

EXPLORING OUR FAITH ~ TIME TO STOP SITTING IN THE DARK

“The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light.” These words from today’s gospel touched something deep within me. Recently I have felt like many of us are people sitting in darkness. We are tired and worn and it is often easier to see what is getting worse than it is to see what is getting better. Day after day the news is full of stories of deterioration, of systems we depend on that are hovering near the brink of collapse. Sometimes it feels as if we are no longer even the people who “walk in darkness.” We are the people who are giving up and sitting in darkness. We are reminiscent of the grandmothers in a joke that I remember from childhood.

*How many grandmothers does it take to change a lightbulb?
“Don’t worry about me dear. I will just sit here in the dark.”*

But for those who have given up, “for those who sat in the region and shadow of death” we are told, “light has dawned.” So, what do we need to do to see that light and to experience its warmth and comfort? Jesus answers that question with some of the first words of his public ministry, “repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” The Greek word that is translated as “repent” indicates “a profound change of mind.” If we want to experience the light, we must learn to think and see differently. As Jesus walked by the sea of Galilee, he called people to fundamentally change their way of thinking because the world itself has been fundamentally changed. Because God has become incarnate, the separation between earth and heaven is no longer unbridgeable. Light is already present even in the deepest darkness, we just need to learn to genuinely believe that it is there and look for it.

As Michael J. Fox said in an interview last year, “you can’t just wait for things to be great and then be grateful for that. You’ve got to behave in a way that promotes that.” We’ve got to behave in a way that demonstrates our belief that God is working for good amidst even the most difficult things that we are experiencing. When we express gratitude, life becomes better, and we have more to be grateful for. When we name the small ways in which God is working in our lives, we begin to see bigger and bigger things that God is doing. Repent, change the way you think, and you will experience the blessings of heaven in this life. Each time I feel stressed or distressed or hear or see something discouraging in the week ahead, my challenge to myself will be to ask myself: how is God drawing closer in this? And when I see how God is drawing closer, the second half of this self-challenge will be to embrace and celebrate that closeness by naming it out loud rather than focussing only on the source of my distress.

And if I manage to do this, it will be easier for those in my immediate circle to do the same, and over time, we will be joined by still more people and the light will continue to grow brighter. We are indeed fishers of people. As we change our way of thinking, those around us are affected. And as they change, the circle of influence continues to grow. We have felt it with the darkness, will we embrace it with the light?

~Pam Driedger, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish Grouping



Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

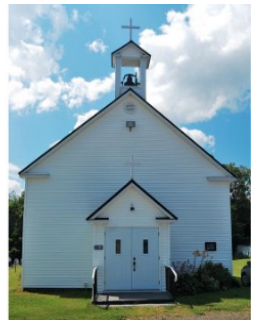
3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time 22 January 2023

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Parish Office:
12 School Street Rexton, NB E4W 2E5
Phone: 506-523-6817
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 – 11:00 am

Tuesday – 4:00 pm (Sacristy)

St. Peter's Mass Time

Saturday – 4:00 pm

Scripture Readings for Upcoming Week

Day	Scripture	Psalm	Gospel
Mon	Hebrews 9:15-28	Psalm 98	Mark 3:22-30
Tue	Hebrews 10:1-10	Psalm 40	Mark 3:31-35
Wed	Acts 22:3-16	Psalm 117	Mark 16:15-18
Thu	2 Timothy 1:1-8	Psalm 96	Mark 4:21-25
Fri	Hebrews 10:32-39	Psalm 37	Mark 4:26-34
Sat	Hebrews 11:1-19	Psalm 37	Mark 4:35-41
Sun	Zephaniah 2:3-3:13 1 Corinthians 1:26-31	Psalm 146	Matthew 5:1-12



PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Loose: **\$101.25**; Envelopes: **\$295.00**;
Initial Offering: **\$5.00**; New Year's Env.: **\$10.00**;
Heating Env.: **\$20.00**; **TOTAL: \$431.25**

St. Peter's
n/a

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED GENEROSITY!

MASS INTENTIONS FOR UPCOMING WEEK

Sat	21	SP	4:00 pm	Marguerite Little†	Cathy & Jimmy
Sun	22	IC	11:00 am	Alban Vautour†	Yvonne Allan
Tue	24	IC	4:00 pm	Paul Martin†	Huguette & Alverie
Sat	28	SP	4:00 pm	David Harnett†	Dwight & Jeannette
Sun	29	IC	11:00 am	Stella McIntyre†	Linda Teakles

LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING WEEK

				Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	28	IC	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading / Intentions	Lois Stella
Sun	29	SP	11:00 am	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Pat Corinne / Carla May Gloria

ROSARY SCHEDULE FOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

				Leader	Intentions
Sun	22	IC	10:30 am	Vina	1 st Decade: <i>For our clergy</i>
Sun	29	IC	10:30 am	Gail	2 nd Decade: <i>For our parishioners</i>
Sun	5	IC	10:30 am	Vina	3 rd Decade: <i>For our youth</i>
Sun	12	IC	10:30 am	Gail	4 th Decade: <i>For peace in our world</i> 5 th Decade: <i>For the intentions of parishioner</i>

WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

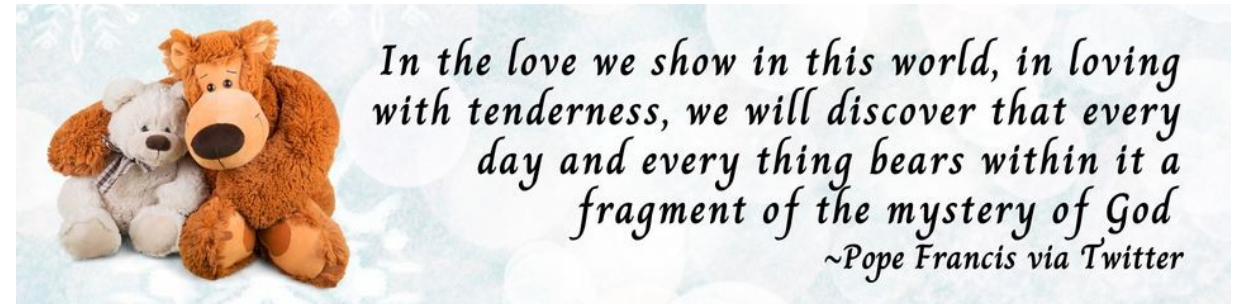
Alverie Robichaud, Roger Mazerolle and all residents living in special care homes.



SEEKING VOLUNTEERS to assist with cleaning the Parish Hall. We are seeking a group of volunteers to assist with cleaning the Parish Hall on a rotational basis. Many hands make light work, so the more volunteers we have the less demanding it will be for everyone. If this is something you feel called to, please contact the Parish Office or speak with Fr. Bernard prior to or after mass.



CONVERSATIONS AROUND DEATH AND DYING (REXTON) Since 2016, a diocesan committee has been offering formation and information sessions in response to the legalization of medical assistance in dying (MAiD). One theme arising from these sessions was that many of us are uncomfortable discussing the subject of death. However, honest conversations (about values, good palliative care, or advanced care planning) can help to improve the care we receive at the end of our lives. In response to this, the diocesan Committee looking at End of Life Pastoral Care is planning a session for **Saturday, January 28th at Immaculate Conception Church in Rexton from 10:30 am – 12:00 pm**. The session will be led by Pam Driedger, member of the Adult Faith Commission and a Director of Spiritual Care at the Moncton Hospital with Horizon Health Network. The aim of this session will be to help families start conversations about death and dying before circumstances force them to. Register with Karen LeBlanc at 387-4198, karen.diocese@gmail.com or online at www.diomoncton.ca → Pastoral Offices → Adult Faith → Formation Opportunities.



FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MONCTON

FORMATION FOR PARISH R.C.I.A. TEAMS We are pleased to offer a series of four virtual formation sessions led by Catherine Ecker, a lead Canadian voice in Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.). Each session will take place on Zoom and run from 7:00 – 9:00 pm. The dates will be **January 30th, February 13th, March 6th, and March 20th** and upon the completion of four sessions each participant will receive a certificate from the Archdiocese. This formation is designed for Parish R.C.I.A. teams and others involved in sacramental initiation but is open to anyone interested and would like to learn more. Contact Karen at 387-4198 or karen.diocese@gmail.com. Register online by www.diomoncton.ca → Pastoral Offices → Adult Faith → Formation Opportunities.

MOTHER TERESA: NO GREATER LOVE, the documentary film from the Knights of Columbus, will be airing in Canadian cinemas January 22-23, 2023. From information found on the internet, this documentary will be shown at Cineplex Cinemas, Trinity Drive, Moncton.

MONDAYS @ THE MOVIES Our next film discussion will take place on Monday, **January 30th** at 10:30 am via Zoom. We will be talking about the 1984 film *Places in the Heart* with Sally Field, Danny Glover, and John Malkovich. Mondays @ The Movies is a discussion group that meets regularly via Zoom to talk about faith connections in popular movies. Contact Karen for more information or to register.