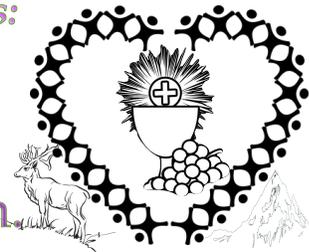


*Our Current Weekend Mass Schedule for the Elk Valley is:*

*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).*

*12th/13th March 2022*

**Dear All,**

I am writing this on Thursday and there is a constant stream of tragic news coming out of Ukraine.

I am sure that many people are saying, “What can we do to help?” And obviously prayer must be front and centre in our response, but practical help is also needed. There are very many ways to offer financial help, including through our own Development and Peace organisation. But one of the most effective ways is through the Red Cross, as the Canadian Government has agreed – ***for a very limited period which ends this Friday - 18th March*** – to match all donations made by individuals “dollar for dollar”. The Government’s website states:

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### **Canada’s matching fund - Crisis in Ukraine**

Recognizing the generosity of Canadians and their desire to assist those affected by the crisis, Canada launched a matching fund on February 25, 2022. Canada will match, dollar for dollar, donations made by individual Canadians to the Canadian Red Cross, between February 24 and March 18, 2022, for crisis relief in Ukraine up to a maximum of \$30 million.

To make a donation:

- visit the [Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal](#) online
- call [1-800-418-1111](tel:1-800-418-1111)

With the matching fund contribution, the Red Cross will support preparedness, immediate and ongoing relief efforts, and other critical humanitarian activities as needs of people affected by the conflict in Ukraine arise, including support to populations that have been displaced.

In line with best practice, Canadians are encouraged to donate money to reputable humanitarian organizations instead of sending relief items, as this allows these organizations to quickly purchase supplies based on the specific needs of the people affected by the conflict.

*A Sunflower – symbol of Ukrainian resistance –  
with the backdrop of the Ukrainian flag, and a heart.*





## Prayers for Ukraine

It is so important to pray for peace in Ukraine, and this evening (Thursday) many of us have linked up across the country with members of the Catholic Women's League of Canada and with members of the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League to pray for peace.

But let us not underestimate the task of praying for Ukraine. Let me explain what I mean.

I do so desperately ask God to end the war and the suffering, but at the same time I feel guilty.

When I am praying for an end to the war, really what I am praying for is Ukraine to win through and those invading their land to be defeated, or at least to see the error of their ways and withdraw, or that some other miracle happens in Russia which means that the war ends. And I am sure that very many of us are praying for the same thing.

But the reality of all wars is that very rarely do they suddenly end. I wonder how many people in Europe prayed year after year for the Second World War to be over; how many people in Syria have been praying for years for an end to their war, or the people caught up in the ten year old conflict in Yemen? Wars usually only end when one side is clearly overpowered and defeated, and in this case, while we can hope that Russia is overpowered, in reality with all the military might that Russia has it is hard to see how they can be militarily defeated. One thing is clear, the military and economic cost has already been so great to Russia that if they don't succeed, that will clearly be the end of the current leadership. Thus we can conclude that if Russia does not appear to be succeeding in their mission the Russian leadership will not have any regard for the people of Ukraine; they will simply try to throw bigger and more horrendous weapons at Ukraine in an attempt to preserve their own personal status and power.

But this week as I have listened to the news I have heard dreadful stories about people stuck in basements, too frightened to venture outside because of constant bombing, yet stuck with no food, no water, no electricity, and no heat when temperatures are below freezing. And my fear – *and thus my sense of guilt* – comes from thinking that if I am praying for Ukraine to win, am I in some ways saying that I accept this reality as a step towards a greater good? By praying for Ukraine's victory am I accepting that this sort of suffering will have to happen for some time to come?

The answer is clearly 'No!', none of us condone this sort of suffering. So what does praying for an end to this war mean?

The other alternative seems to be to say that we pray that the war is over quickly so that this absolutely dreadful suffering will end – which implicitly means that we are praying that Russia will succeed in its aggression. But I am not sure that this is a prayer I can make either.



This whole situation seems to have come about because of power struggles and ideology, and they have resulted in a very visible example of, to use Rabbe Burns’ famous words, “man’s inhumanity to man”. Alan Paton was a very strong anti-apartheid activist in South Africa from 1953 to the end of apartheid some thirty-seven years later. He similarly faced the question of how one mentally copes with regimes that appear to have no humanity yet seem to have all the power. In his book, ‘Cry, the Beloved Country’ his response was,

“There is only one way in which one can endure man’s *inhumanity* to man and that is to try, in one’s own life, to exemplify man’s *humanity* to man.”

So let us remember that a very strong way to support our prayer is to challenge ourselves about the quality of our own humanity and do all we can to build our lives and our society to be as humane as we can.

And if you are struggling to work out how to be more humane, the thesaurus gives us alternative words that cover the same area of meaning:

<i>compassionate,</i>	<i>tolerant,</i>	<i>forgiving,</i>
<i>kind-hearted,</i>	<i>good-natured,</i>	<i>merciful,</i>
<i>considerate,</i>	<i>gentle;</i>	<i>mild,</i>
<i>understanding,</i>	<i>lenient,</i>	<i>charitable,</i>
<i>sympathetic,</i>	<i>forbearing,</i>	<i>generous.</i>

Now there is a check list for an examination of conscience! And trying to live these values could be an incredibly powerful ‘prayer’ to place before God.

## Springing Forward towards Camping Season!

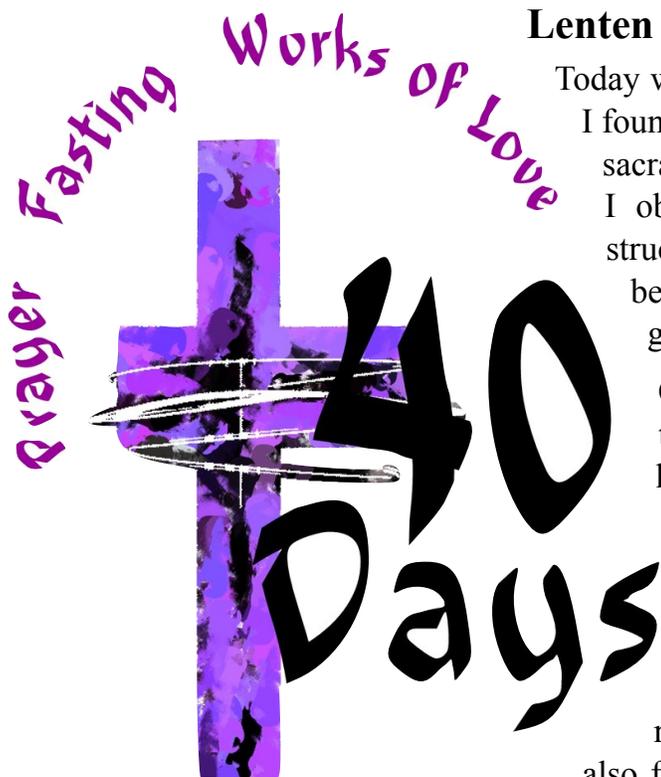
Don’t forget, this weekend in many parts of North America we will be changing our clocks. (*For the ten years I lived in Northern B.C. we didn’t play this game and it is still difficult to get back into this slightly archaic practice.*)



But for us it has a number of implications:

- If you are in a place where they *do* change their clocks this weekend, then please remember to do this before you go to bed on Saturday so you don’t miss our Mass on Sunday morning.
- If you live in an area that *does not* change their clocks this weekend, then please note that from Sunday we will be doing everything an hour earlier than normal.
- If you are joining us for our Lent Talks on Thursdays, please note that for the next two weeks the talks will be at 1pm Mountain Time until Britain catches up with us.
- If the deer haven’t moved off the back lawn in the morning when your dog wants to go out and do his business, then please remind them to also change their internal clocks.





## Lenten Talk Series

Today we had the first in our series of Lent talks, and I found it fascinating. It was about the history of the sacrament of reconciliation – that is, ‘confession’. I obviously studied this at seminary, but what struck me hearing it this time was the connection between the community and the reconciliation given in the sacrament.

Quite often when I go to anoint a sick person the family will say, “Do you want us to leave?” and I will reply “No! Quite the opposite, I want as many as possible of the family and friends to be there to be part of the celebration of the sacrament.” And when I preside at a baptism or at a wedding I usually tell the people that my role is to represent the Church, but all the people present

also fulfil that role. And in particular reference to the celebration of the Mass I regularly say that the sacraments are never private but are always acts of the whole Church.

But as Fr. John Patrick pointed out, it is probably harder to see this community aspect of the celebration of the sacrament in ‘confession’ than in any other sacrament, and that was very much what his talk addressed. It was a very good start to this series of talks. Even if you missed this talk, you are more than welcome to join any or all of the other talks.

*The zoom link is below and it will be the same link for each of the talks, becoming active at 6:45pm [British time, 12:45am Mountain time this week and next, but see below].*

***Mark Skelton is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.***

To get the link to our Lenten series of 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)

### ***Talk Details:***

As mentioned above, the talk this coming week and next will be at 1pm. The talks will last for about 45 minutes with questions to follow. The Zoom link will be active fifteen minutes before the start of each talk.

Each talk takes a different subject, so even if you miss one or more you are still welcome to join the subsequent talks.

### **1pm Mountain Time on:**

Thursday 17th March – Fr. Anthony O’Gorman, a priest in the Plymouth Diocese.

Thursday 24th March – Sister Bernadette Reis,  
who works in Vatican Radio and Media.

### **12noon Mountain Time on:**

Thursday 31st March – Mr. Jeremy Skelton, Religious Education Advisor  
to the Plymouth Diocesan Schools.

Thursday 7th April – Prof. Anthony Towey, director of the ‘Centre for Catholic  
Education, Research and Religious Literacy’  
at St. Mary’s University in London, England.

### **Pausing to be in Awe**

Do let me know if the pause before taking Communion connects with you in any way, or indeed, if it doesn’t connect with you. I would be interested in your feedback.



Personally for me, it is a precious moment. There are very few points during Mass when I am not either listening, reading, performing some action, or generally ‘doing’ something, so this point when I can just stop, be present to the moment and be in awe, is a real gift.

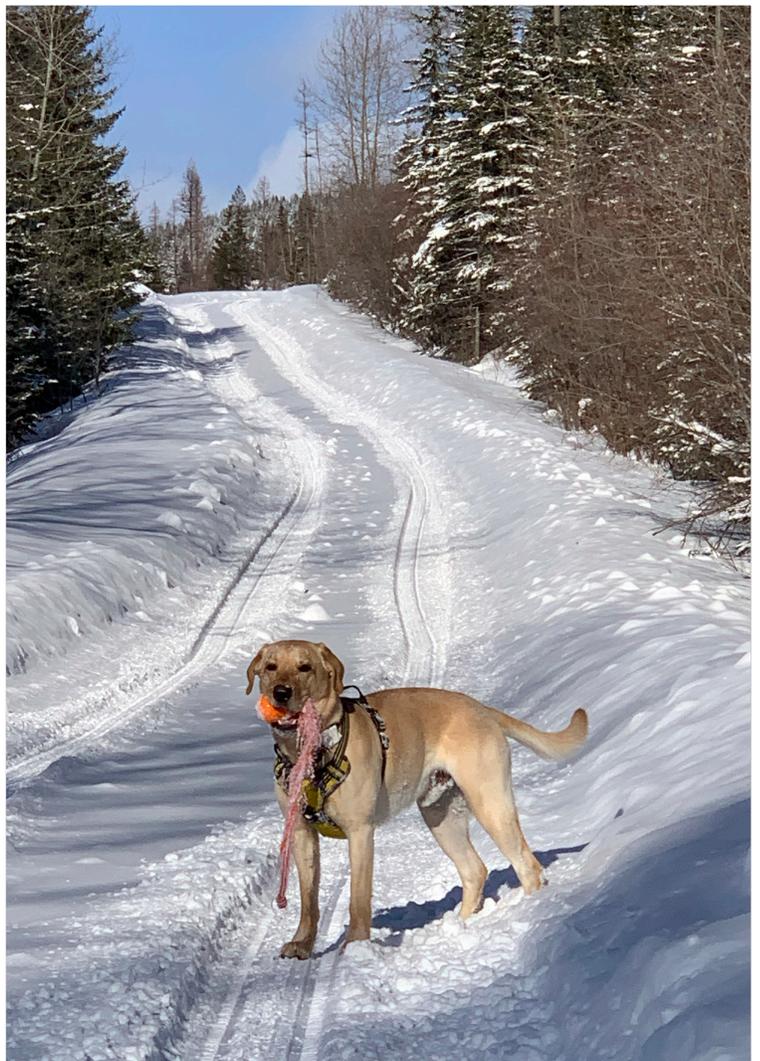
### **And Finally...**

The recent cold and the snow made no difference to Thumper, but on our walks I certainly appreciated the sun when it came out, even if it was well below zero.

And now our clocks have changed, perhaps the weather will change as well and soon we will be able to get out in the camper!

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 Weekend Masses

### Link to Weekend 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](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 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.*

*Normally there is "1A - Chat (Co-Host)" who watches the chat for any problems or prayer intentions. If you don't want everyone to see your message you can send your message directly and it will remain private.*

### 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.*

### And for those who are attending church in person, be careful:

Please continue to be careful when you are in church. Please sanitise your hands, wear a mask at all times, always think of the good of others. As you move about in church you might come within a 'breath distance' of others, and be conscious that others might have health vulnerabilities that you don't know about.

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



## Exemplify Man's Humanity to Man

*Here is that list again in case you want to pin it to your fridge or somewhere else where you will see it regularly – I certainly need to do this!*

One way we can 'pray' for peace in Eastern Europe is by trying "to exemplify man's humanity to man", that is, by trying to be as humane as we can to others. Being humane means being:

compassionate,      forbearing,  
kind-hearted,      forgiving,  
considerate,      merciful,  
understanding,      mild,  
sympathetic,      charitable,  
tolerant,      generous.  
good-natured,  
gentle;  
lenient,

