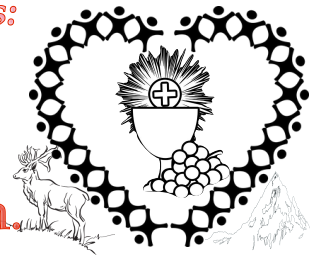


*Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:*

*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).*

9th/10th April 2022

**Dear All,**

I am so distressed by the news that we are getting from Ukraine, it is just dreadful. And my fear is that it will get worse before it gets any better. I suspect that over the next few weeks and months the stories of atrocities will just keep on coming and coming. The challenge to us is not to get 'hardened' to these stories, but at the same time not to get so stressed that we can't operate in the normal way.

We must keep the people of Ukraine front and centre in our prayers, and we must re-double our efforts to make our society a place where human life is fully respected and all peoples are seen as beloved children of God.



### **Easter Services**

Though I feel bad about leaving the situation in Ukraine with only a brief mention, I feel that it is important to make the main focus of this week's letter our Easter celebrations.

What I will write here will be general comments about the days ahead and some specific details of what we will be doing in the Elk Valley, but hopefully some of these notes will be useful wherever you will be celebrating Holy Week and the Easter Weekend.



**HOLY WEEK**

### **General Principles**

It is worth remembering that technically speaking the three Holy Week services – *the Maundy Mass, the Good Friday liturgy, and the Easter Celebration* – make up just one service celebrated over a number of days. So ideally we do ask as many people as possible to participate in all three parts of the celebration of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ.

Having said that these three services make one celebration, each part does have its own very distinctive feel to it. We will try to make the Maundy Masses reflective, the Good Friday liturgies solemn and the Easter Masses as joyful as possible. If we think of the emotional journey that the disciples must have experienced during the days around our Lord's passion, they too must have been at the Last Supper and reflected upon what Christ meant when He washed their feet and then took bread and said, "This is my body". And they would not just have been solemn as Christ experienced his Passion and Death, but they must have been heartbroken. Then when we get to the celebration of the Resurrection on Saturday night or Sunday morning, again we will be echoing the joy of the disciples, even as they attempted to comprehend what the events meant. And in a way, that is the task of Eastertide – a time that helps us break open the full meaning of the events of the Easter weekend.

Another principle that is worth having in the back of one's mind is the idea of movement. On Palm Sunday we are asked to start in one place and process to the main church; at the end of the Maundy Mass the focus moves from the altar where the 'Last Supper' was celebrated to a separate altar of repose; and at celebrations of the Easter Vigil, again the actions are split between the church and a place away from the church where a fire can be lit.



As Catholics we are used to certain types of movement; we stand, sit, and kneel. The processions we do during Holy Week services are not that different from these basic actions. When we stand, sit or kneel, we do this together as a sign of unity and as an expression of our faith that goes beyond words to involve our whole bodies; so too when we process, this is not just a functional activity that is needed to get us from one place to another, it is a proclamation of our unity and our faith.

To be clear, when we process with palm leaves singing "All Glory, Laud, and Honour", we are not acting, rather we are proclaiming our faith. This is not always easy as we are not used to doing these liturgical movements. But if it helps you to reflect on how we might approach this, think of a 'Conga line' – when people form a long chain and move from one place to another. In doing this the people aren't *acting*, they are *celebrating*. Now I am **NOT** suggesting that we move from one place to another in a conga line, but the idea is the same that we move together as a body, we sing, and we express what we are celebrating by the way we move.



The times I have really experienced a procession as a meaningful liturgical activity and as a clear proclamation of faith has been when I have been on pilgrimage and the group who are processing has found a strong group identity and a unity that not only binds them together but also helps them have the confidence to proclaim their unity and their faith. As a parish this is what we should try to grow towards<sup>1</sup>

I say all this just to invite you to see if you can get a bit more involved in our celebrations. Because unless we understand them, then they will be a bit distant. Our celebration of Holy Week should be a dynamic celebration that includes the elements of journeying and this is reflected by movement.

So going into a bit of detail for each service.

### ***Palm Sunday – Also Called Passion Sunday***

*On this day the Church recalls the entrance of Christ the Lord into Jerusalem to accomplish his Paschal Mystery. (Roman Missal)*

In the first part of the rite we recall the joy of the crowds who hailed Christ as the ‘Son of David’ – a messianic title – and laid palms on the road as Jesus entered Jerusalem.



*(As snow is forecast for the Elk Valley this weekend, rather than gathering outside we will celebrate the first part of our Sunday Mass in the Family Centre in Fernie and in the church hall in Sparwood.)*

In the second part of the rite we will recall how Christ was taken and crucified, while the crowd shouted for the release of Barabbas and the disciples deserted Jesus.

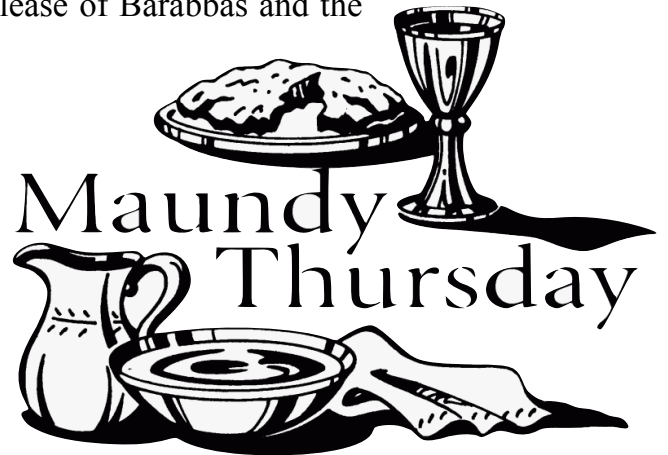
### ***Maundy Mass***

*“I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.”  
John 13:15*

The Maundy service remembers both Christ choosing to wash His disciples feet and His institution of the Eucharist.

The washing of the feet is open to everyone.

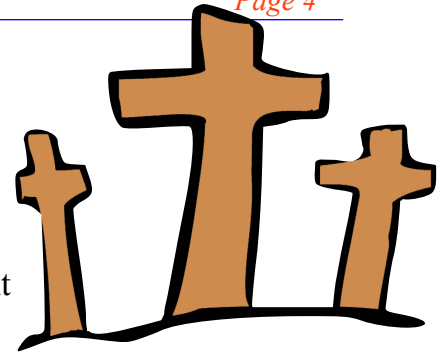
In Sparwood and Fernie we will do as we have previously done, that is, we will have a large bowl of warm water (*that will have Dettol disinfectant in it*) and everyone is welcome to come forward in procession just like we normally do at Mass and step into the bowl for the feet washing. If you have reservations about being part of this, remember that Peter also didn’t want to have his feet washed but Jesus told him that it was the right thing to do.



<sup>1</sup> *Up to the time of Covid, we would regularly process as part of our celebrations – the altar servers and others would process in with the clergy at the start of Mass, and at important celebrations like the Chrism Mass, this can involve a large number of people.*

### ***Good Friday Liturgies***

As part of the Good Friday liturgy we will be having the veneration of the Cross. Please note that you are welcome to venerate the Cross in a number of different ways. Lots of people will want to kiss the cross, and we will try to disinfect it after each person, but you might prefer simply to touch the cross, or even just to bow before it; do what you are comfortable with, but please do venerate the Cross in some way. Hopefully hand sanitiser will be readily available in church.



The reading of the Passion is the central part of this service, and I will be reading it alone and at a very gentle pace. My hope is that it will be an opportunity for all of us to push everything else aside for a short time and just listen again to the events that are at the centre of our faith.

### ***Easter Masses***

All our Easter weekend Masses will be special Masses for Easter Sunday. As we are not quite back to full strength in terms of ministries and readers, none of these will be the full Vigil with the fire, but we will be blessing Holy Water and refilling the Fonts, so Holy Water will be available once more after the Easter Masses.



### ***Zoom and Communion After Mass***

Each of our celebrations from Sparwood and Fernie will be broadcast via Zoom, and the link will be the same one as we use at the weekend (see below). Communion will be distributed after these Masses to those who are not yet comfortable being in church.

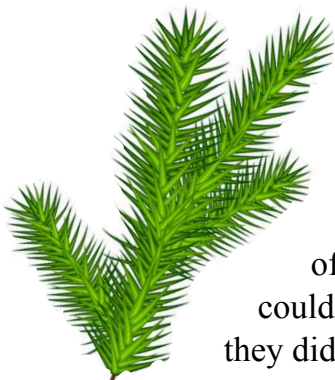
### ***A Debate about Leaves!***

As an aside, there is a general discussion going on about whether we should be using real palm leaves on Palm Sunday or whether we should be using branches cut from local trees like pine branches.

The argument on the side of palm leaves is that this is the tradition and after all it is “Palm” Sunday!

On the other side it is argued that the people cut down the branches from the trees that surrounded them, and for us, that is pine branches and alike. It is also pointed out that it costs a lot of money to bring palm leaves in, and they have a relatively high carbon footprint as often they are brought in by air to ensure that they are fresh. And we could spread pine branches on the ground and get a greater sense of what they did in Jesus’ time

I thought this was an interesting area of discussion and would love to know if this produces a strong reaction either way for you. Of course, we could do a bit of both!



## **Thank You – Deacon Stephen**

Thank you to Deacon Stephen for being with us last week and sharing his wisdom. We hope he will be back during Eastertide at some point.



## **Lenten Talk Series**

Also a big thank you to Fr. Mark in Britain for organising another splendid series of Lent talks. Like last year, they had incredible breadth and depth. I know that those who were part of this series were very grateful to all the speakers.

## **And Finally...**

A number of people have asked me about the big white square that is attached to Thumpers collar (*right*). It is a bluetooth tracking device. In theory if Thumper wanders more than about a hundred feet from me my phone is meant to notify me.



It has never worked! So this week I have got a new one from 'Tile' which is meant to be more reliable and be able to find Thumper at up to four hundred feet. We will see. The nice thing is that the new one doesn't stand out so much as his old one (*left*). Neither of these are the 'electric shock' collars, they are just like the discs that you can put on your keys to find them when they are lost

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 & Holy Week Masses

### Link to Weekend & Holy Week Masses

To get the link to our two weekend Masses and to our Holy Week services 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 "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 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.***



## **The Schedule for Holy Week**

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### ***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.

