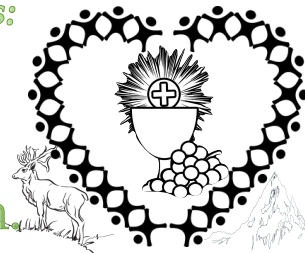


Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

**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).

5th/6th February 2022

Dear All,

Recently in Sparwood we have had two baptisms, Marcus and Dominic, and on the horizon we have Ember's baptism. Similarly in Fernie we have three baptisms lining up in the next month, Astrid (*meaning divinely beautiful*), Mateo and another boy. This is wonderful – and all six are locals rather than babies being brought back to the area by couples who have moved away. Since I have been here I don't know whether we have had this many baptisms in a whole year! Whether this is Covid related or not I am not sure, but it certainly is a blessing for us as a parish.

On a different topic, I have attached a piece about the set prayers we have at Mass.

Looking Forward to Lent

As mentioned last week, thanks to the hard work of Fr. Mark back in my home diocese, again this Lent we will be joining up with Teignmouth parish in Devon, England, for a series of five Lenten talks. All talks will be at 12noon Mountain time. The pattern we tried to work to last year was that the talk would be about forty-five minutes and then there might be questions and discussion after that for another forty-five minutes. Here are a few more details:

Thursday 10th March – Fr. John Patrick Thomas, a priest from Wales.

Thursday 17th March – Fr. Anthony O'Gorman, a priest in the Plymouth Diocese.

Thursday 24th March – Sister Bernadette Reis,
who works in Vatican Radio and Media.

Thursday 31st March – Mr. Jeremy Skelton, Religious Education Advisor
to the Plymouth Diocesan Schools.

Thursday 7th April – Prof. Anthony Towey, director of the 'Centre for Catholic
Education, Research and Religious Literacy'
at St. Mary's University in London, England.

I think that is a very impressive list of speakers that Fr. Mark has pulled together. So please note these dates in your plan of things you will be doing during Lent.

Synodal Journey – that is now regularly being called “Walking Together”

This morning I was talking to one of the coordinators who is overseeing the feedback from the 'Synodal/Walking Together' project, and she reminded me that they hope to get as many as possible of the responses back by this week.

I know that some people are saying, “They don’t want to hear from me!” or “I can’t write anything that will be of interest!”, but the diocese does want to hear from you, whatever your thoughts – profound or ordinary.

In Europe in 1995 one of the big oil companies decided that the easiest and cheapest way to get rid of a large, outdated oil platform was to dump it in a part of the sea that was over a mile deep. Their argument was that over time the oil contained in the wreck would decompose and all would go back to nature. The plan was to scuttle the platform in international waters, so there was no *government* to get upset, but *people* got upset. In Europe, particularly in Germany, if there were two filling stations close to each other and one belonged to this particular oil company, people would fill-up at the other one instead. This *small* action of a *large* number of people made the oil company change their mind. I quote this as an example of how even in the secular world the views of people are important and can change things – not necessarily through elections or militant campaigns, but just through small actions. As Canada is so large, I am not sure that we have the same sense that we are being listened to, and I really do wish that as a ‘populus’ we could find our voice. This is particularly true of us as believers; I am sure that we could bring the values of life and hope to our society that so much needs these!

This is a long winded way of saying that what the Church is offering us is a chance to find our voice and be listened to. It doesn’t matter what your thoughts are, they will all be fed into the ‘synodal’ process and the Church at all levels is wanting to hear. So please, don’t think that this isn’t for you, it is for all – your voice matters!

If you could send any feedback this week to ElkValleyRC@gmail.com with the word “Synodal” (or something close to that) in the title of the e-mail.

And Finally...

Just room to say that with the snow and low temperatures this week, I hope that we have now seen the worst of the winter and things will get better from here onwards.

Fr. David @ Thumper



I might not be allowed on the couch, but I have managed to nab this pillow!



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 have been kicked off the couch and have no internet access, if you have a phone 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.



Set Prayers at Mass

Each week the Church gives us three prayers to be included in our Mass – one at the beginning, one in the middle and one at the end. These prayers are different for every week of the year, and there are special prayers for feast days and saint's days. Because the readings run on a three year cycle and these prayers are the same every year, the prayers don't refer directly to the readings of the Sunday, rather they reflect our belief and try to guide us through the liturgical journey of the year.

For some reason this week's prayers caught my attention and I thought that each was quite profound! So I decided that I would share them with you.

Opening Prayer

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care,
that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace,
they may be defended always by your protection.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

'*Rely solely on the hope of heavenly grace*' are words that I should attach to my front door so that I am reminded of this each time I leave the house! In our modern world we seem to rely upon so many things, and this isn't necessarily bad, but one thing should be relied upon above all others and in a profoundly different way to all other supports – and that is God's grace.

Prayer over the Gifts

O Lord, our God,
who once established these created things to sustain us in our frailty,
grant, we pray,
that they may become for us now the Sacrament of eternal life.

Through Christ our Lord.

I was taken by the idea that God created all our food so that in our frailty we might have sustenance, and then God takes this same substance and uses it for our spiritual food. God first creates the ordinary and then makes it extraordinary.

Prayer after Communion

O God,
who have willed that we be partakers in the one Bread and the one Chalice,
grant us, we pray, so to live that, made one in Christ,
we may joyfully bear fruit for the salvation of the world.

Through Christ our Lord.

Again a challenging thought: do we see the Eucharist merely as something relating to our personal salvation without recognising the Communal aspect and the uniting aspect? Or do we see that the way we joyfully bear fruit in our world – and indeed bring salvation to others – is by being made one in Christ in the Eucharist?

These prayers are worth a few moments meditation either before or after Mass.