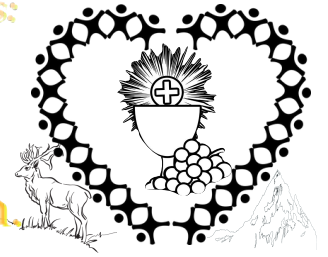


Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

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



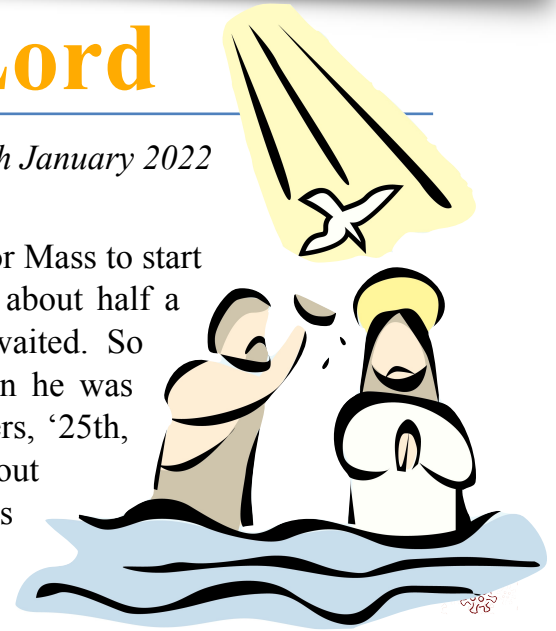
The Sunday Mass is broadcast via Zoom from Fernie & Sparwood (see below).

Baptism of Our Lord

8th/9th January 2022

Dear All,

In my very first parish I was waiting in the sacristy for Mass to start on the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. We had about half a dozen altar servers who were getting fidgety as they waited. So to distract them I asked, “How old was Jesus when he was baptised?” Everyone started counting on their fingers, ‘25th, 26th, 27th...’ and there was much discussion about whether you included Christmas Day itself as Jesus was born at midnight. But the general consensus was that Jesus must have been about fifteen or sixteen days old.



Of course, the baptism of Jesus did not come when he was a baby but rather right at the start of his public ministry when we think he was probably in his early thirties. This is obvious and we all know this, but all the same, for many Catholics the words ‘baptism’ and ‘baby’ do seem to have a strong association and we should be aware of this.

New Year’s Resolutions?



Have you made a New Year’s Resolution? While I don’t usually play this ‘game’, most years I do take a little bit of time to look ahead and think how I might try to live a better life, whether that be spiritually, in my relationship with others, or by improving my physical or mental health in some way. But this year I have really struggled with this. Was it that New Year’s Day was a Saturday and I was somewhat busy with the other tasks I had to do? Or was it that I have given up all pretence that I am actually in control of my life situation?

Recently I was writing to my bishop in England, Bp. Mark, and telling him about the last few months in B.C.. I told him that following on from a summer of dreadful fires across the province, we have had rain and floods which resulted in all the roads from the Lower Mainland being cut. Also I told him how over Christmas we had tons of snow, and of course, I also mentioned our situation with Covid. Reflecting back on the year, because I didn't see these things coming upon us I think that during 2021 I ended up being more *reactive* rather than *proactive*. So making resolutions for the next years seems a bit optimistic at the very least!

Looking at what we can do rather than what we cannot do!

Having said this, even if we are sceptical about making open ended resolutions, that doesn't mean that we should do nothing. Today I was talking with our 'Synodal Journey' coordinator back in Britain and she said that there is still lots of time to get responses in to the 'Synodal' questions that were in this e-mail leading up to Christmas. She went on and said that while many had found that the handouts worked well in assisting them to mark Advent as a special time, she also knew that others found that Advent was already so full that the reflections never quite got to the top of the pile of things to do! Thus many parishes in my home diocese are slightly repackaging the handouts and inviting people to take these sheets as something that can be done over the next few weeks as a sort of New Year's Resolution to do something spiritual or churchy as we start the new year.

So attached at the end of this e-mail will be the four reflections slightly re-worked just to take the 'Advent' references out. The Church genuinely wants to hear from people on these subjects. The coordinator in Britain said that the range of comments made was incredible and she is really enjoying putting them together in some meaningful way so that the diocese can send them up the line towards Rome.

If you haven't done so already, or if you didn't get through all the four sheets, please do revisit these and let the Church know what you think, what the Holy Spirit has prompted you to share.

Booster Jab

This week I had my Covid booster jab. Before I went to the clinic I was thinking about the procedure that would be followed, and I was thinking that if you are a medic who delivers these vaccinations it must be a pretty monotonous task of asking all the same questions time and again and then sticking a needle into the arm of someone who is pretending that they aren't nervous and it didn't hurt. So I thought what could I do to lift their spirits a bit. Thus I made a small label that I pushed up under my sleeve in a way that meant it was guaranteed to fall out as they went to give me the injection. I had a lovely doctor who gave me my injection and she was attentive and kind, but she didn't seem too impressed with my efforts to be a little different! But I tried.



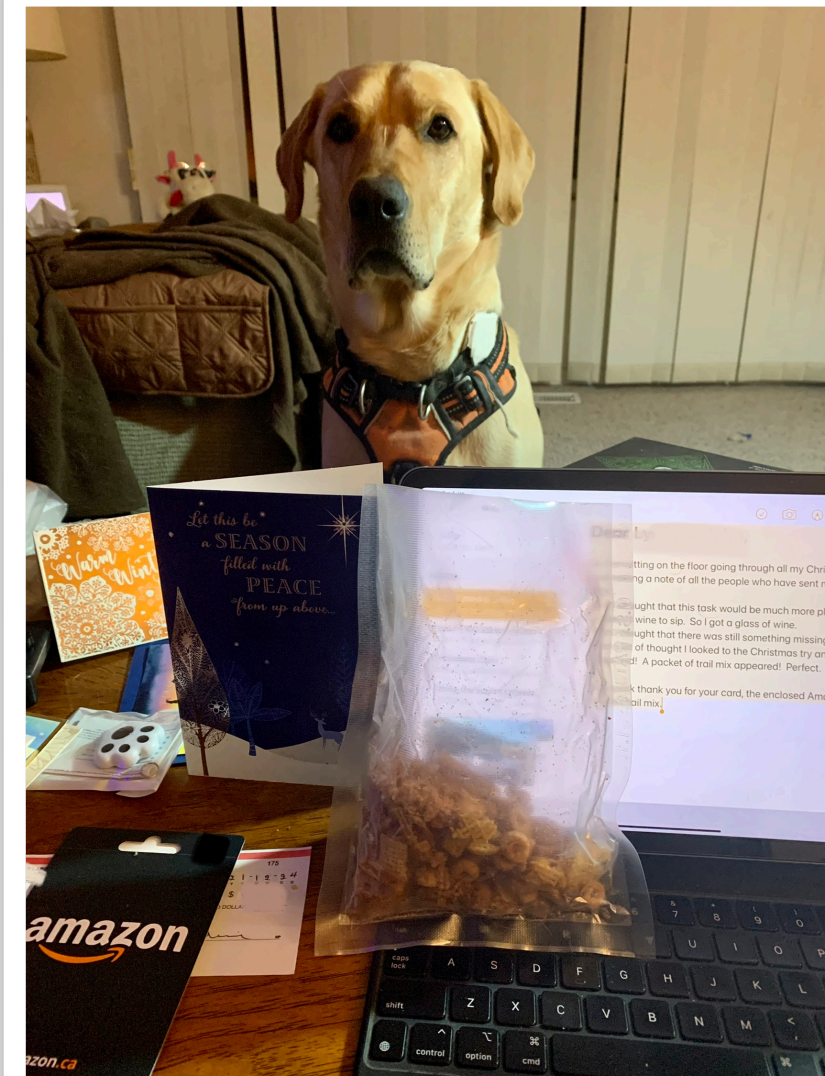


Many Thanks

Many thanks for all the cards and gifts that people gave to me and Thumper over the holiday. I didn't rush through and open them all on Christmas Day, but rather I tried to open each one slowly and I made sure I prayed for everyone as I read their cards. (Now Thumper, do you want to say about opening your presents early? Okay, we will let that one go.)

I think my favourite greeting was in a card that read:

*Christmas comes but once a year,
A time of joy and laughter.
Our Christmas lunch was venison;
And Santa couldn't get home after.*



And Finally...

On the left Thumper is helping me go through all the Christmas cards - just look at the concentration on his face!

And this week when it wasn't snowing too hard we did manage to get out, and can you spot Thumper below?



And wishing you a good rest to 2022. With prayers,

Fr. David @ Thumper

Our churches are open to those *without* any Covid symptoms.
But Covid is still a real threat – thus caution is needed!



Zoom Links – To Our Weekend Masses

Link to Weekend Masses

To get the link to our two weekend Masses 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

Audio Only

Don't forget, even if you are so busy trying to fulfil your New Year's resolutions that you don't get to church and don't have internet access, you can still listen to Mass via a phone call to our Zoom link.

Again, e-mail the office for the link for this.

Chat:

Feel free to greet people via the chat when you join our broadcast, and if you are praying for anything particular, do share this with others on the Chat.

Normally there is "1A - Chat (Co-Host)" who watches the chat for any problems or prayer intentions. If you don't want everyone to see your message you can send your message directly and it will remain private.

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; we will be with you as quickly as we can.

And for those who are attending church in person, be careful:

Please continue to be careful when you are in church. Please sanitise your hands, wear a mask at all times, always think of the good of others. As you move about in church you might come within a 'breath distance' of others, and be conscious that others might have health vulnerabilities that you don't know about.

Everyone still needs to be careful.

