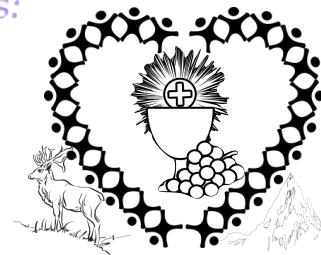


Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

*Fernie on Saturday evening at 5pm,
Sparwood at 9am Sunday morning,
and Elkford at 4pm Sunday afternoon.*



The Sunday Mass is broadcast via Zoom from Fernie & Sparwood (see below).

Dear All,

There are so many thoughts in my head! I have had so much wonderful and enriching information pass in front of my eyes during this last week. From the talk on Black Madonna images as part of our Lent series, through C.S. Lewis' writings, to Greek philosophy as part of our priests' day of reflection, and I still have a CWL Lenten Retreat to come! I wish I could have all this in smaller chunks so I could consume it more slowly, because just at the moment I am feeling a bit bloated with ideas! Hopefully, if any of this passes the test of time, I will share it with you later.

Edward Hays Poem for Holy Week

Below I have included a wonderful poem by the late Edward Hays called, "Prayer of Dedication to a Life of Perfection and Service". Bp. Gregory recently used part of it when he was talking to priests, and I really liked it so went and found the original. I think it is a very good prayer for anytime, but if you wanted to do a little something extra for Holy Week, the reading of this prayer each day might be a good and easy task. I find it particularly helpful if I use it as a meditation more than a prayer; by this I mean that I read a line at a time and then double check myself to see if that is my prayer, that I am happy to say that to God.

In the interests of full disclosure, I must admit to having changed a very small part of the prayer. The original said, "*May I strive for excellence in all the work of my hands.*" And I have changed this to, "*May I strive to do my very best in all the work of my hands.*" This change is made out of love and respect for my Dad-in-England. When I was young he was a principal of a high school. At that time many schools would talk about striving for excellence, but this worried Dad. Excellence is a good thing, but it is only available to a few. Certainly in my case, I never came top in any academic subject because I was not academically gifted. Sadly, I also never came top in any sports as I wasn't gifted in that area either, nor in practical things like woodwork or art, nor in music. Basically, I knew from the outset that at school I wasn't going to achieve excellence in any area. And if excellence was the goal, then one or two gifted people would always win, and the rest of us would continually lose. But if instead one focused on *effort* rather than *achievement*, then the game is open to all! Few can achieve excellence, but if we decided to, any of us could do our very best. So clearly a real way to show our love to God is to say that we will do our *very best* in the work of our hands; then really, after that it is in *God's hands* what comes from this.

Fr. Mark and the Lent Talks

This week we had the last of the ten Lent Talks. I have to say how impressed I was with every one of the talks. They were, obviously, part of a Lenten journey, but each talk left one thinking and feeling that a person of faith had shared something that was precious to them. If you missed any or if you want to see what so many people are raving about, they are (slowly) going up on YouTube, and the link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9Z63PS4tyPqMcqbaDULqNQ>

I must look again at the one that talks about the difference between sin and shame as, to my shame, I got distracted during that talk, but because I wasn't listening, I don't know if that was a sin!?!

I would very much like to thank Fr. Mark for doing all the hard work of getting the speakers lined up, so I will be writing to him after Easter. If you would like to include a note to him or send him any particular comments, feel free to e-mail me and I will put together a 'thank you' from all of us who got so much from these talks.



Covid Update

The B.C. authorities have slightly changed their mind. At the moment

LATE NEWS

As we go to press the B.C. government have announced some relaxation of the restrictions of gatherings for worship.

We will have to work out how they affect us.

We will provide a separate e-mail stating when and where any indoor service will be held.

But as numbers will be very limited, the Zoom broadcast will continue as before.

...after so many months of having p... open and churches shut.

Palms

What a wonderful turnout we had at the blessing of palms! I was amazed and so delighted. In both Fernie and Sparwood I was blessing palms for well over an hour. It was particularly wonderful to see so many young people turn up. Thus many thanks to all those who were part of this.



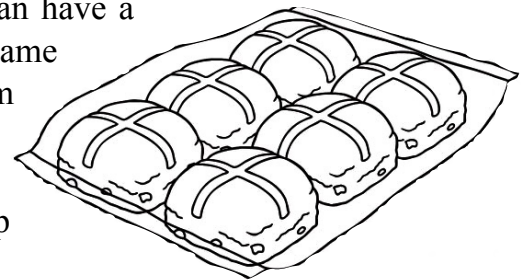
Blessing of Feet and a Hot Cross Bun!



The point of giving out palms during the week was not just to get palms in people's hands before Palm Sunday, but equally importantly, it was to get people to feel that they are still involved in the liturgy, that is, with our celebration of Easter. I wanted to underline that even when you sit at home in front of a computer screen, you are still an important and active participant. And I have to add that for me it was really wonderful to see so many people and to be able to say hello again.

With this in mind, this coming week I will be offering the blessing of feet in preparation for Maundy Thursday – the day we would traditionally have the washing of feet. Obviously this year the washing of feet is not possible, but what I am very happy to do is to offer a **blessing** of feet!

Just like with the blessing of the palms, what I will do is put together a very short liturgy of around five minutes. This liturgy will involve a short part of the Gospel reading from Maundy Thursday and a prayer plus a blessing. So if you are in Sparwood on Wednesday from 12noon to 1pm, you can have a blessing and hopefully pick up a 'Hot Cross Bun' at the same time! And if you are in Fernie on Thursday from 11:30am to 12:30pm, the last 'Soup and a Bun' of Lent will be taking place, so you can have your feet blessed and then wander next door to the Family Centre and pick up something there.



More than anything, my hope is that by providing this short liturgy it will give those who can join us an opportunity to come to the church just as we start our great celebrations of the Easter events. Then, as you watch the liturgies each day at home, you will know that you are connected to them, they are **your** Masses!

(Again, you might be asked if we can include a picture of your feet at the service.)

Holy Week Services

Please see below for a full description of the broadcast services. But to the right is a basic summary. There will be the distribution of Communion after each of the services.

Maundy Thursday	Thursday 7pm	Fernie
Good Friday	Friday 3pm	Sparwood
Holy Saturday Night	Saturday 5pm	Fernie
Easter Sunday	Sunday 9am	Sparwood
	Sunday 4pm*	Elkford

** means not broadcast on Zoom.*

And Finally...

Many thanks to the person who dropped off a shepherd's pie on my doorstep. It was wonderful and I have the empty casserole dish to prove it! Do let me know how I can return the dish to you!

With thanks and a promise of prayers,

Fr. David @ Thumper

P.S.

This week's Thumper pictures are on the last page.

Prayer of Dedication to a Life of Perfection and Service

Lord God, You who know the secrets of my heart,
come now and fill me with the spirit of sincerity
as I pledge myself to You and to the coming of Your kingdom.

Lord, I desire to serve You with all my heart,
with all my soul and
with all my strength.

I surrender myself to Your holy plan for me
as I seek to be perfect as You are perfect.

May I strive to do my very best in all the work of my hands.

May I strive to live within the spirit of holy poverty,
living a simple way of life.

May my greatest possession be Your love and the love of those around me.

May I strive to love as you Love,
asking that my love be always chaste and whole.

May I strive to be obedient and open to the mystery of Your voice within me,
willing to embrace whatever You may ask of me.

Lord and Friend,
I rededicate myself to a life of prayer and worship of You.

May a song of praise be the constant melody of my heart.
I recommit myself to serve the needs of those around me
and the needs of all the world.

May I find my salvation here at this time and in this place where I now live.

May my union with those who share my commitment
be a source of confirmation and inspiration to me.

Lord, I marvel that You, in Your divine wisdom,
have chosen me to be an instrument of Your creative salvation.

May all the work of my hands,
even my failings and stumblings,
be leaven to make that much desired Kingdom a reality.

Bless me now with Your abounding love
as I promise to be Your friend, servant and holy minister.

May I ever live out this commitment,
in Your name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Holy Week and Easter Weekend Services

This weekend we celebrate Palm Sunday and then we are into Holy Week and the great celebrations of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and then the Easter Weekend. We will be having just one Mass for Maundy Thursday, one service on Good Friday, a simple Easter Vigil on Easter Saturday night and just one Easter Sunday morning service, and all of these will be broadcast via Zoom. So the schedule is:

Palm Sunday	Saturday 5pm	Communion after Mass in Fernie
	Sunday 9am	Communion after Mass in Sparwood
	Sunday 4pm*	Communion after Mass in Elkford
Maundy Thursday	Thursday 7pm	Communion after Mass in Fernie
Good Friday	Friday 3pm	Communion after Mass in Sparwood
Holy Saturday Night	Saturday 5pm	Communion after Mass in Fernie
Easter Sunday	Sunday 9am	Communion after Mass in Sparwood
	Sunday 4pm*	Communion after Mass in Elkford

* means not broadcast on Zoom.

Palm Sunday

Hopefully a good number of people already have their palms, but if you don't, and you can get to the Communion distribution after Mass, then palms will be available then.

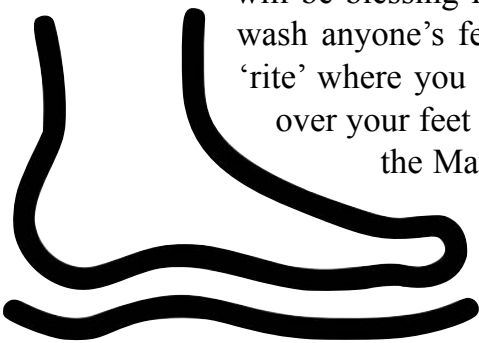
Hopefully everyone who has palms and then joins us via Zoom at the weekend will be able to wave them at the appropriate time.



Maundy Thursday

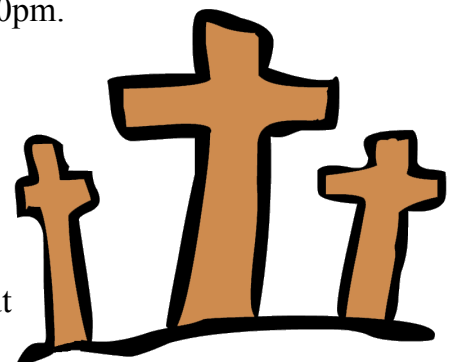
As mentioned above, on Wednesday in Sparwood and on Thursday in Fernie we will be blessing feet. Because of the current restrictions we are not able to wash anyone's feet, but we can bless them. So we will work out a small 'rite' where you can come and – in a Covid safe way – I will say a prayer over your feet and then sprinkle them with holy water. Then as you watch the Maundy Mass via Zoom you will know that your feet are truly part of the service – the Church, which represents Christ, has washed your feet with the grace of a blessing.

Sparwood – Wednesday 12noon to 1pm,
Fernie – Thursday 11:30am to 12:30pm.



Good Friday

The service for Good Friday will be very simple, and basically will be the reading of the Passion from John's gospel and prayers for our world. And as Jesus died outside the city walls, so this service will be broadcast from outside of the church walls – nothing as dramatic as Christmas, but not from church. We are still working on this!



Holy Saturday



Whatever happens with the Covid restrictions, we are still expecting that the majority of people who will be joining us will join us remotely rather than in person. So the Easter Vigil on Saturday night will be a very simplified event.

We will have the lighting of the Easter Candle, the blessing of water and the renewal of baptismal vows, but there will be no processions and no dressing of the altar half way through the service; we will try to keep movement to a minimum and to keep those watching from home as involved as possible.

Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday morning will again be a simple but hopefully joy filled Easter celebration. Again, not great feats of liturgy, just the liturgy of the Word and the praying of the Eucharist done as best we can.

LATE NEWS - RESTRICTION CHANGES

With the changes to the restrictions, we will review how we can do things in the next few of days when we have guidance from the Bishop. But the times of the services won't change and they will still be broadcast. Another e-mail will follow early next week.

Link for the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services

To get the link to our Maundy Thursday Mass and our Good Friday service please send an e-mail to one of our parish offices with your name and you will then receive the link each week.

info@holyfamilyfernie.ca

ElkValleyRC@gmail.com

Link to Weekend Masses

Again, to get the link to our 5pm Saturday evening Palm Sunday Mass or our 9am Sunday morning Palm Sunday Mass please send an e-mail to one of our parish offices with your name and you will then receive the link each week.

info@holyfamilyfernie.ca

ElkValleyRC@gmail.com

Waiting Room: Please note when you log on you will be put in a "waiting room".

Hopefully as soon as we see you waiting we will let you in.

*If there is a bit of a delay, please just wait;
the co-host or myself will be with you as quickly as we can.*

Thumper's Week

Thumper has had a good week with some walks to new places. As the snow recedes we are able to get a bit deeper into the bush. But I keep forgetting that really he is still a puppy, because this week he dropped his ball into a small pond and didn't want to put his head under the water to retrieve it! Good job I was in flip-flops and shorts so could wade in and get it.

