

EXPLORING OUR FAITH – FAMILY

When I was studying theology at Fordham in 1964, a professor told us an anecdote from the diary of a 19th century missionary to the Far North. The professor said that it is a principle of anthropology that the more remote a society is from the centres of civilization the farther back in time it can lead us. When the missionary priest explained to the people the connection between sex and babies they laughed. How ridiculous, they said. Look at how often there is sex and how seldom there are babies. Everyone knows that the spirits of the ancestors enter the mouth of the mothers and begin to grow within them.

This conversation has been repeated over and over again in the course of our Western history, sometimes symbolically, sometimes straight up. The first time was "In the Beginning" between Eve and Adam. The knowledge passed on by Eve and the missionary was followed by what seems an obvious conclusion, namely that a man plants a "seed" into the woman who then gives birth to HIS child. Many consequences followed which are written in our history. He needed to know that the child this mother gave birth to was actually HIS child. As the child was his, it was no longer the village but the father who was responsible. "By the sweat of his brow" he provided for his family. The father needed to own things to do so. He even needed to own land for shelter. He needed to give what he owned to his son who carried his seed. Inheritance began so possessions could be passed on. It was believed that God gave to men alone the Seed of reproduction and therefore power and wealth became signs of God's blessing to fathers. This was understood as the "Natural Law" and defined the shape of families, while inheritance from father to son defined society.

I hear echoes of the earlier version of the natural order in Luke's story of the Annunciation. It was a way of expressing the divinity of the Christ. This earlier version of family life must have been known at that time. Luke also tells us in today's gospel that Jesus did not accept the name "Father" for anyone except God. We know that later on in his life the "powers that be" considered Christ's teaching to be quite threatening to their power.

As Saint John explains in his letter to us "we are God's children now" and this is His commandment "we should love one another, just as He has commanded us." Human power and ownership do not come from God. Only one commandment, to love, comes from God. All other rules and regulations are only human.

The Holy Family was a family grounded in love, not inheritance. Modern science has shown us how very complex heredity really is. Both the ancient theories of life were partly true. But what is now and always was true is that love is what creates Family.

~Agnes Beirne, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish Grouping



Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

Feast of the Holy Family ~ Epiphany of the Lord
26 December 2021 ~ 2 January 2022

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Parish Office:

12 School Street Rexton, NB E4W 2E5
Phone: 506-523-6817 ~ **Fax:** 506-717-0245
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 & 4:00 pm (until further notice)
Tuesday – 4:00 pm (Sacristy)

St. Peter's Mass Time

Saturday – 4:00 pm

Scripture Readings for Upcoming Week			
Mon	1 John 1:1-4	Psalms 97	John 20:1-8
Tue	1 John 1:5-2:2	Psalms 124	Matthew 2:13-18
Wed	1 John 2:3-11	Psalms 96	Luke 2:22-35
Thur	1 John 2:12-17	Psalms 96	Luke 2:36-40
Fri	1 John 2:18-21	Psalms 96	John 1:1-18
Sat	Numbers 6:22-27 Galatians 4:4-7	Psalms 67	Luke 2:16-21
Sun	Isaiah 60:1-6 Ephesians 3:2-6	Psalms 72	Matthew 2:1-12

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.
~Howard Thurman

PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Loose: **\$60.20**; Regular Envelopes: **\$640.00**;
 Christmas Env.: **\$130.00**;
 Heating Env.: **\$100.00**; Donation: **\$1,500.00**;
 CEWS Wage Subsidy: **\$1,105.78**;
TOTAL: \$3,535.98

Immaculate Conception Cemetery Fund

Memorial Tree: **\$40.00**;
 Donation *IMO Thomas Cail*: **\$20.00**;
TOTAL: \$60.00

Regional mass Account

Masses: **\$70.00**

St. Peter's

Loose: **\$10.00**; Envelopes: **\$80.00**;
 CEWS Wage Subsidy: **\$337.42**; Donations: **\$440.25**;
Total: \$867.67

St. Peter's Cemetery

Memorial Tree: **\$805.00**;
 Donation *IMO Dicky Murphy*: **\$20.00**;
 Donation *IMO Leon Vatuour*: **\$20.00**;
 Donation *IMO Marie Woolaver Guidera*: **\$10.00**;
TOTAL: \$855.00

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 WEEKS

Sat	25	SP	11:00 am	--	--
Sun	26	IC	9:00 am	Mass Cancelled	--
Sun	26	IC	4:00 pm	<i>Dave Hebert†</i>	Mina Richard
Tue	28	IC	4:00 pm	<i>Sarah Simon†</i>	Trevor D.
Sat	1	SP	4:00 pm	<i>Souls in Purgatory</i>	A Parishioner
Sun	2	IC	9:00 am	Mass Cancelled	--
Sun	2	IC	4:00 pm	<i>Nathalie & Frank LeGoff†</i>	Bill LeGoff
Tue	4	IC	4:00 pm	<i>Arlene Lane†</i>	Debbie & Dale Harnett
Sat	8	SP	4:00 pm	<i>Leon Vatuour†</i>	Evelyn Murphy
Sun	9	IC	9:00 am	<i>Terry Regan†</i>	Trevor & Cory
Sun	9	IC	4:00 pm	<i>Paul Robichaud†</i>	Sharon, Melissa, & Jocelyn

WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

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

LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING WEEKS

				Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	1	SP	11:00 am	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Lois Stella
Sun	2	IC	4:00 pm	1 st & 2 nd Reading Intentions	Corinne Vina Gloria
Sat	8	SP	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Lois Stella
Sun	9	IC	9:00 am	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Pat Vina Gloria
Sun	9	IC	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Bob -- --

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE Please note the parish office will be closed the week of December 26th – January 1st, opening again on Tuesday, January 4th.

COVID ALERT Please watch for ongoing changes to provincial health restrictions relating to COVID-19, as mass schedules could possibly be impacted by these changes. COVID-19 updates are placed on the diocesan website <http://diomoncton.ca/>

December 31st (No Mass)
 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
 Rexton.....7:30 p.m.

January 1st
 South Branch.....4:00 p.m.

January 2nd
 Rexton.....4:00 p.m.
 Elsipogtog.....11.00 a.m.



DIOCESAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH: COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION, AND MISSION

What is this latest Synod all about, you ask? In the latest Synod, opened by Pope Francis on October 10, 2021, the Pope has asked the Church to reflect on how we journey together as Church, listen and respond to the working of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the world, and how decisions are reached at all levels: who is involved, who is excluded and how can our processes be improved. In order to be a Church that walks works and worships together, it is important that we work together for the greatest amount of participation and respect. Stay tuned as we next speak about how this Synod will work.

