

EXPLORING OUR FAITH – WHAT IS JESUS GOING TO SAY TO YOU TODAY?

In today's Gospel, Jesus proclaims the "good news" to the poor. Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth, unrolled the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and found the place where it was written. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

In history, apparently, the meaning of "poor" to the people of Israel at that time was "for those who know their need for God". It wasn't a matter of who had money or who didn't have money. It wasn't a matter of who was rich and who was poor. Money and poverty have nothing to do with each other in the gospel reading. One is rich when one is filled with the joy and happiness of life. To be rich is to be full of life and this is what Jesus brings us. He is going to bring us the fullness of life. That is also what is meant when it is said that He will bring recovery of sight to the blind. Because in our ways and means, we go through life looking for its meaning, a purpose for us. At times we lose focus on what we really should be trying to achieve to be content. That day in Nazareth, Jesus said, "You will find me for I am the richness of life. I am the Son of God."

Pope Francis has stated "Dear brothers and sisters, let us make room inside ourselves for the word of God. Each day, let us read a verse or two of the Bible. Let us begin with the Gospel: let us keep it open on our table, carry it in your pocket or bag, read it on our cell phones, and allow it to inspire us daily. We will discover that God is close to us, that He dispels our darkness and, with great love, leads our lives into deep waters."

In day-to-day situations we can apply the gospel values like honesty, forgiveness, justice, caring for the needy. Henri Nouwen stated "Our humanity comes to its fullest bloom in giving. We become beautiful people when we give whatever we can give: a smile, a handshake, a kiss, an embrace, a word of love, a present, a part of our life...all of our life." We, as followers of Jesus, are pursuing the mission of the Gospel. We NEED GOOD NEWS...today, more than ever.

In preparing for this reflection I found this story.

A priest and soap-maker were out walking together. The soap-maker said cynically "What good is religion? Look at all the trouble and misery in the world after thousands of years of teaching about goodness, truth and peace - after all the prayers, homilies and teachings."

The priest said nothing. They continued walking until they noticed children playing in a muddy canal. Then the priest said, "Look at those kids. You say that soap makes people clean, but see the dirt on those youngsters? Of what good is your soap? With all the soap in the world, these children are still dirty. I wonder how soap is effective at all."

The soap maker got peeved and protested: "But Father, you ought to know that soap can't do any good unless it is used!"

"Ah exactly" replied the priest. "So it is with Christianity and its teachings. They are ineffective unless they are applied and put into practice."

By reading from Scripture, listening to sermons given at Mass, we experience the Word of God. We can ask ourselves "What is Jesus going to say to me today." How can I apply what I read/hear in practical terms? When people see us practising our faith, filled with love and reaching out in love, making our community a community of love, people begin to understand who God is and that's the witness that we give.... practising the "Good News".

~Cathy Kierstead, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish Grouping

Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time 23 January 2022

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Parish Office:

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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. 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	2 Samuel 5:1-7,10	Psalms 89	Mark 3:22-30
Tue	Acts 22:3-16	Psalms 117	Mark 16:15-18
Wed	2 Timothy 1:1-8	Psalms 96	Mark 4:1-20
Thur	2 Samuel 7:18-19	Psalms 132	Mark 4:21-25
Fri	2 Samuel 11:1-17	Psalms 51	Mark 4:26-34
Sat	2 Samuel 12:1-17	Psalms 51	Mark 4:35-41
Sun	Jeremiah 1:4-19 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13	Psalms 71	Luke 4:21-30



Jesus Teaches at
the Synagogue
in Nazareth

PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Envelopes: **\$40.00**; Initial Offering: **\$10.00**;
Heating for Church: **\$50.00**; Missals: **\$5.00**;
Mass Stipends Dec.: **\$33.00**;
TOTAL: \$138.00

St. Peter's

Mass Stipends Dec.: **\$9.00**; **Total: \$9.00**

St. Bartholomew's Cemetery Fund

Donations IMO Teresa Warman: **\$480.00**

Regional Mass Account

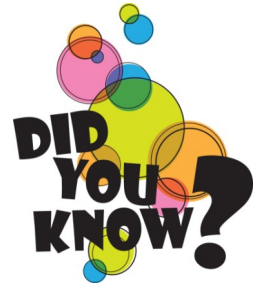
Masses: **\$60.00**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

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

MASS INTENTIONS:

Please note Mass intentions up to and including those scheduled for January 23rd will be offered by Fr. Bernard. Those scheduled after January 23rd will be assigned new dates. If you have any concerns or questions about a mass intention you have purchased please contact the parish office.



From the days of the early Church it has been common practice to offer Mass for the dead, as well as for others. Archaeologists have discovered epitaphs on tombs in the Roman catacombs, asking for prayers for the departed one. Numerous early Church Fathers witness to this practice. Recall from St. Augustine's "Confessions" St. Monica's one dying request, "that you remember me at the altar of the Lord wherever you may be." Countless Christians have made this same request of their survivors. (Source: Fr. Ray Ryland)

Online Resources to Nourish Your Faith

For Daily Prayer:

<https://pray-as-you-go.org/>

Sacred Space:

<https://sacredspace.ie/>

Scripture & Scripture Reference:

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/>

For Joyful Faith:

<https://bustedhalo.com/>

Sunday Mass (Redemptorists UK)

<https://www.rpbooks.co.uk/holy-mass-online>

Prayer, Retreats, Stations of the Cross:

<https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html>

WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

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

LEVEL 3 COVID RESTRICTIONS In response to Level 3 COVID Restrictions, Archbishop Vienneau has announced all weekday and weekend masses and Liturgies of the Word will be canceled January 15th-30th inclusively. Any additional updates will be placed on the parish voicemail, Facebook Page and website. Please note the parish office will be closed to the public during this time. Please call or email with questions, concerns or to arrange a pick-up or drop-off.

2021 INCOME TAX RECEIPTS will be made available in the near future. If you have not already done so, please drop your yellow income tax envelope into the collection basket if you wish to receive your tax receipt. If you would like to receive an emailed copy of your tax receipt please contact the parish office.

OLD PHOTOS OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OR ST. PETER'S If you happen to have in your possession any old photos of Immaculate Conception or St. Peter's parishes (particularly inside) we would love to see them so we can scan them and share some of the rich history of our parishes on our website and on social media. Please contact Trevor at the parish office if you have some photos you would like to share.

DIOCESAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

BREAKING DOWN WALLS: YOUNG PEOPLE, FAITH, AND MENTAL HEALTH Young people from around Atlantic Canada are invited to join special Facebook Live Event addressing issues around young people and their mental health on **Wednesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm (AST)**. Special guests for this **Bell Let's Talk** event will include Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick, Bishop of Antigonish; Joe Townsend, Community CARES Youth Outreach (Sydney Mines); Paige Cox, Author of "The Berlin Project: Breaking Down Walls," and John Ratchford, Faith Witness. Anyone can join the session through the website for the Diocese of Antigonish (www.antigonishdiocese.com/) or their Facebook Page (<http://www.facebook.com/antigonishdiocese>). This event is a collaborative effort hosted by the Diocese of Antigonish and sponsored by the Atlantic Association of Catholic Youth Ministers. For more information, please contact Trevor at 857-4879.

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH If you are wondering how you can be involved in the Synod: parishes have been invited by Archbishop Valéry Vienneau to organize consultative meetings in their parishes, as we strive together to discern the Holy Spirit's calls for the Church today. He reminds us that this first phase of the Synod consultations is of vital importance since it involves listening to the People of God guided by the Holy Spirit. The pandemic is presently making it difficult for parishes to proceed as they would like but stay tuned to your bulletins as parishes attempt to put these meetings in place. Service Organizations, Ministry Groups, Family Groups, Single Groups, Children and Youth, Seniors, Movements within the parish, and any other formal or informal grouping of people may also take the initiative to organize a discussion group around the questions found on the Vatican website.

LAUDATO SI' CAMPAIGN: PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW, GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH In last week's bulletin, we looked at the Popes who have spoken and written about the environment. In addition, numerous scientists, theologians, and other groups have addressed the issue. Also, other churches and religions have expressed deep concerns on environmental issues. Patriarch Bartholomew of the Greek Orthodox Church has spoken of the need for each of us to repent of the ways we have harmed the planet. He challenges us to acknowledge our sins against creation and to look for solutions not only in technology but in a change of humanity.

You are invited to our diocesan web site at <http://www.diomoncton.ca/en/news-item/diocesan-committee-laudato-si> to view the second presentation from our Laudato Si Committee, prepared by Sr Denise Lirette, FJ.