

## ***from many hands to Christ's poor...***

This coming Saturday, November 12, 2022, during Vespers beginning at 6:30 p.m., we will receive and welcome the relics of a saint who has been directing the course of our community for over 36 years.

How this relic has finally come to be received by us is a 25-year story which someday could be written in a book.

Looking back, it was a long history of an effort that appeared often to be foolish and futile. Fr. Deacon Pawel is witness to the many letters and creative attempts in this search! We knocked on many doors and behind each door there is a story waiting to be told, e.g. the time Pope Francis sent us the wrong relic, i.e. the relic of St. John the Apostle and not St. John the Merciful....

St. John is buried in Venice in a church dedicated to him. The Venetians were great for stealing relics and this worked in our interest....Flavio, who is p. Roberto's brother lives in Venice and he was instrumental in getting us the relic.

The relic of our beloved saint was finally released from the Venetian Patriarchate under solemn oath that it would only be brought to Canada by hand, not mailed or sent by courier. This is a beautiful tradition that we were happy to honour. Cristina and José therefore travelled from Spain to Italy to take it from the hands of Flavio and eventually brought it to us when they travelled from Spain to Canada. Alas, conflict in Belarus where the reliquary was being made slowed down the crafting of the sacred urn. So, we had to wait and wait and wait ...about one year....But soon, in a few days, the moment will come and the Mission will house the only relic of St. John the Compassionate in Canada. The only place in Canada (maybe in North America?) where his relics are housed and venerated, daily.

## 36<sup>th</sup> St John the Compassionate Feast Day!



This year please  
come and  
welcome with the  
community the  
relics of our  
Beloved Saint.

Vespers will be followed by guest presentations, a play on the life of St John, a few surprises and some good food.

It all starts  
Saturday November 12 at 6:30pm

All are welcome

From the hands of two Venetian Patriarchs, Scala and Francesco, to Flavio, to Cristina and José, to p.Roberto, to p.Nicolaie and finally to Christ's poor at the mission. We have kept our promise. As did St. John.

We are very grateful to the Patriarchate of Venice for releasing to us this precious relic of our Saint.

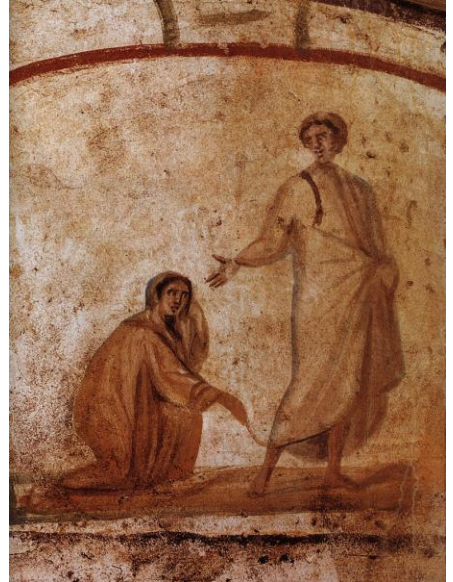
### *Sunday reflection*

*"My child, your faith has made you well; go in peace."*

On Friday at the end of lunch I ended up at the table with two new people. One, an older man, moving slowly with the walker and a lady, that I did see before praying with us in the chapel, but never had the chance to chat. At the mission, at times, we come across people who come to church out of faith. All of us come out of our little faith, however, some come out of this faith that we hear about in the gospel today, the one that makes the human person well. The one that gives boldness to approach God. This faith that can touch Christ and be revealed within the community. It is a faith that cannot be hidden within the humility of the faithful. Being at the mission and seeing so many people over the years, coming inside and pressing on the Lord, we at times recognize this faith that the Lord wants to reveal to all. On Friday, when we reflected on the woman's faith, Sister Penka said that Jesus wanted to see her so He could bless her: *"My little child ... go in peace."* To give her a blessing for her faith. She was afraid, she thought she had done something wrong.

Jesus blesses her and He lets us know that faith is something good that makes us resemble the children ready to love and be forgiven. Somehow, the faith of the new lady who came to pray and eat with us needed some kind of recognition too. Because of her humility and simplicity, because she did not want to be noticed.

She was from Sri Lanka, as I was going to find out and she was a buddhist. She goes and prays to different churches. Not to the mosques, she said, because they do not allow women there, otherwise she would have gone there as well. She had a family and children and has been in Canada for a few years now. She spoke about her home country and about her family, when she was asked. She had a sense of humour and an ongoing curiosity to listen to the older man who was telling the young people at the table about the accidents he had had and about how the system failed in taking care of his health. He stayed with us for the Friday gospel reflection and we find out that he was a muslim. He asked me to pray for him as a priest and he told us how happy he felt to have come inside and eaten together. Grateful for the food and company and everything he received.



*"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity . . .*

24th Sunday after Pentecost

At the end of the day he confessed more to us. He told us how he avoids the Christians in Dundas square, who harass you with hell if you are a muslim or if your sexuality is not the way they want you to be. He avoids the place and he is afraid of them. "Who are they? Why do they do that? I came here today and ate and received food and respect. It did not matter I was a muslim. The place is clean and treats everybody the same, I see all these nice pictures here. Why is this not enough? Why do they have to hate others and send the muslims and homosexuals to hell?"

"I don't know who they are," I answered.

I wanted to continue and tell him that we are not the same, the orthodox church. That we do not condemn and that the church prays for all and does not send people to hell but rather prays for those who end up there, especially if it is caused by our many sins. I wanted to say more, that as the kingdom of God is within the heart, hell could be manifested there as well and it doesn't really matter where the people send you. I wanted to say more but I could not because of shame. Are we indeed the way the fathers tell us we are? Do we send others to hell or do we pray and forgive our enemy? Are we open to all in the practicality of faith or do we rather reject all due to the impracticality of the bylaws we invented that take us away from any path that could lead towards unity and reconciliation?

At times it might be better to let some questions be answered by others. Especially those that define who we are. We should let the poor and the strangers, the addicts who are dying on the streets or the elderly who are alone in nursing homes to tell us who we are. To ask the Muslims and the Buddhists how they relate with us and what they see. The atheists and even those who are possessed by evil spirits. Let them tell us how much we love peace, how much we are peacemakers being moved and changed by the love we know. We don't need to go to conferences in order to introduce ourselves to the world and tell them who we are but rather learn from people on the streets and find out who we are for them. How relevant we have become in a time of war for those souls who desire peace and a life lived in reconciliation and unity among the Truth.

Moments like those on Fridays are important for us at the mission. The spirit of divisiveness that spreads all over the world is seen in the streets as well. Just this week, as we were having lunch, a person rushed inside to complain angrily that people were waiting for food outside and not being served, while the people inside were eating. I got up from the table and went outside to see what he was describing. The truth was that he could not wait for a few minutes. He had come late and he was complaining that when he arrived people did not stop what they were doing in order to attend to him. He had actually been avoiding coming inside for years because, at times, we are not good enough for him.

Moments like these are not few during the week. It would be easy for us to be drawn within this confrontation with nobody for the sake of nothing, where everybody is at loss. When small

moments of unity manifest within the room between people of different faiths we receive hope that Christ is among us and He makes His face shine upon us and has mercy on us. He let us see the simplicity of faith that heals and the desire for unity and reconciliation of the “stranger” we have wounded with our “purity of faith”.

Saturday of the 7th Week

The Gospel According to Luke 9:1-6

***“At that time, Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases.”***

During the week I met a person I have not seen for some time. Ever since I met him, he has been living in between worlds, being tempted by voices, fighting them at times and looking for a cure. He confessed to me that now is a time when he listens more to them. One could see his troubled soul and the distress disguised in happiness.

He always had an admiration for the Orthodox church. He thinks one day he will be baptized. The true way, he said, the only way. He attacks the heretics and their teachings. “You know what you should do? ... The orthodox should sue all other Christian denominations for copyright, being an apostolic church. Take them to court. You would win and take over all these buildings, right? Becoming the only church.” He spoke more about the purity of faith and other things. At one point he could not resist an honest opinion. “Actually, you know, you guys are actually the new pharisees. Thinking that you are above all.” I did not say anything, just thought for myself: yes, at least we don’t have a love for canons and laws as they did.

He quickly corrected his hasty opinion. He was going to argue with people about the faith and needed the right teachings. He talked more for a little while. When he was leaving one could see a funny picture with snakes attached to his coat. His mind was listening to some voices, while his heart was in need of kindness and hope in his healing.

For us it is not good to listen to the voices, they lie even when they say the Truth, as St Athanasios says. However, at times, when they lie they cannot cover the truth. And the truth of who we are is important so we need to know how much more we should repent.

7th Sunday of Luke

The Gospel According to Luke 8:41-56

*"But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." And her spirit returned, and she got up at once; and he directed that something should be given to her to eat. And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no one what had happened."*

The question on Friday was about Jesus asking the parents not to say anything about the resurrection of their daughter. Why could they not share the good news? The apostles are told by Jesus to proclaim his resurrection, why can the parents not speak about their joy? Why does this joy mean nothing for the community? It is for the second Sunday in a row when we hear from Jesus that people coming from the dead could not change our faith.

Eliana said it was in order for the parents to be protected. Imagine if they had talked to people. They would have to answer all the questions and deal with all that lack of belief. Jesus did it for them, for their sake, for their protection. This might have been true, we remember that after Jesus brought Lazarus back from the death at Bethany, the Pharisees and the priests got together and talked to kill both Jesus and Lazarus. Lazarus had become a target as well.

For us, this opens a personal door to reflection. Why are we so quick to listen to the voices and to the lies, to those who discredit and those who accuse and slow to believe the good news, when the good news happens? We see that at times with people who go through traumatic events in their lives, how those voices are so present and so accusing. So strong to battle, impossible to neglect. Those that plant the lie within the year so the Truth cannot be heard. The Word of God looks so fragile in this context. It needs protection within the heart and silence in order to grow and to convince the broken heart of its healing. To let it fully taste of its renewal. The new life of the 12 year child cannot be given to the world, together with the joy of the parents. They need protection and maturation. At the mission, that happens within the silence of the chapel. Where the silence is clear and the Word can grow within the heart that is harassed by the voices that lie. The bad news and the lies travel fast. Faster than the light speed. The good news of the resurrection walks by foot. And people who bring it encounter rejection and humiliation. The heart has to be ready to prove the witness because only in this way the faith becomes alive.

We pray these days at the mission for the good news. For God to let us know the good that happens now in the world and in the heart of his people. We are ready to prepare the place for the heart to rest and to preserve the silence that leads the broken heart to prayer. To give time to the joy to mature so it cannot be taken away and harmed by the lies. To become the inner Truth that reveals to us the reality of forgiveness that is resistant to any form of rejection. We pray that God would make us worthy of receiving the good news. And not let us in darkness quarreling with the voices that always win.

Prayer list for the sick and those who have recovered:



Peter; José, George, Mihaela, Richard; Bernadette, Elisha; Kayla; Harley, Maria and Carlos; Omar; Elisabeth; Ben, Kim, Maria Becatam ;Seena; Tony, Nikitha; Dianne; Joy; Susie; Alex; Maurice; Lynn; Molly; Thomas; Varghese; Delia; Leela; Mary; Tanya; Basma; Aditi; Larry; Darius; Lori; Lisa; Cindy; Césare; Fatima; Debbie; Donald; Hermina; Råul; EK Thomas; Nebu; Evangelia; Sarah; Shelley; Bill; Ruth, Kristian and Frank; Maria; Binja ; Mike; Luke; Anusia; Lavalin's son; Sana; Father George Patrick, and Father Michael Miklos/Pani Karen Miklos; Dominique and her daughter; Mike; Luke; Arjuna; Joy; Susie; Alex; Lynn; Molly'; Thomas; Alex; Fathima; Frank; Chris; Evlokia; Mikayla and Luca; Karunawathi, Gloria, Vijekumari, Ronda, and Regina; Delia; Valerie; Tom; Traian; Peter; Marco; Kim; Tihomir; Kate; Payton Clark; Sana, and her family in Egypt; Isaiah; Mary; Sydney; Peter; Christine; Stephanie; Iulia; Jason; Sophia; Alexander; Charles; Tom; Paul; Phillip and his wife Juliet; Cristina; Ann Brown's daughter; Silvia; Jincy; Shiron Crisreen; Allain; Seena and her husband; Waheeda and children; Faizah; Shirin and her family; Cristina; Daniela, Jerry; Delia ; Ragaie; Victoria; Mike; Farida; Roselyne and family; Ana; Cornelia; Leon; Jerry; Ocean; Gloria; Anne; Marina; Marie; Edemene; Joanna and family; Rejoice; Romana, Coline, Michael, Peter, Henry, George, Kelly; Tom; Marina; Kumari; Susan; child James; Aaron; Sylvia; Fr Jonathan; Tharshini and her two children; Ann Tyron and her family; Sandra Gomaz's children; Sameen; Sophia; Amy; Swetha and children; Charitha; Jitesh's parents; Demene; Carol; Gloria; Hawa Bibi; Vimaladevi; Fr. John and Pani Marie; Lynn; Michelle; Emanuel(Mani); Stefanie; Geoff; Joey; Evangelia; Sophia; Melanie; Tanya; Piper; Zamalk; Nelly; Nahla; Mira; Sandral; Brenda; Vol; Gomaz; ; Helen; Paul; Wafaa; Fr David; Pani Donna

Please pray for the deceased:

Judie; Joel; Peter; Fr Tony; Zatia; Tom; Fred; Shrin; Andre; Andree; Akhir; Arjuna; Dillon; Elena; Pani Mary; Rejoice`s mother; Edmund; Pani Eleanor; Fr John; Alexandru; Constantin; Robert; Fr Aurel; Georgi; Rada; Petre; Stela; William; Samuel; Debbie; John; Amy, Willie; Dave`s wife; Ana; Shirin`s cousin in Jordan; Father Lawrence; Dave; Anne Tyran`s father; Edith, Sr. Mary Magdalene; Joice; BettyAnn; James; Pauanasuy Kamthasang; Maria; Andrei; Agostina; Carminda; Vimaladevi's sister; Sri's mother; Carol's Mother and 23 year old nephew; Demene`s mother, Dalalzaki.

## November 7 - 13

<b>Tuesday</b>	8:30 am 7:30pm	Morning Prayer Psalms Study – via Zoom	<b>Wednesday</b>	8:30 am 12:30 pm 4:00 pm 6:30 pm	Morning Prayer Noon Hours Vespers/Dinner Bridges/Compline 8pm
<b>Thursday</b>	8:30 am 12:30 pm 2:00 pm	Morning Prayer Noon Hours Jesus Prayer	<b>Friday</b>	7:00 am 12:30 pm 2:00 pm	Orthros Noon Hours Jesus Prayer
<b>Saturday</b>	9:00 am 6:30pm	Morning Prayer Vespers for the Feast of St John...	<b>Sunday</b>	6:00 am 7:00 am 8:30 am	Jesus Prayer Orthros Divine Liturgy

	<p><b>St Silouan Chapel at St John's Mission</b>            155 Broadview Ave. Toronto, ON M4M 2E9            T: 416-466-1357 E: info@stjohnsmmission.org W: stjohnsmmission.org</p> <p><b>St Zoticos Orthodox Church at Good Neighbours Mission</b>            193 Markham Rd Scarborough, ON M1J 3C3            T: 647-358-4105</p> <p>We are an apostolate of the ecumenical patriarchate "Mother Church of Christ's poor" under            the Omophorion of Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa</p>	
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St. Silouan Chapel, November 5, 2022

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