

## EXPLORING OUR FAITH: SITTING IN THE BELLY OF THE WHALE

Jonah was a reluctant prophet to put it mildly. In that short book of the bible, a mere four chapters, we read his story. In the proclaimed excerpt, we do not hear of his initial reluctance to take on the task which God calls him to. Jonah was the guy who ended up in the belly of the big fish, traditionally a whale, when he is thrown overboard by the sailors of the ship he has taken to elude God, in an attempt to quell the raging waves the sailors fear will capsize them. Eventually, realizing during his time of reflection in the whale that he could not outrun God, he does what is asked of him – he goes to Nineveh, and delivers God’s message.



Who are the Jonah’s for us today, and are we listening to them? There is angst in the world, and since the New Year it seems to have become heavier. We are now 10 months into a global pandemic, the rumblings of which began a year ago. The ‘prophets’ of science tell what we must do to keep ourselves and those we love safe, and yet since January 1, there have been significant daily increases in the numbers of infection, even here in New Brunswick. To our south, we have seen political unrest the likes of which we had never expected to witness – the storming of a building that is sacred to their democracy by people who have been whipped into a frenzy by an egomaniac. On-line chatter and social commentators warned that this was possible – those ‘prophets’ have been sharing their concern about the increasing audacity of far-right groups and warn that this may well be a Pandora’s box difficult to close. Environmentalists, including Pope Francis, and a young Swedish girl are ‘prophets’ that warn that if we do not do something to counteract the effects of climate change, there will be irrevocable damage to the earth, yet we find it difficult to even separate our trash.

The people of Nineveh listened to their prophet, and “turned from their evil ways.” We appear to find it much harder. It’s a little like me and my commitment to healthy eating. I know how to eat healthy; I know I will feel and look better when I eat healthy, and yet I continue to plow through the chocolate and potato chips. Albert Einstein is believed to have said ‘Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results.’ Are we all insane?

Paul writes to the Corinthians, “The appointed time has grown short ... the present form of the world is passing away.” As I write this reflection, we are less than 24 hours away from the swearing in of Joe Biden as the 46<sup>th</sup> president of the United States – a man as opposite to the one who presently holds that office as you are likely to find. But he is one man ... and if we and the American people are pinning our hopes on one man to make changes that need to be made, we are going to be deeply disappointed. We all have changes to make ... we all need to take time in the belly of the whale and reflect on how our choices may contribute to the world’s anxiety. And then, we, even if we are as reluctant as Jonah, need to make those changes.

~Ellen Bennett, Archdiocese of Moncton Office of Faith Development

# Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
January 24, 2021

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



### Parish Office:

12 School Street Rexton, NB E4W 2E5

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Web: <https://ourladyofhope.weebly.com/>

### Office Hours:

Tuesday 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm,

Wednesday & Thursday – 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

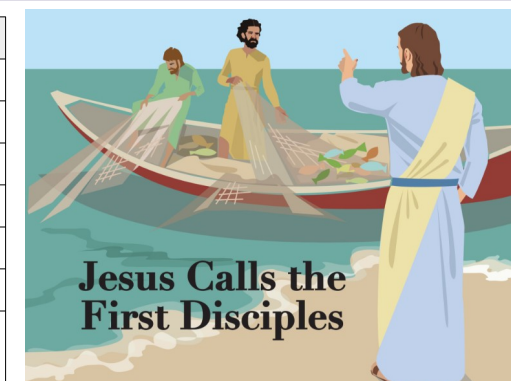
**Priest-Moderator:** Fr. Bill Bernard, C.S.s.R. 523-9788 (house) 233-6587 (cell)

**Assistant:** Fr. Bernard Gauthier, C.S.s.R. 523-9788 (house)

**COVID-19 RED ALERT LEVEL**  
**ALL ADVERTISED MASSES CANCELLED**

### Scripture Readings for Upcoming Week

<b>Mon</b>	Acts 22:3-16	Psalm 117	Mark 16:15-18
<b>Tue</b>	2 Timothy 1:1-8	Psalm 96	Mark 3:31-35
<b>Wed</b>	Hebrews 10:11-18	Psalm 110	Mark 4:1-20
<b>Thur</b>	Hebrews 10:19-25	Psalm 24	Mark 4:21-25
<b>Fri</b>	Hebrews 10:32-39	Psalm 37	Mark 4:26-34
<b>Sat</b>	Hebrews 9:2-14	Luke 1:69-75	Mark 4:35-41
<b>Sun</b>	Deuteronomy 18:15-20 1 Corinthians 7:32-35	Psalm 95	Mark 1:21-28



## PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

### Immaculate Conception

Loose: **\$61.00**; Envelopes: **\$640.00**; Heating for Church: **\$45.00**; CEWS Subsidy: **\$476.26**; **TOTAL: \$1222.26**

### St. Patrick's Building Fund:

Donation: **\$76.70.**

### St. Peter's:

Loose: **\$15.00**; Envelopes: **\$110.00**; Heating for Church: **\$10.00**; CEWS Subsidy: **\$145.33**; **TOTAL: \$280.33**

### St. Peter's Cemetery:

Memorial Tree: **\$50.00**

Regional Mass Account: \$10.00

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Please note your envelope donations can also be left in the locked box outside the parish hall, mailed to the parish at 12 School Street, Rexton, NB E4W 2E5, or dropped off at the parish office during office hours.

## WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

Alverie Robichaud, Charles (Chuck) LeBlanc, Roger Mazerolle, Brenda Beers, and all residents of nursing homes.



**INCOME TAX RECEIPTS** for 2020 are now available and can be obtained by:

- Providing the parish office with your email address so a digital copy can be sent electronically;
- Dropping by the parish office during regular office hours;
- Contacting the parish office to request a paper copy be sent to you via Canada Post.

Those who submitted their yellow tax envelope in the Sunday collection will receive their tax receipt via regular mail unless you would prefer to pick it up in person or receive it via email. Please contact the parish office if this is the case.

**COVID-19 Updates** will be posted on our website and Facebook page as we receive them, so please check regularly and share the information with those who do not use the internet if you can. If you would like to be added to the parish e-mail list, contact the parish office at [icprexton@rogers.com](mailto:icprexton@rogers.com) and you will receive updates via email.

## FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE

**NB Public Health has announced that Zone 1 (Moncton area), Zone 2 (Saint John area) and Zone 3 (Fredericton area) will move to the red alert level of COVID-19 as of midnight January 20<sup>th</sup>.**

**This will result in the closure of all our churches, as religious services or indoor gatherings are not permitted. All announced masses are cancelled starting January 20th inclusively.**

**We need to understand the apprehensions of Public Health and work with them in following the guidelines to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.**

**As a Church, we are concerned for the health and well-being of our faithful.**

**May the Lord bless us and continue to watch over us.**

**+ Valéry Vienneau, Archbishop of Moncton**

### Faith Experiments Express (via Zoom)

Learn about faith using science experiments! Designed for young people in grades 1-6, participants will be guided step by step through various fun and simple science experiments that will help them to learn more about faith and scripture. This invitation is extended to children from all parishes throughout the diocese. The next two sessions will take place at 6:30 pm on February 22, and March 22. Contact Karen at 387-4198 or [ihmccatechism@rogers.com](mailto:ihmccatechism@rogers.com) to register.

### The End is Nigh of an Era: Exploring the Book of Revelations, Part 2

Dr. Fiona Black and Dr. Andrew Wilson will answer your questions from the last session on The Book of Revelations and dig a little deeper into the end of the world images we see in

these passages during a second virtual session on Tuesday, January 19th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. If you're interested in hearing more or would like to join us for the first time, register with Ellen by Monday, January 18th and you will be sent the Zoom link to 'link' into the evening. **Contact:** [ellen.diocesemoncton@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.diocesemoncton@gmail.com) or 857-9952.

### "We're All in this Together": Exploring Pope Francis's encyclicals, Laudato Si and Fratelli Tutti

Please note this preliminary announcement of three sessions taking place during Lent on February 18, March 4 and March 18 with Sr. Denise Lirette, fj and Dr. Andrew Wilson. These sessions will be a hybrid of physical and/or virtual gathering, depending on what level of alert the Zone is in. More details will follow – for now note the dates.

### POPE FRANCIS TWEET:

**EACH ONE OF US CHRISTIANS IS A BRANCH OF THE ONE VINE WHICH IS JESUS; AND ALL OF US TOGETHER ARE CALLED TO BEAR THE FRUITS OF THIS COMMON MEMBERSHIP IN CHRIST. #PRAYER #CHRISTIANUNITY**

