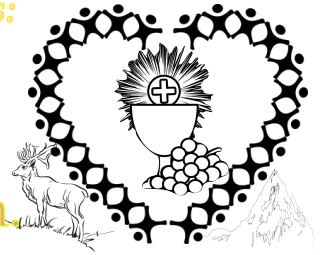


Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

**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).

23rd/24th April 2022

Dear All,

Happy Easter! I say this because it is the first time I have written since Easter Day, and also because the Church calls each of the eight days of Easter week Easter Day, including this coming Sunday.

Lent Has Ended – Yippee!

It is very easy for Lent to disappear and be forgotten before we have even noticed it is over, but I think it would be worth while pausing for a moment and looking back to see if we had a ‘good’ Lent – or as I mentioned a number of weeks ago, we had a priest in our diocese who always used to wish people a “miserable Lent”, so perhaps we might want to reflect upon whether Lent has been miserable.

One of the things I did for Lent was never putting the house thermostat above 19°C, but instead – *when I was cold* – to put on extra clothing. I did this for a number of reasons: partly because in Europe the price of gas and electricity has gone through the roof, so it was a way to make myself more aware that – *in world terms* – having a thermostat that we can set to whatever we want is a real luxury that is only enjoyed by relatively few. Also because during Lent I was trying to be a bit more environmentally aware. And additionally at the start of Lent we were also hearing about people in Ukraine living in basements where there was not only no heating, but no food or water, and a bit of a cooler house was meant in some very, very small way to be a reminder of our incredible blessing to live in peace.

And I should add that for the second half of Lent I extended this also to my vehicle for journeys, so I didn’t put the temperature in the car above 19.5°C.

So what have I learnt from this? Firstly, that even with the thermostat at 19°C there were times when I was home and felt cold and uncomfortable – particularly when I was sitting down and working. And putting lots of clothes on isn’t always that practical.

The solution I came up with was to put a rug over my legs. Now this was an interesting thing!!! The hardest part was getting passed my ego that equated putting a rug over my legs with being really, really old! Grandma used to have a beautiful blanket which she used when she sat in her chair in the evenings and when she went in the car; but the thing is, I always saw her as ancient! So the first issue I had to face was not the cold, but my pride and my self-image!



Even Thumper decided that this was a good idea and tried to get in on the act!

This ‘self-image’ issue meant that every time I put a blanket over me I made *absolutely* sure that no one could see me sitting like this.

What I have discovered is that there are blankets and there are blankets! At Christmas I was given a ‘weighted blanket’, This weighs in at about 20lbs. I did try it on the

bed for one night but really didn’t like it, but when I put it over my knees it felt like a true luxury! It’s weight means that it is really good at keeping the draft out. This has been something I have enjoyed using. Additionally, when I have a book and am ploughing through some heavy reading, it makes me think twice before I jump up and run to the fridge to find something to nibble as I would lose all that warmth that I had built up. So there are hidden advantages to using it.

In the car I have a much lighter blanket, and I find that this also works well; I appreciated the cooler, fresher air around my head when I was travelling at night, yet with the blanket and the heated seat, I felt amazingly warm and snug.

So do I feel any more holy because of this Lenten discipline? Not obviously so. But perhaps I have become slightly more aware of the gift of being warm, and of course, the more we see all the goodness around us as a gift from God, the more we are going to come into right relationship with God. So I suppose in that sense I might have become very slightly more holy.

Also included in the rationale behind this Lenten discipline was the idea of trying to be a bit more ‘green’, and I learnt that being ‘green’ wasn’t just about giving things up, but rather, doing things in a different way. So I didn’t give up being warm, I just achieved it in a different way, which like everything else had positive and negative sides to it. But this little ‘green’ step really wasn’t that terrible, in fact I managed to make the most of the positives that it brought. So working *with* God’s creation rather than *against* it doesn’t necessarily mean giving things up, but rather changing the way one sees and cherishes the world we live in.

So certainly in relation to this discipline, I really didn’t have a miserable Lent.

So how was your Lent? Did you learn anything? Did your Lenten disciplines bring you any closer to God? If not, why not? Do you want to write down any notes or reminders for the beginning of Lent next year? Don’t lose your experience, put it away safely and remember to bring it out next Lent.



Ukraine

When it comes to the dreadful war in Ukraine, I feel that I am all out of words. All I can do is hold the poor people of that country in my prayers.

And Finally...

Over winter I stored my camper beside the house. To move it from there I had to drive across the lawn, and as the warmer weather comes the lawn gets very soft and the tyre marks would show. So I decided that I had to move the camper this week or I might do real damage to the lawn.

So there was my camper sitting on my truck. My next thought was about what I needed to do to get it ready for camping season. Then I struck on this great idea: the best way to find out what needs doing is to take it out and use it and see what is missing!



And that is what we did, just for one day, and it snowed and again I was cold! But we got away. And we met some sheep, and Thumper didn't chase them. Good boy Thumper!

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 Sunday Masses

Link to Our Sunday 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

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.



Our Life as a Garden

I knew an Italian lady who really did have ‘green fingers’ and had the most incredible ability to make things grow. I was being shown around her garden by a friend who pointed out to me how this wonderful gardener had got some bamboo poles on which she had attached her peas so that they would have support. But then my friend invited me to look more closely and I realised that even the bamboo poles themselves were now sprouting green shoots; these bamboo poles were growing!

The memory of this ladies ability to bring life to her garden has always stayed with me, and I guess that it was in the back of my mind as I was preparing for our Easter celebrations. On Easter Day we heard in John’s gospel an account of the resurrection (John 20) where Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb early in the morning and finds it empty. She calls the disciples who come and see the empty tomb, but they then leave while Mary stays there. It is then that she meets Jesus in the garden. The text says that she supposed that Jesus was the gardener.

At college I remember reading an intricate explanation from some scripture scholar saying that Mary was crying and her eyes would have been filled with tears, plus as it was ‘early’ she may have been facing the rising sun so couldn’t see the face of Jesus, and this was the reason that she failed to recognise Jesus and her ‘mistake’ of thinking that He was the gardener. This might be true, but for me it seems to miss the whole point of the incident.

If we look back to the book of Genesis it tells us that God put Adam in the garden of Eden, “*The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.*” (Genesis 2:15). So effectively Adam was the gardener of paradise. Thus I wonder if what John is trying to tell us in his gospel is that Mary wasn’t wrong in seeing Jesus as a gardener, but not the gardener of a small area of land near Calvary, rather the gardener of the whole recreated world that came about because of His resurrection. As the ‘First Adam’ was the gardener of the first paradise, the ‘New Adam’ is the gardener of the new reality that has been brought about through His passion, death, resurrection, ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Of course, that leads us on to ask, how is Jesus a gardener of our new recreated Easter lives? Do we see Christ as the ever-present gardener within us who loves His garden and constantly cares for it, or do we see Christ more like “The Lawn Doctor” or some other company who only come in when things get out of control and need fixing? Is Christ nurturing us every day, or do we get Him in a few times a year hoping He will get rid of some of the weeds and make our inner selves a bit more presentable, and certainly in need of just minimal maintenance?

A gardener feeds and provides water to enable growth and ensures that there is light. If we see our lives as a garden and Christ as the gardener, how do we let Christ nurture and tend our lives, providing nutrients for the areas that need growth, water for the areas that are dry, and yes, pruning what might be getting out of control, and all the time providing His light that enables that growth?

If the season of *spring* is the time of year we need to be physically outside getting rid of the dead foliage of winter and enabling the new growth of spring, then the season of *Easter* is the time we need to be in the spiritual garden of our lives helping the Gardener to toss out what is dead and holding us back, and encouraging the new spiritual life of the resurrection.

So just think, if that Italian lady can, out of love for her garden, produce such a wonderful place of life and growth, how much more can Christ, out of love for each one of us, recreate the inner you!