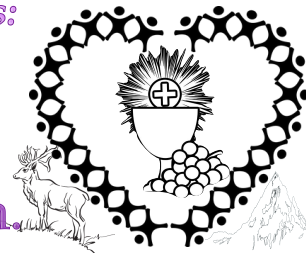


*Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:*

*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).*

26th/27th March 2022

**Dear All,**

I am writing this on Thursday, and tomorrow, Friday, the Pope will be holding a special time of prayer for peace in Ukraine. Anyone who was with us today at the Lenten talk would have heard Sister Bernadette from Vatican Radio talk about how this service by the Pope will have more world wide coverage than any other service the Vatican has done, and the text has been translated into more languages than any previous text. (You might also have heard an interesting bit about the challenges of producing an accurate translation for the ceremony.)

### **Prayers for Ukraine – On the Feast of the Annunciation**

For those who don't know, 25<sup>th</sup> March is the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, that is, exactly nine months before the date on which we celebrate the birth of Jesus. This feast day celebrates the visitation by the Angel Gabriel to Mary to announce God's plan to her. Mary's response is to say "yes" or more fully "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let *it be* with me according to your word." (Luke 1:38).

In Catholic symbolism Mary represents the Church because the role of the Church is to say 'yes' to God and thus to bring forth Christ into the world, and this is what Mary did. Further, at the Wedding Feast at Cana, when there was a problem Mary interceded for the people by taking their difficulty to Jesus. And once she had made the issue known to him she said to those in charge, "Do whatever he tells you." (John 2:5). In a similar way, in John's gospel the Beloved Disciple is understood to represent all the followers of Christ.

So when Jesus, hanging upon the cross, entrusted the Beloved Disciple to the care of Mary saying, "Here is your mother." (John 19:27), Jesus was entrusting each of his followers to Mary's motherly care.

So with this in mind, the Pope's prayer of Consecration calls us all back to faithfulness to God. Remembering the events at Cana the Pope will say,

*Now, O Mother, repeat those words and that prayer,  
for in our own day we have run out of the wine of hope,  
joy has fled, fraternity has faded.*

*We have forgotten our humanity and squandered the gift of peace.  
We opened our hearts to violence and destructiveness.*



The whole prayer of Consecration is a prayer asking that we will all return to God, but it also remembers that both Ukraine and Russia have a long and rich tradition of Christianity, and particularly of devotion to Mary. Addressing Mary he says,

*At this hour,*

*a weary and distraught humanity stands with you beneath the cross,  
needing to entrust itself to you*

*and, through you, to consecrate itself to Christ.*

*The people of Ukraine and Russia,*

*who venerate you with great love, now turn to you,*

Ultimately, the prayer is a prayer for peace,

*Through your intercession,*

*may God's mercy be poured out on the earth*

*and the gentle rhythm of peace return to mark our days.*

*“At this dark hour,  
the Church is urgently called to intercede before the Prince of Peace  
and to demonstrate her closeness to those  
directly affected by the conflict.”*

**Pope Francis**

### ***Pope's Letter to Bishops***

Also this week, through a letter he sent to all the Bishops, the Pope gives us a bit of background of why he is holding this special time of prayer,

*Nearly a month has passed since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine that is daily inflicting immense suffering upon its sorely tried people and threatening world peace. At this dark hour, the Church is urgently called to intercede before the Prince of Peace and to demonstrate her closeness to those directly affected by the conflict. I am grateful to the many people who have responded with great generosity to my appeals for prayer, fasting and charity.*

And then the Pope goes on to encourage as many people as possible to be part of this prayer. I will think about how we might be able to include part of this 'Act of Consecration' into our Masses this weekend.

I will also include the full text of the Act of Consecration at the end of this e-mail.



*A Sunflower – symbol of Ukrainian resistance –  
with the backdrop of the Ukrainian flag, and a heart.*

## **Confessions for Easter –**

**this Monday, 28th March, at 6pm in Sparwood**

The Pope will pray this act of consecration in the context of a reconciliation service, so another way of joining our prayers with the rest of the Church is to be part of our reconciliation service in Sparwood this Monday.

Again, the Pope's full text will be there for people to meditate upon, and a prayer for peace in our world might well be part of the penance that the priests will give.

We hope to be joined by Fr. Jim McHugh, our Dean, who will be driving over from Kimberley, and possibly by Fr. Aaron from Cranbrook.

If you can't make this service, the other reconciliation services in this area are:

- Creston – Wednesday 30th March at 7pm
- Kimberley – Thursday 31st March at 7pm
- Cranbrook – Wednesday 6th April at 7pm



## **Looking Ahead to Holy Week**

And while we are looking ahead, the arrangements for our Holy Week services are almost back to normal. There will be a Maundy service in Sparwood and Fernie with the washing of feet offered to all. There will be a Good Friday service in Sparwood and Fernie in the usual way. And over the Easter weekend we will keep to the normal service times for our weekend Masses, but obviously each Mass will be a special Mass for Easter.

So the schedule for Holy Week is:

### ***Maundy Services:***

- Sparwood – Wednesday 13th April at 7pm
- Fernie – Thursday 14th April at 7pm

### ***Good Friday Services:***

- Sparwood – Friday 15th April at 12noon
- Fernie – Friday 15th April at 3pm

### ***Easter Saturday Night:***

- Fernie – Saturday 16th April at 5pm

### ***Easter Sunday:***

- Sparwood – Sunday 17th April at 9am
- Elkford – Sunday 17th April at 4pm

All the Sparwood and Fernie Masses will be available via Zoom. And while it is difficult to wash your feet while you are in your vehicles, we will be making Communion available after these services.

## Deacon Stephen will be Visiting Again!

I am delighted to say that Deacon Stephen will be with us in a week's time, that is, the weekend of 2nd/3rd April. We will look forward to what he will share with us when he preaches. I am particularly grateful to Deacon Stephen for agreeing to come and preach as this coming week is a bit busy for me. A family who are very close to my family suffered a bereavement recently and I have been asked to take the funeral. This means that I will be a way for a couple of day this week as I do a very quick dash down to the Lower Mainland and back.

The person who died, Emile, was 84 and passed away very peacefully in his home. His wife, Marg, died just under a year ago. But because of the Covid and the families health issues at the time, they had no service for their mother. So this service that I will be taking will, in a way, be a memorial for both Emile and Marg.

There are a few families that I am in contact with who lost a loved one during Covid and didn't have a service for them, and often it is so clear that the family were not able to fully grieve and so find it much harder to move on. I always say that funerals are part of the grieving process and they are there to help not to hinder.

Someone once said to me, "I don't go to church so I don't want a funeral, that would be hypocritical." to which I replied, "Your funeral is not for you, it is for your loved ones. They need the funeral so they can grieve. So hard luck, you are going to church on your way to the cemetery!"

## New Covid Restrictions

As mentioned last week, with many of the Covid restrictions being lifted we are slowly moving back towards some kind of normality in church. And as we transition back it is so important to remember that the virus is still there and, for some, it is a real threat to their wellbeing. If someone has vulnerabilities, or problems with their immune system, the Covid virus really does need to be avoided at all costs. So please don't say, "We are now back to normal so I am going to hug people"; rather make very sure that the person you are interacting with is comfortable with someone approaching them, perhaps without a mask, and coming close. Remember it is *very* hard to say, "Please don't come close to me." – that is an extremely difficult statement to make, so the onus must be on us to ask permission to enter another person's personal space, and to ask in a way that allows the other person to say "I would prefer it if you don't" and not feel bad!

Every time I have been in a supermarket this week I have worn my mask, just to say to others who might feel self-conscious about wearing a mask, "It's okay to be masked". So once more, you are very welcome to wear a mask when you are in church if that is right for you.

I will be wearing one as I stand at the door and when I give out Communion. This is because I know that I do get relatively close to a lot of our older parishioners and those with vulnerabilities, and I would hate to get Covid, be asymptomatic and then pass it on to someone who was vulnerable.

## Other Issues – Lenten Talk Series

Just two talks left, and as Britain changes its clocks this weekend we will be back to a 12noon start time with the link opening fifteen minutes before this. The full details are presented at the end of this e-mail.

### Lenten Disciplines

I was sitting here putting this e-mail together thinking ‘I am cold’, but as it is Lent, rather than turning up the thermostat I went and put on my lovely warm hoodie that one of my sisters recently gave me. Now I am not only warm but I’m also gently glowing with a certain environmental superiority!

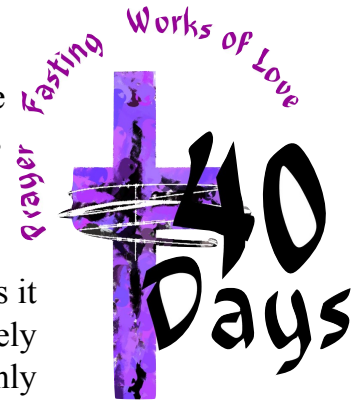
### And Finally...

With fuel prices as they are, I just thought I had to share the following with you:

#### **Health Warning:**

*If you are sweating while putting gas in your car and feeling sick while you are paying, then you are probably suffering from carownervirus.*

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](mailto:info@holyfamilyfernie.ca)

[ElkValleyRC@gmail.com](mailto:ElkValleyRC@gmail.com)

### Audio Only

*Don't forget, if you don't have the internet but 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 "IA - 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 if you wish and 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.***



## Lent Talk Details

As mentioned above, the last two talks of our Lenten series will be at 12noon. The talks will last for about forty-five minutes with questions to follow. The Zoom link will be active fifteen minutes before the start of each talk.

Each talk takes a different subject, so even if you miss one or more you are still welcome to join the subsequent talks.

The zoom link is below and it will be the same link for each of the talks, becoming active at 11:45am Mountain time.

To get the link to our Lenten series of talks please send an e-mail to one of our parish offices with your name and you will then receive the link each week.

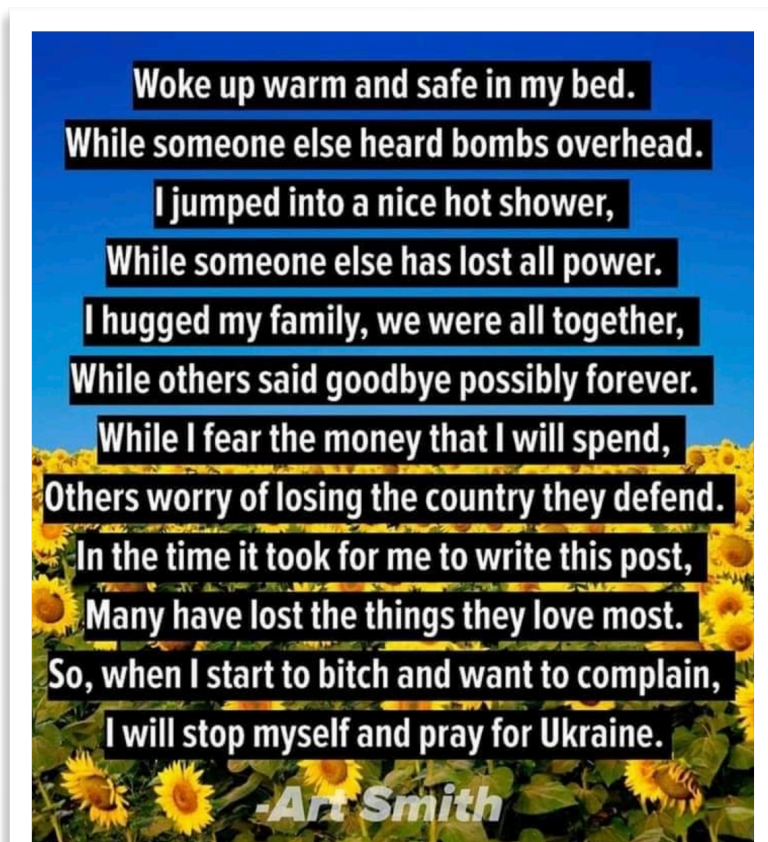
[info@holyfamilyfernie.ca](mailto:info@holyfamilyfernie.ca)

[ElkValleyRC@gmail.com](mailto:ElkValleyRC@gmail.com)

### 12noon Mountain Time on:

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.



*The picture to the left was sent to me this week by a parishioner. While William Shakespeare probably wouldn't feel too impressed by the eloquence of these prose, I did think that the message expressed something that I have been feeling.*

## New Guidelines for Mass

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***Firstly, and most importantly***, the one provision that has not changes is that if you are feeling unwell, please don't come to church. This applies as much to a common cold as to Covid or any other possibly infectious disease!

Apart from that, the new guidelines are:

- There will be no signing-in needed when you come to Mass.
- But when you do come in and take a seat in church, please be mindful of those around you; some people might still want to keep a certain distance from others, and we very much want our church to be a welcoming place where anyone can come and feel safe, so please be aware that others might still need a bit of physical distancing around them in the pews.
- There is now no limit to our capacity at Mass – as the Bishop said, “It will be a blessing to see our churches full again”!!! I must say, if we filled out churches it would not just be a blessing but perhaps better described as a miracle!
- There is no need to wear your mask in church, but please do be conscious of the needs of others and act first and foremost in a way that protects others.
- We can now start taking a collection once more.
- We can also have an offertory procession when the gifts of bread and wine are brought forward.
- We can process out at the end of Mass.
- I will again be at the door after Mass to greet people as they leave. (See below.)

Other changes to the use of the other parish facilities will come in April.

### ***Greeting at the Door***

I won't be at the door before Mass as that is usually a busy time for operating the Zoom broadcast and getting things lined up and ready.

I will be at the door at the end of Mass, but I will try – weather permitting – to stand a little away from the door so we don't get bunching.

But being at the door at the end of Mass means that our Zoom broadcasts might end a bit more abruptly than normal! Sorry about this; we will work to see how we can smooth this out a bit. Also, it means that there might be a slight delay before I can get to the Communion after Mass.





# Act of Consecration

## To the Immaculate Heart of Mary

### Basilica of Saint Peter – 25th March 2022

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O Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, in this time of trial we turn to you.  
As our Mother, you love us and know us:

no concern of our hearts is hidden from you.

Mother of mercy, how often we have experienced your watchful care  
and your peaceful presence!

You never cease to guide us to Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Yet we have strayed from that path of peace.

We have forgotten the lesson learned from the tragedies of the last century,  
the sacrifice of the millions who fell in two world wars.

We have disregarded the commitments we made as a community of nations.

We have betrayed peoples' dreams of peace and the hopes of the young.

We grew sick with greed,

we thought only of our own nations and their interests,  
we grew indifferent and caught up in our selfish needs and concerns.

We chose to ignore God,

to be satisfied with our illusions,  
to grow arrogant and aggressive,  
to suppress innocent lives and to stockpile weapons.

We stopped being our neighbour's keepers and stewards of our common home.

We have ravaged the garden of the earth with war

and by our sins we have broken the heart of our heavenly Father,  
who desires us to be brothers and sisters.

We grew indifferent to everyone and everything except ourselves.

Now with shame we cry out:

**Forgive us, Lord!**

Holy Mother, amid the misery of our sinfulness,

amid our struggles and weaknesses,  
amid the mystery of iniquity that is evil and war,

you remind us that God never abandons us,

but continues to look upon us with love,  
ever ready to forgive us and raise us up to new life.

God has given you to us

and made your Immaculate Heart a refuge for the Church and for all humanity.

By God's gracious will, you are ever with us;

even in the most troubled moments of our history,  
you are there to guide us with tender love.

We now turn to you and knock at the door of your heart.

We are your beloved children.

In every age you make yourself known to us, calling us to conversion.

At this dark hour, help us and grant us your comfort.

Say to us once more: “Am I not here, I who am your Mother?”

You are able to untie the knots of our hearts and of our times.

In you we place our trust.

We are confident that, especially in moments of trial,  
you will not be deaf to our supplication and will come to our aid.

That is what you did at Cana in Galilee,

when you interceded with Jesus and he worked the first of his signs.

To preserve the joy of the wedding feast, you said to him:

“They have no wine” (*John 2:3*).

Now, O Mother, repeat those words and that prayer,

for in our own day we have run out of the wine of hope,  
joy has fled, fraternity has faded.

We have forgotten our humanity and squandered the gift of peace.

We opened our hearts to violence and destructiveness.

How greatly we need your maternal help!

Therefore, O Mother, hear our prayer.

*Star of the Sea*, do not let us be shipwrecked in the tempest of war.

*Ark of the New Covenant*, inspire projects and paths of reconciliation.

*Queen of Heaven*, restore God’s peace to the world.

Eliminate hatred and the thirst for revenge, and teach us forgiveness.

Free us from war, protect our world from the menace of nuclear weapons.

*Queen of the Rosary*, make us realise our need to pray and to love.

*Queen of the Human Family*, show people the path of fraternity.

*Queen of Peace*, obtain peace for our world.

O Mother, may your sorrowful plea stir our hardened hearts.

May the tears you shed for us

make this valley – *parched by our hatred* – blossom anew.

Amid the thunder of weapons, may your prayer turn our thoughts to peace.

May your maternal touch *soothe those*

who are suffering and are forced to flee from the rain of bombs.

May your motherly embrace *comfort those*

forced to leave their homes and their native land.

May your Sorrowful Heart move us to compassion

and inspire us to open our doors

and to care for our brothers and sisters who are injured and cast aside.

Holy Mother of God, as you stood beneath the cross,

Jesus, seeing the disciple at your side, said:

“Behold your son” (*John 19:26*).

In this way he entrusted each of us to you.

To the disciple, and to each of us, he said:

“Behold, your Mother” (*John 19:27*).

Mother Mary,

we now desire to welcome you into our lives and our history.

At this hour,

a weary and distraught humanity stands with you beneath the cross,  
needing to entrust itself to you

and, through you, to consecrate itself to Christ.

The people of Ukraine and Russia,

who venerate you with great love, now turn to you,

even as Your heart beats with compassion for them

and for all those peoples decimated by war, hunger, injustice and poverty.

Therefore, Mother of God and our Mother,

to your Immaculate Heart we solemnly entrust and consecrate ourselves,  
the Church and all humanity,

especially Russia and Ukraine.

Accept this act that we carry out with confidence and love.

Grant that war may end and peace spread throughout the world.

The “Yes,” that arose from your heart

opened the doors of history to the Prince of Peace.

We trust that, through your heart, peace will dawn once more.

To you we consecrate the future of the whole human family,

the needs and expectations of every people,

the anxieties and hopes of the world.

Through your intercession,

may God’s mercy be poured out on the earth

and the gentle rhythm of peace return to mark our days.

Our Lady of the “Yes”<sup>1</sup>, on whom the Holy Spirit descended,

restore among us the harmony that comes from God.

May you, our “living fountain of hope”, water the dryness of our hearts.

In your womb Jesus took flesh;

help us to foster the growth of communion.

You once trod the streets of our world;

lead us now on the paths of peace.

We make this and all our prayers, through Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase ‘let it be’ or ‘so be it’ is in Latin ‘fiat’, thus this “Yes” of Mary is often called “Mary’s fiat”. So in the English translation of the consecration prayer it refers to ‘Our Lady of the “Fiat”’