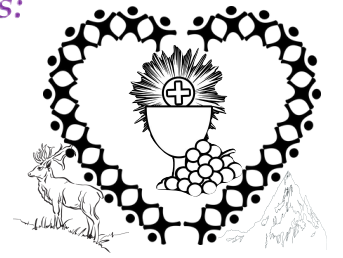


*Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:*

*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).*

11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> March 2023

## Dear All,

Just two things in this week's e-mail, firstly something to read before our weekend Masses, and then news about what is happening in the parish over the next number of weeks, but for some reason, it still runs to seven pages – it must be all the poems!

*The  
Season  
of  
Lent*



## Thirsting

This Sunday we start reading the first of three of the longer passages from John's gospel. It is the wonderful story of the woman at the well. The story starts with,

*When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her,  
“Give me a drink.”*

When she questions Jesus and asks why he, a Jew, is asking a Samaritan for a drink, we get these wonderful words from Jesus,

*“If you only knew what God is offering  
and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink’,  
you would have been the one to ask,  
and he would have given you living water.”*

This was very much in my mind when I was listening to Fr. Mark's Lenten talk today (Thursday), and when he mentioned – *possibly just in passing* – about people's reaction to Jesus. Fr. Mark pointed out that in some of the great epic films about Jesus, as Jesus staggers towards Calvary, there is always a baying crowd throwing their insults and anger at Christ. But Fr. Mark speculated whether in fact many of those who lived in Jerusalem at that time would have had little or no interest in what was going on, and Christ's passion could have been a tragically sad scene with only a few onlookers.

Move forward two thousand years and in our modern society we can see that there are some who are very hostile towards the Church, particularly the Catholic Church, and towards religion in general. Yet for ever increasing numbers in Canada, the Church and religion are of no interest, and so our faith doesn't provoke anger but rather apathy; people don't see that Christianity has any thing to offer them.



This story of the woman at the well is of such importance to us as Christians as it goes to a basic truth: that unless we recognise our thirst we will not see our need to come to the water. It is because people don't recognise their thirst that so many in our world aren't aware of their own need for what God is offering.

So is there less *thirst* in our society or less *awareness* of that thirst? I would say that the thirst is great but because so many other things are trying to fulfil people, we don't recognise our thirst. I could make a list including the suicide rate of young people, the prevalence of cannabis stores in every community and so many other signs that say people are seeking – *people are thirsting* – but they don't recognise either the nature of that yearning or what will answer that desire.

And while we lament that our world is going in this direction, the real question for each one of us – *particularly during Lent* – is do we recognise *our own* thirst, and recognise that Jesus is the only way that our real thirst will be quenched. As Jesus said – *indeed he cried out* – while he was in Jerusalem,

*“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,  
and let the one who believes in me drink.*

*As the scripture has said,*

*‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’”* (John 7:37-38)

John the Evangelist goes on to tell us that Jesus *“said this about the Spirit”*.

So often we can forget our thirst, we forget our need to come back to the living waters that flow from Christ, the living water of the Spirit. Or perhaps as Christians we have intellectually decided to believe in Christ, we go through the motions and say the right prayers but yet we don't cultivate that relationship with God that enables the water of life to well up in us. Knowing our need for God, knowing only God can be God, and thirsting for that reality must be central to us.

If you get a chance before the weekend Masses, please just take a few moments to quietly read and reflect upon Psalm 42 below. And as you reflect ask God to help you both recognise your thirst and recognise that the more we work on having a living relationship with God, the more we will be able to drink deeply from the wellsprings of salvation.

*Like the deer that yearns for running streams,  
so my soul is yearning for you, my God.*

*My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life;  
when can I enter and see the face of God?*

*My tears have become my bread, by night, by day,  
as I hear it said all the day long: “Where is your God?”*

*These things will I remember as I pour out my soul:  
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd into the house of God,  
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving, the throng wild with joy.*

*Why are you cast down, my soul, why groan within me?  
Hope in God; I will praise him still, my saviour and my God.* Psalm 42(41)

## B.C. & Yukon CWL Provincial Executive Mid-Term Meeting



This week I will be off to our Provincial CWL Executive meeting in the Lower Mainland. I will leave here after Mass on Wednesday. With our reconciliation service on Monday and commitments all day Tuesday, it will be a very busy week for me, so please don't expect anything from me until I get back.

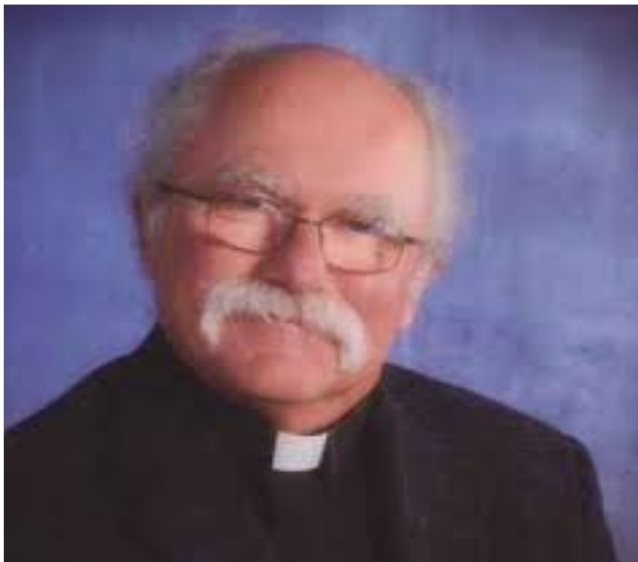


**Fr. Harry** – we had hoped that Fr. Harry would be with us for a couple of weeks, but sadly due to health reasons he is not able to be here. We promise Fr. Harry our prayers.

**Fr. Wayne** – I am so grateful to Fr. Wayne for agreeing to step in at short notice. He will be driving here from Kelowna this Friday and then he will be returning on the Monday, so I am doubly grateful that he is willing to travel so far for just three Masses.

As Fr. Wayne has commitments in Kelowna he won't be able to be with us for our Lenten Mass in Sparwood on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March. But I will drive back late Thursday night so we can still have a Friday Mass on the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

Please give Fr. Wayne a warm welcome and help him in whatever way is needed.



**I will be leaving this Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>,  
Fr. Wayne arrives late on Friday 18<sup>th</sup>.**

*Top: a lovely picture of Fr. Harry*

*Bottom: again a nice picture of Fr. Wayne.*

**Zoom Broadcasts** – as I will be back early we will only need to suspend Zoom for one weekend. So there will be no Zoom broadcasts for the weekend of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> March, but there will be broadcasts the following weekend, 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>.

**Weekly E-mail** – I won't be able to produce a weekly e-mail for next weekend, and realistically, I don't think I will be able to produce one for the following weekend either. I will try to get something out before Palm Sunday.



## Lent Reconciliation Service

This Monday – 13<sup>th</sup> March –  
at 6pm in Sparwood

Our Lent Reconciliation service is this Monday. If you can't get to this service I am sure that you could ask Fr. Wayne to hear confessions after any of the Sunday Masses this weekend.

Alternatively, Cranbrook are having their reconciliation service on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 7pm.

## Lent Talks

What a great talk we had this week by Fr. Mark! I knew he'd be good. It brought up so many thoughts in my mind, but I fear thoughts more about poetry and how we use different genres rather than thinking about the scourging of Christ.

Right at the start of his talk Fr. Mark read a poem by an Anglican theologian, Nicola Slee. Nicola isn't exactly mainstream, and some people will find what she writes slightly shocking, and certainly, I would not want to align myself with many of the things she writes (*indeed, I might want to actively distance myself from them!*) But having said all that, I was very moved by the poem that Fr. Mark read. I am sure that we can discuss the theology of Mary's sinless state and what that meant in practice, but if we accept that Mary was a good, honest yet normal person, then I found this poem really said something I have not heard said before; in it Mary is portrayed with a humanity that we don't often think about.

*(Fr. Mark did not want to put the poem on the screen during his talk as the talk will be uploaded to YouTube, and they have rules about copyright, so similarly I won't include it in this version of the weekly e-mail that is put on the website, but it is in the version sent out to individuals.)*

We still have three talks left of this series:

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March** — The Crowning with Thorns:-  
Mr. Francis Harrington – A reflection with Music.

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** — Jesus carries His Cross:-  
Mgr. Robert Draper – A reflection using Scripture.

**Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March** — Jesus dies on the Cross:-  
Fr. Jonathan Stewart – A reflection through Art.

The Zoom  
Meeting ID:  
897 1938 9363

Passcode  
36 25 64.

To get the link to watch our series of Lenten talks, 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](mailto:info@holyfamilyfernie.ca)

[ElkValleyRC@gmail.com](mailto:ElkValleyRC@gmail.com)



## Summary of Dates

As there are a lot of changes and a lot of dates, I will write below a summary for the important dates over the next few weeks.

### March

- Monday 13<sup>th</sup> – 6pm - Reconciliation Service for the Valley – Sparwood
- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> – No Lenten Mass
- Weekend 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> – Fr. Wayne visiting the Valley
- Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> – 12noon Lenten Talk
- Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> – 7pm - Cranbrook Reconciliation Service
- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> – 11am - Friday Lenten Mass
- Weekend 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> – Back to normal

And looking ahead to Holy Week:

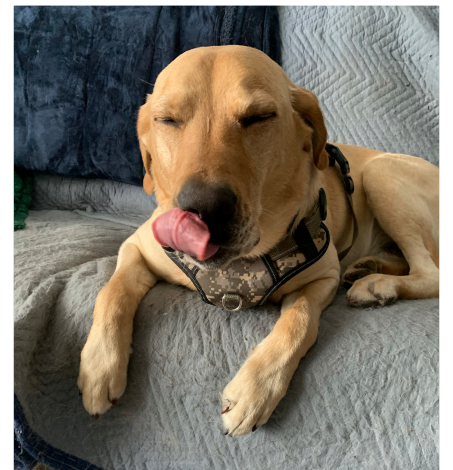
### April

- Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7pm (Pacific time) Chrism Mass – Nelson
- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> – 7pm - Maundy Mass with washing of feet – Sparwood
- Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> – 7pm - Maundy Mass with washing of feet – Fernie
- Friday 7<sup>th</sup> – 12noon - Good Friday Service – Sparwood
- 3pm - Good Friday Service – Fernie
- Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> – 5pm - First Mass for Easter – Fernie
- 8pm - Easter Vigil – Sparwood
- Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> – 9am - Mass for Easter Morning – Sparwood

### And Finally...

This week has been so busy that I haven't taken even one photo of Thumper! So I have gone to find him and snapped the shots below, and I can tell you, Thumper is not the only one yawning just now. With prayers,

*Fr. David @ Thumper*



Our churches are open to those *without* any viral symptoms.  
**But Covid is still a real threat – thus caution is needed!**



## Zoom Link – To Our ‘Thirst Quenching’ Sunday Masses

**Topic:** **Third Sunday of Lent**

**Date & Time:** Saturday – 11<sup>th</sup> March – at 5pm Mountain time from Fernie  
Sunday – 12<sup>th</sup> March – at 9am Mountain Time from Sparwood

To get the link to watch our two weekend Masses via Zoom 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](mailto:info@holyfamilyfernie.ca)

[ElkValleyRC@gmail.com](mailto: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.*

### ***Chat:***

*Feel free to send greetings via the chat when you join our broadcast, and if you are praying for anything particular, do also share this with others.*

### ***Those who are attending church in person, be careful:***

**Covid and other viruses are about and many people have vulnerabilities.**

Some people might have vulnerabilities that we don't know about, and at the moment as well as Covid there are other viruses going around – *the normal winter colds* – but this year they might be slightly more problematic because many people haven't been exposed to colds and flu for a few years. So please continue to be careful. If someone wants a bit of space, we have a lot of it in our churches, so please be respectful.

***Everyone still needs to be careful.***

