

EXPLORING OUR FAITH: IT'S FAITH NOT LOGIC

Our first reading this week is very familiar to us as it is the second reading every year at the Easter Vigil. The story of God calling Abraham to take his only son, Isaac, and go on a three-day journey to Moriah to "offer him there as a burnt offering" always stirs up a lot of questions in me. For instance: At any time in those three days, did Abraham have second thoughts? Did he ever think that this just isn't right, and want to turn around and go home? Did he ever dare to question if this is really what God wanted of him? You know, all the same emotions and questions that we wrestle with when faced with a tough decision. Now, please understand that I am not equating trying to decide if God is calling you to a new job, or new city, with having to sacrifice your own son, but you get my drift.

I think most of us, at one time or another, have had to make a "fork in the road" decision in life which was going to impact more than just ourselves. In those times I have found myself looking to God for guidance, but I have to tell you, the guidance wasn't always crystal clear in the moment. It would often take time, require patience on my part and most importantly, trust.

I would like to share with you how my journey toward church ministry began. I had begun volunteering at St. Augustine's as a lector and was quite taken with the ministry. Then I was approached and offered the opportunity to serve on the liturgy committee as coordinator of the altar servers. I jumped at the opportunity, as, often times when you are starting out in church ministry, you say "yes" to everything, whether you have the gifts or the formation to do the job. Looking back, I had the gifts (raw and undeveloped as they were), but not the formation. What comes along next to this eager new volunteer, but the chance to study for three years at the Atlantic School of Theology in their theology and ministry program. Here is where the "fork in the road" comes and how this decision was going to affect more lives than just mine. At the time I worked for the Superstore, was married and had a 6-year-old son. The demands of the program were one weekend (Friday night and all day Saturday) per month for three years. One problem, working in retail I only had one weekend a month off. As much as I wanted to do this, I couldn't imagine asking my wife and son to make this huge sacrifice of family time. While I did pray for help in deciding what to do, I had a difficult time separating my voice in my head, and what I wanted to do, from where God was calling me. Then, I came home from work one Saturday, and there on the kitchen table was a study bible my wife had purchased for me. She looked at me and said, "you are going to need that for your course". God had answered my prayer for guidance using a voice I knew I could trust.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said "faith is taking the first step, even when you can't see the whole staircase". We can never see the whole staircase; most of the time, we can't even see the next step, yet we soldier on with so many little acts of faith. For instance, every night we go to sleep without any assurance that we will be alive the next morning, yet, we set the alarm. Despite everything we see around us, we walk with faith that God is still in control and that everything will be OK. Some people will say that this doesn't make sense and to them I say you're right. If it made sense it would be logic; this is **FAITH**.

~Mark Mahoney, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish Grouping

Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

Second Sunday of Lent
February 28, 2021

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Parish Office:

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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)

Immaculate Conception Mass Times

Sunday - 9:00 am & 4:00 pm

Tuesday & Thursday - 4:00 pm (Sacristy)

St. Peter's Mass Times

Saturday - 4:00 pm

Scripture Readings for Upcoming Week

Mon	Daniel 9:4-10	Psalm 79	Luke 6:36-38
Tue	Isaiah 1:1-20	Psalm 50	Matthew 23:1-12
Wed	Jeremiah 18:18-20	Psalm 34	Matthew 20:17-18
Thur	Jeremiah 17:5-10	Psalm 1	Luke 16:19-31
Fri	Genesis 37:3-13	Psalm 105	Matthew 21:33-46
Sat	Micah 7:14-20	Psalm 103	Luke 15:1-32
Sun	Exodus 20:1-17 1 Corinthians 1:22-25	Psalm 19	John 2:13-25



SECOND SUNDAY
in
LENT

PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Loose: **\$23.00**; Envelopes: **\$2180.00**; Initial Offering: **\$40.00**; Ash Wednesday Loose: **\$35.00**; Needs of Holy Land: **\$360.00**; Donation: **\$300.00**; Votives **\$120.00**
TOTAL: \$3058.00

Immaculate Conception Cemetery:

Funeral: **\$250.00**

Regional Mass Account

Masses: **\$120.00**

St. Peter's

Loose: **\$5.00**; Envelopes: **\$300.00**; Initial Offering: **\$10.00**; Donation: **\$100.00**
TOTAL: \$415.00

St. Peter's Cemetery

Memorial Tree 2020: **\$150.00**
TOTAL: \$150.00

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Please note your envelope donations can also be left in the locked box outside the parish hall.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR UPCOMING WEEK

Sat	27	SP	4:00 pm	For the People of the Parish	Redemptorists
Sun	28	IC	9:00 am	Faye Hudson†	Betty Wilson & Family
Sun	28	IC	4:00 pm	Edward & Mary Hannay†	Donna & Family
Tue	2	IC	4:00 pm	Odetta & Ron Sawyer	Dianne, Jeannine & Family
Thu	4	IC	4:00 pm	Special Intention	Emile Cormier†
Sat	6	SP	4:00 pm	Richard Murphy	Gerry & John
Sun	7	IC	9:00 am	Faye Hudson†	George, Vivian & Family
Sun	7	IC	4:00 pm	Edward & Mary Hannay†	Donna & Family

LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING WEEK

				Lectors		Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	6	SP	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Lois / Sharon Terry	Stella
Sun	7	IC	9:00 am	1 st & 2 nd Reading Intentions	Joyce Corinne	Gloria
Sun	7	IC	4:00 pm	1 st & 2 nd Readings Intentions	Ginny Bob	Stephanie

WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

Alverie Robichaud, Roger Mazerolle, Brenda Beers, and all residents of nursing homes.

SERVERS NEEDED With two masses each Sunday our dedicated group of liturgical ministers are stretched thin and we are currently in dire need of people who would be willing to assist as altar servers. If you feel called to this ministry once or twice a month, please contact the parish office. Training provided!

SNOW REMOVAL A huge THANK YOU is extended to those who have been attending to the snow removal at our church and hall this winter. Just a friendly reminder that the entrances to the church and hall need to be cleared even when mass is not held, such as during the Red Phase of COVID-19 recovery.

MAKING A GOOD LENT The Church suggests three traditional ways to make Lent a good one. The Church asks us:

- to pray more (so we can love God more deeply)
- to do some personal act of self-denial (to remind ourselves that Jesus asks us at times to put God and others ahead of our own self-centered interests)
- to share with those in need (because loving our neighbour with our actions is the second of the Great Commandments).

DURING THE SEASON OF #LENT, THE HOLY SPIRIT DRIVES US TOO, LIKE JESUS, INTO THE DESERT (MK 1:12-15). IT IS NOT A PHYSICAL PLACE, BUT RATHER AN EXISTENTIAL DIMENSION IN WHICH WE CAN BE SILENT AND LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD, SO THAT A TRUE CONVERSION MIGHT BE EFFECTED IN US.
 -POPE FRANCIS VIA TWITTER

FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE

Mondays at the Movies (for Lent)

Everyone is invited to join our film discussion series this Lenten season designed to connect popular films to our faith. On Monday, March 8th at 6:30 PM we will meet via Zoom to discuss the film, *My Sister's Keeper* (2009), based on the novel by Jodi Picoult. On March 29th, we will meet via Zoom at 10:00 am to discuss the film *Forrest Gump* (1994), based on the novel by Winston Groom. For each session, participants will have watched the film ahead of time. Contact Karen for more information and to register at or ihmccatechism@rogers.com or 387-4198.

Mondays at the Movies is a collaborative effort between St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Pastoral Unit and the Archdiocese of Moncton Office of Youth Faith Development.

Lenten Reflections from the Canadian Bishops

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops have produced a series of reflections for Ash Wednesday and the Sundays during Lent, in both English and French, which will be made available on their website each Monday during Lent. This link will take you to the (English) reflection for Ash Wednesday:

<https://www.cccb.ca/evangelization-catechesis-catholic-education/video-resources/journey-through-lent/>

