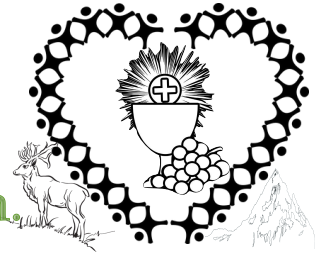


Our Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

**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).

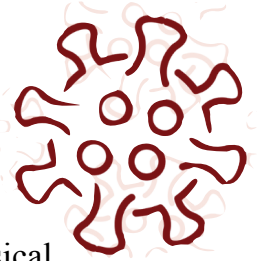
23rd/24th July 2022

Dear All,

Oh my goodness, it is Thursday already – where does time go!

The Importance of Funerals

We have had a run of funerals – two last weekend and two this weekend – so our prayers are with those grieving a loss of a loved one. But two of these four funerals were following deaths that happened during Covid. There is a medical condition called ‘Long Covid’ which has certain physical symptoms, but I think in the life of our communities there certainly will be a ‘Long Covid’ that will effect us emotionally and spiritually as we become aware of all the grieving – and the celebrating – that we couldn’t do because of the pandemic.



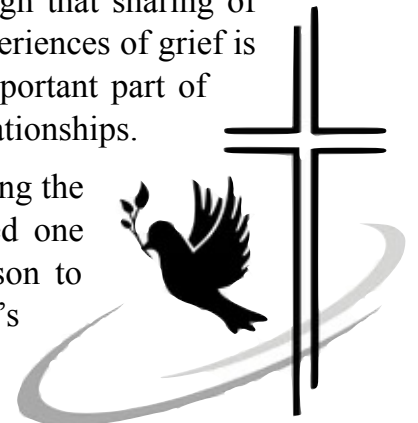
Johnny’s burial and celebration of life followed some nine months after his death, and Sharlene’s burial and celebration some seven months, but with both of these I really do think that the act of coming together to mark their passing was a really healing experience and one that felt so right. At Sharlene’s funeral there were very many tears of love, and I am sure that the shared grief was healing for the family. With Johnny, he was such a good and selfless soul that somehow I don’t think we would have been at peace with ourselves if we hadn’t publicly said “Thank you Johnny, thank you God”.

I write this because I remember someone whose wife, before she died, said,

“I don’t want people to stand up and say nice things about me after I am dead; if you want to say something nice say it now because I don’t want a funeral!!!”

And after their death the husband was left in what looked like limbo, not able to mark their loved one’s passing with others, so not going through that sharing of grief. Grief is the loss of a loved one, and one of the classic experiences of grief is loneliness, thus the coming together for funerals is such an important part of coming to terms with the loss and the rearrangement of one’s relationships.

And all the above is just on the psychological level, when we bring the faith element into it, gathering to mark the passing of a loved one becomes even more important. The commending of the person to God’s love, the thanking of God for their life, the asking for God’s healing in our grief. I was there when a dad said, “I don’t go to church so I don’t want a funeral” to which the reply came,



“Shut up Dad; your funeral is not about you but about Mom. You will have a funeral in her church and you will let her have her time of mourning.”



If during Covid anyone did have a death of a loved one and didn't have a chance to mourn and are now feeling this pain, please do contact me. The summer is a bit busy, but we could look at having a very quiet time in church, perhaps a simple Mass with just a few of your friends with you to support you, and we could bring a picture of your loved one into church, and we can use those lovely prayers from the funeral rite that focus on God's eternal love. And then we could all go down to Tim Hortons!

More About the Catholic Women's League

The other thing that has been keeping me busy and out of trouble this week has been preparations for the Catholic Women's League National Convention. I must say that I am quite excited about this; not so much being in a hotel in Kelowna for five days (however posh it might be) but the idea of looking at the CWL and seeing how it can move forward and flourish.

This isn't 'rocket science'. Back in the 1960's we had the Second Vatican Council that was all about restoring the place of the laity within the life of the Church. So ideas of responsibilities and functions being spread throughout the faith community are not new. As we move ahead into a time when parish councils and parish organisations like the CWL will be taking an ever more important role, then it is obvious that the CWL needs to be ready to embrace this challenge.

Please keep all the executive of the CWL in your prayers as they work incredibly hard to get everything ready for this first National Convention for three years.

Pope's Visit to Canada

The Pope arrives in Canada this Sunday and will be in our country for five days. We must keep his visit in our prayers, that it will be a time of healing and reconciliation, when we as a Church will grow through our new awareness of the past, and those who have been hurt by dreadful actions done by members of our Church, and by our Church's response to these actions, will find some comfort and relief.

To mark the Pope's visit there is a suggestion for prayer, which I will include at the end of the e-mail.



**WALKING
TOGETHER**

POPE FRANCIS CANADA 2022



Synodal Journey – Feedback from Western Canada

Tonight I read the document that we got that was the synthesis of input into the Synodal Journey throughout Western Canada. This is available on line if anyone is interested in it. My honest thought was that again it was a long inventory of incompatible wish-lists that pointed out all that is wrong in the Church. I have to keep believing that the authentic voice of the Holy Spirit contains real hope!



I would point people back to the synthesis from the Bishops of England and Wales that I included last week exactly because it was not negative, rather it recognised both good and bad and put them together in a constructive way. I could see a path forward in that document and a shape of a church that I really could get excited about.

This Week

I do have to get my head down and finish some work that I promised to do, and there is some more preparation I need to do before I go off to the National Convention. It is just that there is never enough time! When we have the next Synodal Journey, on my wish-list will be having an extra day to be added to each week!

And Finally...

After sitting there for very many months with a flat tyre, this week I got my bike up and running again. And Thumper was delighted, even if, as you can see, we didn't manage to get out and about until the sun was turning red and was only seen on the distant mountains. All the same it was hot enough to mean a swim was needed to cool off.

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

info@hollyfamilyfernie.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.

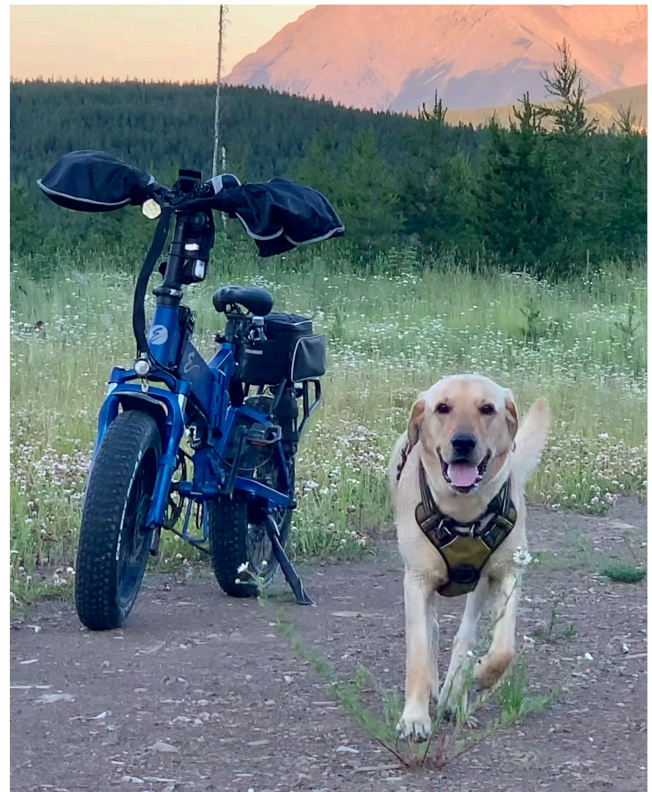
Waiting Room:

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.

Those who are attending church in person, be careful:

Covid is very much still about and people still have vulnerabilities. Therefore please continue to be careful when you are in church and continue to 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, so please be conscious that others might have health vulnerabilities that you don't know about.

Everyone still needs to be careful.



Prayer Ritual for Reconciliation during Pope Francis' Visit to Canada

During Pope Francis' pastoral visit to Canada (Sunday 24th to Friday 29th July), the Pontiff will address the impact of colonisation on Indigenous Peoples and the Catholic Church's involvement in operating residential schools.

All of us can be part of this moment of healing and reconciliation through prayer at home or wherever we may be. Here is a brief prayer ritual you can use on your own or with family members or friends.

Prayer Ritual

† **Find a quiet, peaceful place.** Place a candle in the space and add one or more symbols of creation, such as a flower, a picture of nature, or a rock, and a symbol of our faith, such as a cross or a Bible. You may want to leave this prayer space set up throughout the Pope's visit and add to it each day.

† **Choose a time for your prayer.** Invite others to join you, if you like. If you can't gather in person, you could agree to pray at the same time in solidarity wherever you are.

† **When you are ready, go to your prayer space.** Light the candle, then pray this prayer:

*Holy One, Creator of all that is, seen and unseen,
of story and of song, of heartbeat and of tears,
of bodies, souls, voices and all relations:
you are the God of all truth and the way of all reconciliation.
Uphold with your love and compassion all who open their lives
in the sacred sharing of their stories;
breathe in us the grace to trust in your loving forgiveness,
that we may face our histories with courage;
touch us through the holy gift of story,
that those who speak and those who listen
may behold your own redeeming presence;
guide us with holy wisdom to enter through the gates of remorse,
that our feet may walk gently and firmly on the way of justice and healing.
Amen.*

† **Take a moment to reflect.** What comes to mind? What actions might you take (in your home, parish or wider community) to work toward reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples? For example: learn about the land you live on and who lived here before Europeans arrived • read a book by an Indigenous author • follow Indigenous people and groups on social media to amplify their voices • donate money or time to an Indigenous organisation • read the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission • learn a word or two in a local Indigenous language (such as Miigwetch: thank you).

† **Offer a prayer for Pope Francis** as he walks the path of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada during his visit.

† **Thank God** for this time of prayer as you blow out the candle.