

## EXPLORING OUR FAITH ~ WRESTLING WITH DEMONS, ATTENDED BY ANGELS

As our Church enters into the desert period of its Liturgical year I feel as though the world around me is entering into its fourth full, 365-days-a-year-tour through its own Lenten wilderness. Much of what I thought I knew or took for granted has been turned upside-down, sometimes in good ways but also in bad ways.

During Lent Christians know there is a journey ahead, but we also know we are headed into a certain celebration of life, light, and resurrection. We see the light ahead and knowing this makes the metaphorical journey through the desert easier to endure, but our real-life destination as a planet is less visible to me. Perhaps your Lenten practices are heroic, but I've learned I do not always succeed with vast Lenten proclamations.

**What does your desert look like this year?** Deserts are dry, hot, desolate places which are inhospitable to life. I believe these places exist within each of us, but am I brave enough to recognize where they are and visit them and the chaos they entail?

**Which demons will you wrestle this Lent?** My list is too long and uninteresting, but this Lent I will seek evidence of God in places where I see only despair and the absence of love. Children's television host Mr. Roger's said, "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news...my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'" I understand he intended it as advice for pre-schoolers dealing with scary situations on television, but it is also suitable advice for adults in 2023. I also need to wrestle with those times I forget my connectedness to God, to others, and to creation.

**Who are the angels that will attend to you this Lent?** When I lived at my parent's house my mother had what resembled a large, decorative, glittery, cloth ribbon affixed to the large mirror in the living room. I do not know when it appeared or how long it was there. In my mind it resembled an elaborate bow that someone would use to decorate a Christmas gift, so I catalogued it in my brain as a Christmas decoration. I vaguely wondered why the decoration remained up 365 days a year but I grew accustomed to it and rarely thought of it.

Then one random day I looked at the bow and saw it differently. It was an angel... a big, glittery craft-Angel, but definitely an angel nonetheless. Nothing about the decoration had changed, but something in my perspective had. I didn't tell anyone. *How could I possibly have been blind to that object that I saw nearly every day of my life? I will just pretend that never happened, who has to know?* Maybe this is how angels appear and attend to us, without our noticing. You need to watch out for angels, they're sneaky like that.

So as we "sit in the ashes of Lent" searching, praying, and attending to those in need, may we grow in faith, and in hope and may each of us emerge from the desert transformed.

~Trevor Droesbeck, Office for Evangelization and Catechesis



# Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

## First Sunday of Lent 26 February 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**

<b>Mon</b>	Leviticus 19:1-18	Psalm 19	Matthew 25:31-46
<b>Tue</b>	Isaiah 55:10-11	Psalm 34	Matthew 6:7-15
<b>Wed</b>	Jonah 3:1-10	Psalm 51	Luke 11:29-32
<b>Thu</b>	Esther 12:14-25	Psalm 138	Matthew 7:7-12
<b>Fri</b>	Ezekiel 18:21-28	Psalm 130	Matthew 5:20-26
<b>Sat</b>	Deuteronomy 26:16-19	Psalm 119	Matthew 5:43-48
<b>Sun</b>	Genesis 12:1-4 2 Timothy 1:8-20	Psalm 33	Matthew 17:1-9



## PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

### Immaculate Conception

Loose: \$132.10; Envelopes: \$760.00;

**TOTAL: \$892.10**

### St. Peter's

Loose: \$40.00; Envelopes: \$140.00; **TOTAL: \$180.00**

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED GENEROSITY!

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR UPCOMING WEEK

Sat	25	SP	4:00 pm	David Harnett†	Cathy & Jimmy
Sun	26	IC	11:00 am	Roseline Martin†	Huguette & Family
Tue	28	IC	4:00 pm	Mary Brown†	Dick & Family
Sat	4	SP	4:00 pm	Lucy & Dorrence Campbell†	Debbie & Dale Harnett
Sun	5	IC	11:00 am	Eric Johnson Sr.†	Elva & Family

## LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING WEEK

				Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	4	SP	4:00 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading & Psalm 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading / Intentions	Lois Stella
Sun	5	IC	11:00 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading & Psalm 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading & Intentions	Pat / Donna Vina Adona

## ROSARY SCHEDULE FOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

				Leader	Intentions
Sun	26	IC	10:30 am	Gail	<b>1st Decade:</b> For our clergy
Sun	5	IC	10:30 am	Vina	<b>2nd Decade:</b> For our parishioners
Sun	12	IC	10:30 am	Gail	<b>3rd Decade:</b> For our youth
Sun	19	IC	10:30 am	Vina	<b>4th Decade:</b> For peace in our world
					<b>5th Decade:</b> For the intentions of parishioner

## WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

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



**SEASON OF LENT** - The highest point in the Church's year of prayer is the Sacred Paschal Triduum celebrating the dying and rising of the Lord Jesus. We prepare for this three-day period during the Season of Lent and prolong it for the great 50 days of the Easter Season.

Lent has a dual purpose. It helps catechumens prepare for celebrating Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil and it invites those who are baptized through penance and prayer to prepare to renew their promise of baptismal faith at Easter.

During Lent, God's people do not sing "Alleluia" until the believing community has undergone conversion and is ready to sing this chant with renewed meaning during the Easter Vigil.

**#Lent is the "favourable time" to return to what is essential, to divest ourselves of all that weighs us down, to be reconciled with God, and to rekindle the fire of the Holy Spirit hidden beneath the ashes of our frail humanity.**

~Via Twitter



## FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MONCTON

### EMERGENCY FUNDRAISING FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE EARTHQUAKE IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

With the support of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), four organizations are launching an emergency aid campaign in response to the destructive earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. Among those organizations is Development and Peace that is well known in our region. Funds received will be used now and in the coming months for food, medical supplies, shelter, and other essentials to meet basic human needs and help families go back to a more stable life. You can make a donation online or by telephone: [www.devp.org](http://www.devp.org) or toll free number: 1-800-494-1401. You could also mail your donation to Development and Peace, 1425 René-Lévesque Blvd. West, 3rd Floor, Montreal QC H3G 1T7. Make sure to include your return address to receive an income tax receipt. Thank you so much for your generosity. ~Archbishop Valéry Vienneau

**DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: A MOVEMENT OF SOLIDARITY** Established in 1967, Development and Peace — Caritas Canada is the official international solidarity organization of the Catholic Church in Canada. We partner with organizations in the Global South that promote alternatives to unjust social, political and economic structures and support women in their quest for equality and justice. With the help of our 11,000+ volunteer members, we inform Canadians about the root causes of impoverishment and mobilize them to act for change. Our Lenten campaign, Stand for the Land focuses on people's defence of their territories in Colombia and Honduras. This year, Development and Peace — Caritas Canada's Create Hope: Stand for the land campaign calls you to support our sisters and brothers in the Global South in defending their land and territory. Do this by: Donating online at



[devp.org/give](http://devp.org/give) or during the Solidarity Sunday collection on March 26, the fifth Sunday of Lent. Your generosity helps support over 86 projects in 40 countries around the world! Learning more by reading the Mini-magazine and other resources available at [devp.org/lent/resources](http://devp.org/lent/resources). To learn more about our movement and to join us, visit [devp.org](http://devp.org).