

EXPLORING OUR FAITH ~ WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

When Jesus replied to a religious student asking Who is my neighbor? the story of the Good Samaritan was given to all of us. In today's gospel from John another story about a Samaritan is told. What do these stories tell us about our Faith and how does our faith guide us?

A letter from Archbishop Valery Vienneau back in December of 2014 states, "the dwindling number of practicing Catholics forces us to reconsider our priorities as Christian communities whose primary mission is to evangelize." Since today's readings seem to be aimed for adults deciding to convert to Catholicism, it seemed to me appropriate to wonder why many Catholics are moving in the other direction. What does it mean to become a Catholic, to be a Catholic or to stay a Catholic? These are not easy questions.

For me, being a Catholic primarily meant participating in Mass. Celebration is an important means of grounding oneself and relating to others and Mass is a wonderful celebration. Secondly, being a baptized Catholic has simply been such a big part of my upbringing and experience that it is like second nature. Third, being a theologian in the Catholic tradition. I understand spirituality through a Catholic lens, using Catholic language. For example, I am more familiar St. Thomas Aquinas than with John Calvin--both extremely influential theologians.



Also, to quote James Carroll (writer of the "Spotlight" series that was made into the movie):

"The virtues of the Catholic faith have been obvious to me my whole life...and I cherish the countless men and women who bring the faith alive...Around the world there are more than 200,000 Catholic schools and nearly 40,000 Catholic hospitals and health care facilities...through which selfless women and men care for the poor, teach the unlettered, heal the sick, and work to preserve minimal standards of the common good."

So why are so many people leaving rather than as in the days of St. Paul, being converted? I have a pretty clear opinion on the matter, and it is illustrated in the two stories about Jesus and Samaritans. In both cases, the rituals of the participants' religions prevented them from being open to the presence of a neighbor in those whom they had been told were inferior or tainted or sinful or worthless. In John's story it was a Samaritan woman; in our time it may be a Catholic woman, a man or woman of another religion or language or race.

A firm faith, not softened by love, makes for a heart of stone, like the Rock that Moses struck to provide water for the people.

~Agnes Beirne, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

3rd Sunday of Lent 12 March 2023

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Parish Office:
12 School Street Rexton, NB E4W 2E5
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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	Reading 1	Reading 2	Reading 3
Mon	2 Kings 5:1-15	Psalm 42	Luke 4:24-30
Tue	Deuteronomy 3:25-43	Psalm 25	Matthew 18:21-35
Wed	Deuteronomy 4:5-9	Psalm 147	Matthew 5:17-19
Thu	Jeremiah 7:23-28	Psalm 95	Luke 11:14-23
Fri	Hosea 14:2-10	Psalm 81	Mark 12:28-34
Sat	Hosea 6:1-6	Psalm 51	Luke 18:9-14
Sun	1 Samuel 16:6-13 Ephesians 5:8-14	Psalm 23	John 9:1-41



PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Loose: **\$194.00**; Envelopes: **\$645.00**;

Ash Wednesday Env.: **\$5.00**;

February Mass Stipends: **\$24.00**; **TOTAL: \$868.00**

St. Peter's

Loose: **\$10.50**; Envelopes: **\$110.00**;

Donations IMO Lillian Vautour: **\$65.00**;

Initial Offering: **\$100.00**; February Mass Stipends **\$12.00**;

TOTAL: \$297.50

St. Peter's Cemetery

Cemetery Envelopes: **\$50.00**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED GENEROSITY!

MASS INTENTIONS FOR UPCOMING WEEK

Sat	11	SP	4:00 pm	Lillian Vautour†	Debbie & Dale Harnett
Sun	12	IC	11:00 am	5 th Anniversary of the death of Lionel Comeau†	Geralda Comeau
Tue	14	IC	4:00 pm	Carl & Marie Welsh†	Dick & Family
Sat	18	SP	4:00 pm	Lillian Vautour†	Jeanne Warren
Sun	19	IC	11:00 am	Ernest LeBlanc†	Jeannine, Dianne & Family

LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING WEEK

				Lectors		Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	18	SP	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading / Intentions	Lois	Stella
Sun	19	IC	11:00 am	1 st Reading & Psalm 2 nd Reading & Intentions	Stephen / Gloria Rose Ann	Marilou

ROSARY SCHEDULE FOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

				Leader	Intentions
Sun	12	IC	10:30 am	Gail	1st Decade: For our clergy
Sun	19	IC	10:30 am	Vina	2nd Decade: For our parishioners
Sun	26	IC	10:30 am	Gail	3rd Decade: For our youth
Sun	2	IC	10:30 am	Vina	4th Decade: For peace in our world
					5th Decade: 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.

PARISH HALL As you may have heard, due to ongoing water problems the Parish Hall will be closed for public use (including parish potlucks, etc.) until further notice. A plumber is looking into the problem, which we hope to have resolved within a couple of weeks. A notice will be placed in the bulletin when the hall has re-opened.

MARK THE DATE: The St Andrew's United Church Outreach Committee invites you to join them for a **Community Crockpot Lunch on Wednesday, March 22nd, 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM** at the Rexton Lions Hall.

There will be Lunch- soup, biscuits, tea and coffee, cookies and conversation. **NO Charge for Lunch.** You may wish to make a donation towards earthquake relief in Turkey and Syria, as you are able. For Whom? Anyone who wants to join us. ALL are Welcome! We will serve until 1:00 PM or whenever the soup runs out...whichever comes first. No take out.

FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MONCTON

MASS OFFERING Effective April 10, 2023, a new rate of \$15.00 for Mass intentions will be in effect for the Diocese of Moncton. For over 40 years, the \$10.00 fee has remained the same. Please be assured that priests from here and elsewhere will celebrate all Masses reserved before April 10, 2023, at the \$10.00 rate.

~Archbishop Valéry Vienneau

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE - Colombia: defence of land and territory

Colombia is home to nearly 10 per cent of the planet's biodiversity, yet it is also one of the most dangerous countries for people defending their land and territory against exploitation. Development and Peace — Caritas Canada's partner, the *Asociación Campesina de Antioquia* (ACA, Peasant Association of Antioquia) supports peasant communities affected by armed conflict in defending their lives and territories and in building a culture of peace through filmmaking and art. This Lent, meet our solidarity visitor Raquel Soto, a participant in ACA's documentary filmmaking school. Learn more at devp.org/lent.

'THE HOUR HAS COME' 3-DAY LENTEN RETREAT

The 'Laudato Si' Committee invites you to enter this Lenten season with this scripture-based, evening retreat at St. Bernard's Church Hall. March 28th, 29th and 30th, we will start each evening at 7:00 p.m. and together, explore this beautiful world and its sacred community of life. Join us as we learn to pay more attention to God, to become more thankful and reverent, and through this, more deeply in love with our Creator and all that he made. For more information, please contact Karen at 387-4198 or karen.diocese@gmail.com

OPPORTUNITY FOR CATECHISTS AND THOSE INVOLVED IN SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Msgr. Paul-André Durocher, Archbishop of Gatineau will offer a virtual conversation for catechists and those involved in sacramental preparation entitled "Baptism and Confirmation: The Big Picture". This interactive session will be held on Zoom on Saturday, March 25th from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Archbishop Durocher's session is sponsored by the Atlantic Catechetical Association and is offered at no charge. For more information or to register, contact Karen LeBlanc at 387-4198 or karen.diocese@gmail.com or visit www.acacatholic.ca

Almsgiving, practised far from the spotlight, gives peace and hope to the heart. It reveals to us the beauty of giving, which then becomes receiving, and thus enables us to discover a precious secret: our hearts find more joy in giving than in receiving (Acts 20:35). #Lent
~Pope Francis via Twitter