens for use in the Sacraments during the coming year. The Bishops and Priests will renew their Ordination promises. *All are welcome.*

### ENGLISH SCHEDULE

<u>Saturday, March 9</u> +Ron Craig +John McMahon	<b>5:00 PM Mass</b>
<u>Sunday, March 10</u> <i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	<b>9:00 AM Mass</b>
<u>Tuesday, March 12</u> +Odessa Barrette	<b>11:00 AM Mass</b>
<u>Wednesday, March 13</u> +Nora Brown	<b>11:00 AM Mass</b>
<u>Thursday, March 14</u> +Stella Dombroskie	<b>11:00 AM Mass</b>
<u>Friday, March 15</u> +Nora Brown	<b>11:00 AM Mass</b>
<u>Saturday, March 16</u> +John Clair McMahon +Nora Brown	<b>5:00 PM Mass</b>
<u>Sunday, March 17</u> <i>Fifth Sunday of Lent</i> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	<b>9:00 AM Mass</b>

### HORARIOS EN ESPAÑOL

<u>Sabado 9 de marzo</u>	<b>Misa 7:00 PM</b>
<u>Domingo 10 de marzo</u> <i>IV Domingo de Cuaresma</i> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	<b>Misa 11:00 AM</b>
<u>Martes 12 de Marzo</u>	<b>Misa 12:00 PM</b>
<u>Miercoles 13 de Marzo</u>	<b>Misa 12:00 PM</b>
<u>Jueves 14 de Marzo</u>	<b>Misa 12:00 PM</b>
<u>Viernes 15 de marzo</u>	<b>Misa 12:00 PM</b>
<u>Sabado 16 de marzo</u>	<b>Misa 7:00 PM</b>
<u>Domingo 17 de marzo</u> <i>V Domingo de Cuaresma</i> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	<b>Misa 11:00 AM</b>

**DIRECTORS AND COORDINATORS OF MUSIC**, Cantors, Musicians, and Choir members are invited and encouraged to participate in a *Music Ministers Retreat* on March 16, 2024, at Annunciation of Our Lord Parish in Hamilton. The session begins at 9:30 a.m. and continues to 3:00 p.m. **The facilitator for the day is Dr. Glenn Byer, and his theme: Near Occasions of Grace!** Dr. Byer is an award-winning author who has written widely on liturgical and pastoral ministry, including a series in *Today's Liturgy*. The day will begin with sung Morning Prayer, followed by four 45-minute sessions on *Transfiguring our Lives and Relationships through Sacred Music*. The presentations will invite participants to sing hymns and reflect on themes. Check [here](#) for registration. An uplifting Lenten experience!

**LOAVES AND LAUGHTER** is a Friday night activity at St. Mary Parish in Kitchener 7pm-9pm. Father Toby Collins, CR, Pastor of St. Mary found the bread-making equipment in Harriston. The renowned Chef Amy of Tiny Homes Takeout refined the recipe and the baking methods to consistently produce a large quantity of sliced sandwich bread. Andrew Zettel, Outreach Coordinator for St. Mary Parish, encouraged community members to gather on Friday nights for Loaves and Laughter, to make bread and have a lot of fun! It is a creative and fun-filled way to build a welcoming faith community!