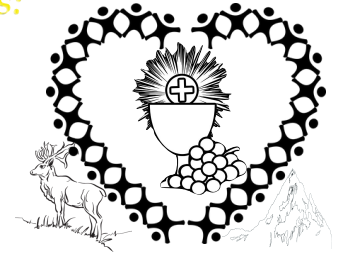


Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

*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,

Happy Easter... or at least, almost!

This is a quick e-mail that will go out to inform you about the Triduum services, that is, the Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil and Easter Day services. So until we get to Saturday night, really I shouldn't be saying 'Happy Easter' just yet. (But when it comes, Happy Easter.)

Covid Update

We are shut until we hear otherwise – that is the basic message from the B.C. authorities. While obviously this is, in a way, sad news, in another way there is an up side to it. Really, if back in October Dr. Bonnie Henry had shut the pubs and restaurants and allowed the churches to stay open, I do wonder if we would be going into this new lockdown. The truth is that we will never know for certain, but at least now we don't have the ridiculous situation that Dr. Henry forbade small groups to pray in covid-safe churches, but seemed happy to let groups of six go into pubs and pray there – without masks!!! I do hope that one day the truth will come out about why this apparent injustice was allowed to continue for so long. *(In case you haven't picked it up, I am very upset about how the B.C. government has treated us as churches.)*

The bottom line is that our doors must remain shut, but of course, we will continue to broadcast our Masses via Zoom.

Services for The Triduum – *that is, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Weekend Celebrations*

We have already started our run up to Easter with the blessing of feet. As I write we have celebrated this in Sparwood where lots of feet turned out, some limping, some in boots, and some jumping up and down in our latest snowfall. And all seemed to enjoy the hot-cross-buns that were shared.

Full details of our Easter services are at the end of this e-mail.

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.

Socrate's Triple Filter

Over these Holy Week days I always fear that if I preach, rather than shining light on the Easter events, I might produce some fog or at least a little haze. In designing these liturgies – *particularly how we can adapt them for broadcast on Zoom* – my hope is that they will talk for themselves. Thus I will not be doing a formal 'sermon' or 'homily'. And, of course, being a priest I can't just not say anything! So instead below is a thought for this weekend and as we go forward from Easter. It is a well known story (*okay, well known among those who know Ancient Greek philosophy*), but hearing it again helped me when I was thinking about Easter.

And you might not believe this, but even my brother has told this story to some of his friends, and they are not exactly what you might call religious!

Thumper's Week

Thumper loved the snow we got; more places to dig holes. And he has really been trying to get into the swing of Holy Week. Now Thumper is a dog and I don't want to humanise him in anyway, but during our Palm Sunday service in Elkford he was sitting at my feet – and honestly – as I read the gospel of the Passion, he started to look up at the big figure of the Risen Christ which was behind my head. He clearly wasn't looking at me at all, his gaze was at that figure. Whatever *he* might have been thinking, it clearly reminded me of where *my* gaze should have been.



And Finally...

I do hope that you have a good Easter, and I very much pray that our services will be part of that, and that they will help you deepen your faith as they raise you up with Christ!

With thanks and a promise of prayers,
Fr. David @ Thumper

An Ancient Greek Triple Filter

No, this is not about wearing face masks, but it is related to this. Masks are designed to control the *tiny particles* that can come out of our mouths, but this ‘triple filter’ refers to the *words* that come out of our mouths! Here is the story:

In ancient Greece, Socrates (the famous philosopher) met an acquaintance of his. Eager to share some juicy gossip, the acquaintance asked if Socrates would like to know the story he’d just heard about a friend of theirs. Socrates replied that before the man spoke, he needed to pass the “Triple-Filter” test.

*The first filter, he explained, is **Truth**.*

“Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to say is true?”

The man shook his head. “No, I actually just heard about it, and...”

Socrates cut him off.

*“You don’t know for certain that it is true, then, let’s try the second filter, the filter of **Goodness**: is what you want to say something good or kind?”*

Again, the man shook his head. “No! Actually, just the opposite. You see...”

Socrates lifted his hand to stop the man speaking.

*“So you are not certain that what you want to say is true,
and it isn’t good or kind.*

One filter still remains, though, so you may yet still tell me:

***Usefulness**: is this information useful or necessary to me?”*

A little defeated, the man replied, “No, not really.”

“Well, then,” Socrates said, turning on his heel,

*“If what you want to say is neither true, nor good or kind,
nor useful or necessary, please don’t say anything at all.”*

Obvious Conclusion

The first reminder to us is the need to think before we speak, and particularly, think before we pass on information that we hear – **also known as gossip!** Is it the truth? Does it contain goodness? Is it useful to the person we are talking to? If it passes these filters, speak up; if not, the better choice might be to keep it to yourself.

Thoughts about Easter

Socrates was a Greek philosopher who lived four hundred years before the time of Christ, but perhaps he might give us some insightful wisdom that will help us understand the Easter gospel readings. On Good Friday we will hear the interchange between Pontius Pilate and Christ,

Pilate said, “So, then you are a king?”

Jesus answered, “It is you who say that I am a king.

*I was born for this, I came into the world for this, to bear witness to the truth;
and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.”*

“Truth?” said Pilate, “What is that?”

(John 18:37-38)



Earlier Jesus had said,

*“I am the Way; the **truth** and the life;
no one can come to the Father except through me.”
(John 14:6)*

Pilate did not know what the truth was, so failed to recognise Christ who is the ‘Truth’. If we are passing on information that we don’t know is true, then how will it help others to find Christ?

Indeed, we might go further: We know that Christ is the truth, but additionally Christ is not only good and kind but He is the definition of these virtues: He is love; and Christ is not only useful but, as John 14:6 tells us, He is a necessity! If this is what we believe, then perhaps Socrates has given us a way to check if we are building the Kingdom of God – the ‘triple filter’.

Seeking the Kingdom of God

But we don’t have to stop at the *words* we say: this rule does not only apply to information that we give out – verbally or via the internet – it can also apply to the things we *seek*. Imagine how different our horizons would be if we only chose to seek information that was true, good and useful.

If we seek information and we don’t do our very best to discern whether it is true or not, then how will it help us to find Christ?

While hopefully few of us seek things that are positively *bad*, there is still a temptation not to bother checking ourselves about whether what we seek is positively *good*. Distractions in that grey area between good and bad will not truly enrich us and be helpful building blocks for the Kingdom. Unless we search for good, indeed, the ultimate good, then how can we believe that we are searching for God’s Kingdom?

And if we spend our lives searching for things that are useless and are not needed, then obviously we are not going to get anywhere. But again there is a vast grey area of things whose usefulness or necessity are tied to very transient worldly values, and we are building impoverished lives if these are our highest goals. We could use our time in a much more fruitful way. When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem he says five times “The hour has come”; let us use the light given to us in our Easter liturgies and this time of grace to move forward in discerning what is of true value, what is useful and needed to come closer to Christ.

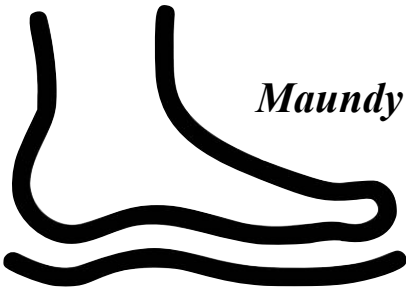
**We *usefully* search
for the ultimate *good*
by following the *Truth*, Jesus Christ,
which is the mystery we celebrate at Easter.**

Holy Week and Easter Weekend Services

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

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 Sunday 4pm*	Communion after Mass in Sparwood Communion after Mass in Elkford

* means not broadcast on Zoom.



Maundy Thursday

Hopefully between lunchtime and our evening service I will be able to put together a short video of all the feet that were blessed (and some of the hot-cross-buns that were eaten!) and this will be included in our Maundy Mass via Zoom.

Good Friday

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



Holy Saturday

Our Easter Vigil will be exclusively on-line, so we have shaped the liturgy accordingly. Hopefully by taking a few of the Easter symbols and focusing on them, we will still be able to convey the profound events we celebrate, and the joy that they naturally produce as the Good News that Christ is risen is shown in word, music and symbols.

We will have the lighting of the Easter Candle, the blessing of water and the renewal of baptismal vows, and the Easter Eucharist, and we will try to keep those at home as involved as possible. So be ready to "I do" at the renew of baptismal vows, and to shout an 'amen' or two as well.

Easter Sunday

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



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 Easter 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.*