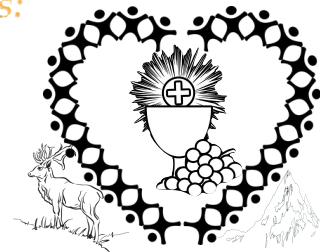


Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

*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).

19th/20th November 2022

Dear All,

Feast of Christ the King & Preparing for Advent.

Advent starts early this year, on the weekend of Sunday 27th November. Indeed, this is the earliest start to Advent that it is possible to have. Purple is the colour of Advent, and while Advent is still a week off, as you will see at the Sunday Masses, I have already

prepared myself with one of my eyes being completely purple.

Okay, this was nothing to do with Advent, but rather something that happened while I was out with Thumper. At 4:45pm on Wednesday I set off to give Thumper a walk. I clearly remember the first half hour or so of the walk, but then the next thing that I knew it was 6:30pm and I was sitting in my car, in the dark, covered in blood.

I am extremely grateful to John and Lynda who run our local funeral home for looking after me and getting me to the hospital in Fernie. The staff there were, as always, excellent and because of the extended time of my amnesia decided that I needed to be kept in hospital under observation. Before dawn on Thursday I was taken down to Cranbrook for further tests and a CT scan, and as expected, no brain was found in my head. But thankfully, also no damage was observed to whatever is housed in there.



I should point out that the handout that the hospital gave to me also referred to concussion as ‘mild brain injury’; now whether the word ‘mild’ refers to the brain or to the injury was not immediately clear! But hopefully my brain, mild or otherwise, is not too injured.

The brain is a very fragile organ and needs to be treated with great care. And as one of the very young looking doctors said to me, this is even more true at your age. (Hummm.). So I am scheduled for a couple of very quiet days and then a slow and gradual build back up to normal routine.

One difference that I noticed between a church and a hospital is that in a church I am included in conversations about our ‘younger’ clergy; and in the hospital I am included when they are saying, “as you start to get older...”!!! Anyway, I got a very strong reminder that, as we do get older, our bodies do take longer to heal. Particularly when it comes to the brain, they need time to recover from even a mild injury. The hospital staff talked through how it is plain daft to try to rush straight back into things just for the sake of attending this meeting or that event, both of which will be forgotten in a short time. But the medics talked eloquently about how our relationship with our bodies is a life long adventure. I mention this because a number of parishioners have shared with me their frustration as they realise that their bodies healing powers are not as strong as they used to be. We must remember that time belongs to God, and while in youth we rightly fill our time with doing so many things, one of the great journeys of older age is the transition to realise that everything depends upon God alone, and first and foremost, what we have to do is simply be aware of God’s abiding presence.

My Mum-in-England gave me a superb example of this. While all her life she was very active, and even into her nineties she was still driving, those last few years of her life were a wonderful movement from control to surrender, of power to weakness, from self sufficiency to dependency. And as the ageing of her physical body forced many of these changes on her, the growth in wisdom that was given to her allowed her to walk this path with great serenity.

For me, sitting still for the next few days will be very difficult (if not near impossible), but it is a reminder that we mustn’t think that everything depends upon us, but rather, absolutely everything depends upon God alone. What we are asked to do is cooperate with that, sometimes by being super active and involved, and sometimes by being super strong and surrendering to God. Certainly I am not good at the latter, so this might be an opportunity for me to start to practice in this area.

We are very fortunate that Deacon Stephen is with us this weekend, so he is taking on the stress and strain of putting a sermon together, and at the weekend Masses, all I will have to do is pray. This coming week I was meant to be in Kelowna with all the other priests of the diocese, but that is now not possible. But the up side of this is that I had nothing else planned for this week so I should be able to take things at a bit more of a gentle pace.

Having no memory of what happened and what caused my black eye, I think I will tell people that it must have been when I got into a fight with a big black bear that I got one sore eye, but I will go on to say that the bear went away with two black eyes! Or did I engage in some spiritual battle between good and evil, and the two colours of my eyes symbolise the struggle that I went through. Or did I just slip in the snow and got concussion?



*The place where apparently I feel,
and the marks left in the snow - not a lot to see.*

But to be honest and serious, apart from two Tylenol pills that Fernie Hospital gave me to help cover the discomfort of the journey to Cranbrook, so far I have taken nothing because I have not felt ill or in any real pain. So if you are either joining us in person or on-line at the weekend, please don't be too shocked by the look of my face, I mean, my right eye, it's okay, all is well.

As a young man I used to say that God doesn't so much lead me along the right path, rather most of the time God had to trip me up as I tried to enthusiastically run in the wrong direction! So perhaps this is just part of that continued process of learning, which I will understand when I am older and truly wise.

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 still about and some people still have vulnerabilities.

Please continue to be careful 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.

