

EXPLORING OUR FAITH ~ LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me. ~Mark 9:37

Anyone who has ever come to church with young children in tow knows what a harrowing experience it can be for the parents. Depending on their age, there can be all kinds of encouraging words spoken by the parents to the child(ren) on the journey to church to impress upon them the importance of “being good”. Everything from lovely images of sitting and listening to stories about how much we are loved by Jesus and that we want to behave to show Jesus how much we love him; to out and out threats of solitary confinement when we get home and the withholding of food. I don’t think one approach is any more effective than another as the one predictable thing about kids is that they are unpredictable.

So, while I think we can agree that kid’s behaviour can be unpredictable, I think we can also agree that our behaviour is anything but. How many times have we sat in church listening to a little one acting up and wondered why the parents are not taking that child out? We sometimes feel that an unwelcoming glance in their direction might help them “come to their senses”. Now, while it is true that there are family rooms in our churches where parents can take children to help them settle, these rooms should not be the initial destination for these young families as soon as they arrive at mass out of fear that they may disturb someone. Also, many times during my years at St. Augustine’s and at Immaculate Heart of Mary I would see people come in for mass, put their hands in the baptismal font, feel that the water was warm and then turn around and leave for another church because the warm water was an indicator that there was going to be a baptism. Then, we sit back, befuddled as to why there aren’t any young people in church.

Several years ago, I was told that we need to welcome these young children in our midst, because they are the church of the future. While this may be true, I think we sometimes fail to remember that they are the church of the present as well. They are here now. I know from personal experience when our son was young that one kind word is all that is needed to be made to feel welcome. One Sunday morning, when our son was having a particularly rough day, after mass a little old lady came to my wife and I and asked, “Do you know why baby’s eyes are so wide?” We answered, “No, why?” She said, “Because the infinity they left behind is still in sight.” In that moment we knew that church was where we belonged, and that the odd tantrum was not enough reason to stay away. She reminded us that this wailing little bundle of joy was God’s gift, not just to us as parents, but to the entire faith community. I think that’s why the community is such a point of emphasis in baptism preparation.

It only makes sense that Jesus said if we welcome a child, we welcome God. After all, are we not all made in the image and likeness of God? I have said it many times before and will say it again. It’s really hard to hold an infant in your arms and not believe in God. How this little one is so fearfully made is far beyond our human capabilities.

So, let’s make a pact. The next time we are bothered by a noisy child in church, let’s remember that the parents want them to quiet down just as much as we do, and probably more. If we are going to make them the center of our attention, let it be because we are welcoming them and telling them how glad we are that they are here. It is truly the Christian thing to do and in our own best interest as well, because the old saying is true: **“If you aren’t hearing any crying, then your church is dying”.**

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

Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time September 19th, 2021

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Parish Office:

12 School Street Rexton, NB E4W 2E5

Phone: 523-6817 ~ Fax: 523-6868

Email: icprexton@rogers.com

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. Bernard Gauthier, C.Ss.R. 523-9788 Cell Phone: 889-0344

Immaculate Conception Mass Times

Sunday – 9:00 am

Tuesday – 4:00 pm (Sacristy)

St. Peter’s Mass Time

Saturday – 4:00 pm

Scripture Readings for Upcoming Week

Mon	Ezra 1:1-6	Psalms 126	Luke 8:16-18
Tue	Ephesians 4:1-13	Psalms 19	Matthew 9:9-13
Wed	Ezra 9:5-9	Psalms 13	Luke 9:1-6
Thur	Haggai 1:1-8	Psalms 149	Luke 9:7-9
Fri	Haggai 2:1-9	Psalms 43	Luke 9:18-22
Sat	Zechariah 2:5-9	Psalms 31	Luke 9:43-45
Sun	Numbers 11:25-29 James 5:1-6	Psalms 19	Mark 9:38-48



PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Loose: \$10.00; Regular Envelopes: \$900.00;

Mass Stipends (Aug): \$39.00;

TOTAL: \$949.00

St. Peter's

Loose: \$53.70; Envelopes: \$200.00; **Total: \$253.70**

St. Peter's Quilt Raffle

Donations: \$100.00; Ticket Sales: \$1101.00

Total: \$1201.00

Running Grand Total: \$1321.00

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	18	SP	4:00 pm	Wallace Best†	Lois & Richard
Sun	19	IC	9:00 am	Earl Walsh†	Leopold Richard
Tue	21	IC	4:00 pm	Faye Hudson†	Dick & Family
Sat	25	SP	4:00 pm	Ed Connolly†	Claire Murphy
Sun	26	IC	9:00 am	Earl Walsh†	Alban & Janet

LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR NEXT WEEKEND

				Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	25	SP	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Lois / Sharon Stella
Sun	26	IC	9:00 am	1 st & 2 nd Reading Intentions	Pat Judi

WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

Alverie Robichaud, Roger Mazerolle and all residents in special care homes.



CONGRATULATIONS to Huguette and Alverie Robichaud, winners of the 2021 SOUTH BRANCH QUILT RAFFLE! The winning ticket was drawn on September 11th. Thank you to everyone who sold tickets, purchased tickets, and made cash donations. **To date, this year's Quilt Raffle raised \$1321 for the parish!**

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CEMETERY We ask those who have put flowers on the graves of loved ones to please remove them by Thanksgiving (October 11th). Removing the flowers will prevent them from scattering around the church property and into the yards of nearby residences over the winter.

CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

OF NEW BRUNSWICK is offering two (2) Scholarships in the amount of \$1000.00 each, they will be awarded to one (1) student studying in a French educational institution and one (1) student studying in an English educational institution. Students must be entering their second year of studies or later, in a post-secondary program in the field of health care.

Information and application forms are available online at . Applications must be postmarked by September 30th 2021. For further information please email catholichealth@chpci.com.

DIOCESAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

MONDAYS @ THE MOVIES Join us for our film discussion series (on Zoom) designed to help us connect our faith to the films we watch. Our next two discussions will take place at 10:30 AM on September 27th (*To Kill A Mockingbird*), and October 18th (*The Village*). For more information or to register, contact Karen at 387-4198 or Trevor at 857-4879.

THE SEASON OF CREATION is September 1st to October 4th. It is a time to reflect on our relationship with the environment, how we live, and how our lifestyles impact the natural world, humans and other creatures inhabiting it. Examine what you really need, where it comes from, and whether it needs to be a "new" purchase. Pope Francis has urged us to live more simply, and to be mindful of our impact on and interdependence with nature.

ANNUAL LIFE CHAIN will take place on Sunday, October 3rd from 2:30 to 3:30 beginning on the corner of Champlain and Paul Streets. Arrive at 2:15 for prayer and departure from Burger King, Dieppe. We pray while distancing and in silence for the unborn and their families. For more information contact Sr. Cécile F. LeBlanc at 857-9414.

