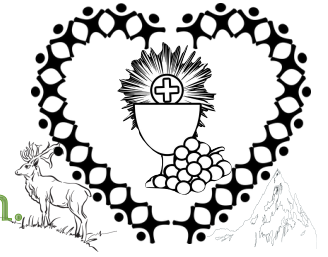


Our Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

*Fernie on Saturday evening at 5pm,
Sparwood at 9am Sunday morning,
and Elkford at 4pm Sunday afternoon.*

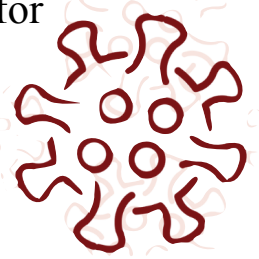


The Sunday Mass is broadcast via Zoom from Fernie & Sparwood (see below).

30th/31st July 2022

Dear All,

Bad news! I have tested positive for Covid, so I am now starting five days of isolation, which means I will need to isolate until the beginning of next week, that is, until at least Monday 1st August.



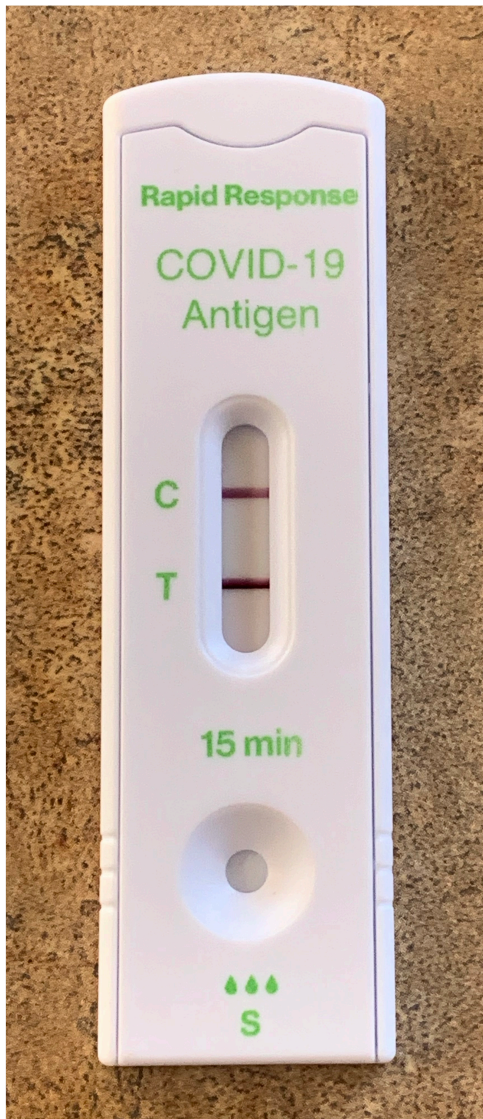
On Tuesday morning I got up and went for a cycle ride with Thumper, but as the day wore on all my muscles started to ache. I knew that this was something significant, so Tuesday afternoon I had a covid test and it came back positive.

Now I should say that while I do have aches and pains, really I don't feel ill; rather I just feel like I am at the end of a long and tiring day – even when I wake up in the morning! So I really don't want people to think that I am poorly. Hopefully being fully vaccinated means that I will have very mild symptoms, but all the same, the rules say that I can not be with people for five days.

Recently I have been effected by my allergies so I have been testing myself twice a week just to make sure that covid wasn't hiding under my allergy symptoms, and what I started experience in on Tuesday was very clearly different to the allergy symptoms I had previously had. So this says to me

that I probably wasn't carrying the virus at the weekend at the Sunday Masses.

And in all honesty, in a way I see this as a gift; I have been so busy and I have got so tired that being forced to do nothing for five days is a real blessing... except that I have been panicking about a wedding, trying to organise everything for the weekend, been told I should do Zoom Masses, have been producing this e-mail, and goodness knows what else. But when all that is done, then I will relax a bit and try to recharge my batteries.



The Arrangements of the Weekend Services: Nothing Has Changed!

The Bishop has asked that I Zoom Mass this weekend from somewhere well away from the churches, and this be shown in church with Communion being distributed at the appropriate point.

Fernie 5pm Saturday: So for those who can make it to church, in Fernie our hope is that you will be greeted by the choir in the normal way, Mass will run as usual except that I will be appearing on the big screen instead of in person. Someone will then distribute Communion as we usually do.

Sparwood 9am Sunday: In Sparwood we haven't yet got the technical side set up, but I am hopeful. I don't think we will attempt to do 'down the line' music as well as 'down the line' priest! But again, I am hoping that we will have all the same elements of a normal Mass, except that the priest's parts will be done in a different location. Again Communion will be distributed as normal.

Elkford 4pm Sunday: Again, hopefully this service will continue as normal with the hymns and the readings, and after the readings a reflection will be read which will lead into the distribution of Communion.

Mass on Zoom: For those watching at home, again nothing much will change with the two Masses broadcast. I hope it will all work close to normal, but doing a 'hybrid' Mass – *that is, partly in the church and partly from elsewhere, when I am not actually in church* – might throw up an issue or two, so please be patient.



Deacon Stephen

When I saw my positive covid test the first person I thought of was Deacon Stephen, hoping that he would be able to step in for me and everything would just continue as normal. But very sadly he had an accident on his bike the other week and he sustain significant injuries that have put him out of action for a number of weeks. So our prayers for a quick recovery go out to him as well.

What with Fr. Marian's accident and now Deacon Stephen, we must try to ensure that our clergy take better care of themselves!

Last weekend in the cool of the evening Thumper and myself went up to one of the cabins in the mountains behind Elkford.

Weddings

When I got the positive covid result I thought ‘No it can’t be positive: I have a wedding this weekend!’ Two parishioners, Kaleigh & Scott, are getting married in Fernie on Saturday. I knew that however ill I might be, this was a situation I just had to solve! I have to say that for the first twenty-four hours my anxiety levels were incredibly high, just because I knew that this couple’s big day was on the line. I am *so, so, so* grateful to Fr. Marian who has stepped in and saved the day.

This weekend we also have a couple from Elkford getting married: Luke and Seanna. Thankfully they are getting married by a priest in Vegreville, Alberta. I would ask your prayers for these two couples in particular, and also for all those who are getting married this summer.

Self-Isolation

As soon as I realised I was going to miss a weekend I had to make a number of decisions very quickly. After making sure that the wedding could go ahead, the next issue was where I would self-isolate. The option I chose was in my camper in the middle of nowhere! Now apart from this being a lovely option, it was based on a bit more than that.



Another walk in the cool of the evening so Thumper can have a swim.

Firstly, after talking to the Dean – Fr. Jim in Kimberley – we were initially trying to get another cleric to come in and take my place. The issue was that at our funeral last Monday the family told me that they had to get a hotel in Cranbrook as all the hotels in Fernie and Sparwood were fully booked, and this is indeed what I have heard from elsewhere that rooms just aren't that available at the moment. So that meant that any visiting clergy would need to stay in the Presbytery, which in turn meant that I couldn't stay there.

Secondly, the house in Sparwood is not a particularly nice place to be ill during a heatwave! As the insulation is so poor in the house the south facing roof heats up and the house becomes like an oven, not really cooling that much at night. Last night at 11pm it was still 27.5°C in the living room with the window fully open. I thought that if I was feeling ill and running a fever this would be a really uncomfortable place to be. In contrast, by going up in elevation one can ensure cooler nights which aid better sleep. I have always said that I sleep so much better in the camper than I do in the house.

Thirdly, I just wanted to get somewhere where I could stop and be still. So far, where I am hidden away in a corner of our Valley, I have seen no one; thus I have not had to worry about people coming to the door or interacting with people. And not insignificantly, I thought that if I was unwell, being in the camper I could just let Thumper out and he could do his own thing; if I was in the house he would have to be inside except when I took him out, and this would involve getting in the car and driving to some spot out of town.

And yes, if I wasn't so busy and if I wasn't aching in all my bones, this would really feel like a holiday!

And Finally...

I am sure that there is so much more I should have included in this week's e-mail, and I do apologise that most of the above is about me and my current situation. It is so odd that I put in the bidding prayers last week that we pray for "those who are ill, particularly those who have tested positive for Covid and are self-isolating". I included that because I had heard of a number of people from all over the place who had tested positive and were going through what I have been through this week. Even the Bishop's secretary is off with covid this week. So this should be a reminder to all of us that the threat is still real, and particularly for those with vulnerabilities the threat is dangerous. So please do think of others and let's try to keep everyone safe. 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@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.

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 everywhere 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.

