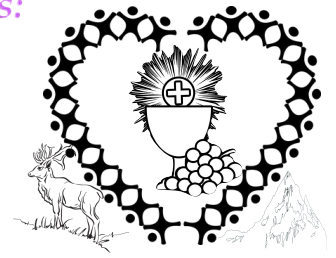


Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:

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



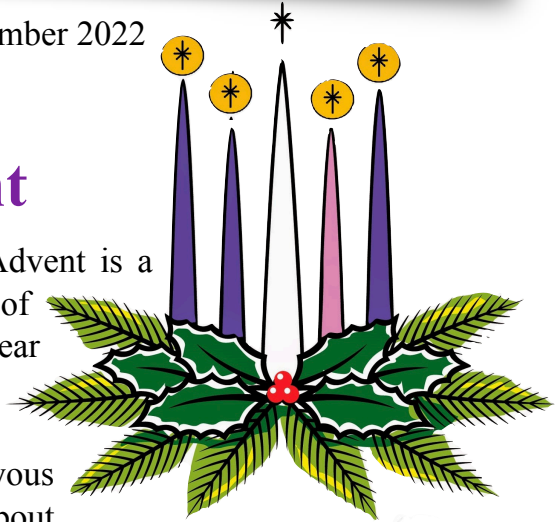
The Sunday Mass is broadcast via Zoom from Fernie & Sparwood (see below).

17th/18th December 2022

Dear All,

Fourth Sunday of Advent

One week to go! Usually for me the last week of Advent is a quieter week, which is wonderful as it gives me a bit of extra time to prepare for Christmas Day itself. Next year there will be no gap between the last Sunday of Advent and Christmas Day, so I am ***not*** looking forward to that! But this year we have a full six days, so I was joyous about having that bit of extra time to stop and pray about what we are actually doing at Christmas. And then, of course, each day of next week is now being filled with different things and it will again be a busy week.



I say this just as a reminder that as well as preparing for the great day by getting in all the food and other essentials for Christmas, don't forget to give your inner-self some time of preparation. Remember to try to find time to stop and think, "What are we doing and why are we doing it?" Hopefully each person will find their own answer to this question, and hopefully the answer will centre on the concept of love. Firstly, the love of God shown to us in the birth of a child, the child of God. And secondly, our love of Jesus in our lives, a love we want to celebrate with family and friends. If there is no love of God in Christmas then it is pretty empty.

So please, if it is possible, see if you can give a bit of time for that internal preparation. Some might be fortunate enough to be able to give time to reading the Christmas scriptures, others might be going into a church to decorate or to clean and then perhaps they could also use the trip to take the opportunity to pause and pray. But even if obvious options like this are not available to you, why don't you see how many 'five minutes' you can give to God over the next week. Why don't you ask yourself,

- ★ ***Getting up in the morning*** – *do I really need to rush or could I take five minutes before I start doing anything else just to stop and think and pray?*
- ★ ***After lunch*** – *before the afternoon chores, do I have five minutes to stop and think and pray?*

- ★ **Driving somewhere** – can I pull over for five minutes before I get to my destination to just stop and think and pray?
- ★ **In the evening** – do I really need to watch whatever is in front of me on the TV, or could I take five minutes to stop and think and pray?
- ★ **Or on the way to bed** – just before that sequence of ‘going to bed’ rituals – like filling the dog’s bowl with water or taking one’s teeth out and putting them in some water (but hopefully not the dog’s bowl) – do I have five minutes to just stop and think and pray?

Could you do one of these each day? Or more than one? Or all of them? Let’s be ready for Christmas, let’s prepare both our homes and ourselves.

Once more, on the last page of this e-mail is the times of the Christmas and New Year services for the Elk Valley.

Our Heartfelt Prayers

It is so tragic to hear of a death near Christmas – somehow the family nature of Christmas highlights the extent of the loss that death brings. So my heartfelt prayers go out to all those who have lost a loved one, either recently or near Christmas in previous years.

And Finally...

Thumper is very proud of his Christmas tree. With this very long Advent it has had the chance to grow a little bit. He obviously has ‘green paws’ when it comes to making Christmas trees grow.

With prayers, *Fr. David @ Thumper*



The tree at the start of Advent.



The tree mid-Advent.



And the tree this week.

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 (*it is the same link for both of our Masses*)

Topic: **Fourth Sunday of Advent**
Date & Time: Saturday – 17th December – at 5pm Mountain Time,
Sunday – 18th December – at 9am Mountain Time.

To Join Zoom broadcast: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2504236127>

If you have the Zoom App you can join via Meeting ID: 250 423 6127

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. All you have to do to call in and listen is:

For audio only, tap: +17789072071,,2504236127#,,#

Or if you are manually dialling this number: 1 778 907 2071 (pause and wait for the prompt) 250 423 6127# (pause and wait for the prompt) #

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 and other viruses are 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.



Services in the Elk Valley for Christmas 2022 and New Year 2023

Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession

I am writing this before our 'Reconciliation Service' this Saturday at 11am in Sparwood. If you are reading this before Saturday, then this service is a really good way to be able to go to confession. If you missed it, then the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available after any of our weekend Masses this weekend.

*Due to the number of Christmas services we have, confession **will not** be available either before or after any of the Christmas Eve or Christmas Day services.*

Services for Christmas & New Year

Christmas Eve

Fernie at 5pm

Elkford at 8pm

Sparwood at 10pm

Christmas Day

Sparwood at 9am

Fernie at 11am

New Year's Eve (Saturday)

Fernie at 5pm

New Year's Day (Sunday)

Sparwood at 9am

Elkford at 4pm

Please note:

While our Christmas Eve Masses are usually well attended, our Christmas Day Masses often attract less people, so these will be a solemn but simple proclamation of the birth of Christ. Thus Christmas Eve will be a big celebration, and Christmas Day more quiet and reflective.

On Christmas Eve the sermon at all the Masses will be very short, and we hope to have a number of Eucharistic minister's available so Communion can be distributed in a timely manor.

So hopefully if we have visitors who only visit us once a year, these Masses shouldn't be too taxing!

On Christmas morning, we will be singing carols. There will be sheets available with carols on them, and if anyone wants a particular carol sung: great! You lead off and we will follow.

For New Year, our weekend schedule will follow our normal weekend pattern.

