

EXPLORING OUR FAITH

Stop Comparing and Competing: Choose Generosity and Cooperation

Every time today's gospel passage is read in church or comes up in discussion, I hear people say, "I hate that story." "It's so unfair." When the landlord asks, "don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money?" The consensus appears to be "yes, but ..." Yes the landlord can choose to be generous or he can choose to be selfish. But, if he is going to choose generosity, there is a right and a wrong way to go about it. And it is "wrong" to be generous to the "undeserving" if you are not going to be at least as generous, and probably more generous, to the "deserving."

The landlord's generosity can strike us as wrong or even, unethical; the idea that God would act in this same, "unfair" manner can feel intolerable. I regularly encounter people in the hospital who want nothing more to do with God, because God has allowed the "undeserving" to thrive while they, or their loved one, who have always tried to be faithful, loving, and good, are struggling with a life-altering illness or are facing an untimely death. It is easy to fall into the trap of evaluating our lives, our blessings, and our burdens by comparing our experience to that of others. We don't think of life itself as a blessing. Instead, we think of blessings as those things that we have that are above the norm, and suffering becomes anything that we must bear that others do not have to deal with. We take a competitive stance towards life and view life as "good" when we are ahead of others and "bad" when we are behind.

Today's gospel tells us that God is not working from this same competitive/comparative framework. God works from a framework of generosity and cooperation. The landlord of the parable gave each worker what they needed. If we only knew the story of one labourer, it would be a good and fair story, regardless of the time of day that the labourer was hired. Similarly, if we look at our own life story without comparing it to anyone else's it is often much easier to see the blessings even when we are going through a very difficult time. We have a choice, we can approach life from a perspective of scarcity, or we can approach life from a perspective of generosity. Our brains, our bodies, and our spirits behave differently depending upon the perspective that we choose.

This Saturday we mark the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This holiday, like today's gospel, challenges us to recognize the harm that we cause when we take a comparative and competitive stance towards others. The "truth" is that whenever we see our faith and/or our culture as "better than," or "more deserving than," the faith and culture of another person or group, we cause harm. In an effort to "protect" and "promote" (both of which are competitive goals) our Catholic faith, we have caused a tremendous amount of harm over the years. The commitment to "reconciliation" is a commitment to stop comparing and competing, and to choose generosity and cooperation. The labourers who received a full day's pay for a full day's work were challenged to let go of their own desire to "win" and really listen to the perspective of those who had not been hired for a full day but still needed a full day's wage. In a similar way, we are challenged this week, to let go of our competitive perspective and to really listen to the perspective of our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

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

Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time 24 September 2023

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton



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

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Priest-Moderator: Fr. Bernard Gauthier, C.Ss.R. 523-9788 Cell Phone: 889-0344

Immaculate Conception Mass Times

Sunday – 11:00 am

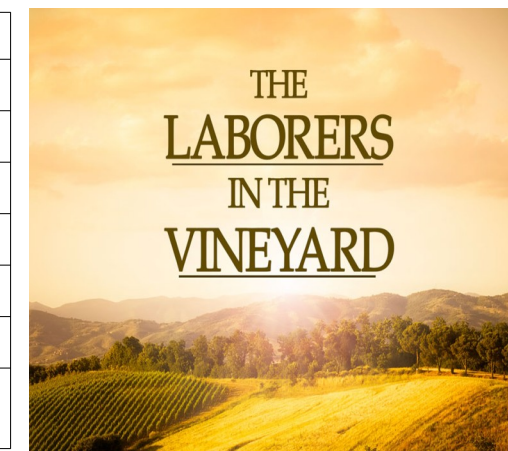
Tuesday – 4:00 pm (Sacristy)

St. Peter's Mass Time

Saturday – 4:00 pm

Scripture Readings for Upcoming Week

Mon	Ezra 1:1-6	Ps 126	Luke 8:16-18
Tue	Ezra 6:7-20	Ps 122	Luke 8:19-21
Wed	Ezra 9:5-9	TB 13	Luke 9:1-6
Thu	Haggai 1-1-8	Ps 149	Luke 9:7-9
Fri	Deuteronomy 7:9-14	Ps 138	John 1:47-51
Sat	Zechariah 2:5-15	JR 31	Luke 9:43-45
Sun	Ezra 18:25-28 Philippians 2:1-11	PS 25	Matthew 21:28-32



PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Loose: \$60.00; Envelopes: \$615.00;

Needs of Cdn Church Env: \$10.00;

Sale of Votives: \$255.00; **TOTAL: \$940.00**

St. Peter's

Envelopes: \$20.00; **TOTAL: \$20.00**

St. Peter's Cemetery

Donation: \$100.00; **TOTAL: \$100.00**

Thank you for your generosity!

MASS INTENTIONS – SEPTEMBER 23RD – OCTOBER 8TH

Sat	23	SP	4:00 pm	Howard Sock †	Mark & Lee Ann Augustine
Sun	24	IC	11:00 am	Gerald Johnson †	Shirley Curwin
Tue	26	IC	7:00 pm	Benjie, Angelico Sr., Emerito, and Carlota †	Anonymous
Sat	30	SP	4:00 pm	John & Melina Mourant †	Dwight & Jeannette
Sun	1	IC	11:00 am	Edward & Mary Hannay †	Blaine & Donna
Tue	3	IC	4:00 pm	Gerald Richard †	Dick Hudson & Family
Sat	7	SP	4:00 pm	Rodney Simon †	Karen & Wayne Clair
Sun	8	IC	11:00 am	Paul Robichaud †	Jeanne Warren

LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING WEEK

				Lectors		Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	30	SP	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm: 2 nd Reading / Intentions:	Lois	Stella
Sun	1	IC	11:00 am	1 st Reading & Psalm: 2 nd Reading & Intentions:	Louise Pat / Harvey	Judi
Sat	7	SP	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm: 2 nd Reading / Intentions:	Lois	Stella
Sun	8	IC	11:00 am	1 st Reading & Psalm: 2 nd Reading / Intentions:	Stephen Corinne / Marian	Gloria



WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

ALVERIE ROBICHAUD, CHRISTIAN ROBICHAUD

ROGER MAZEROLLE

ALL RESIDENTS LIVING IN SPECIAL CARE HOMES

ROSARY SCHEDULE FOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

				Leader	Intentions
Sun	1	IC	10:30 am	Gail	1 st Decade: For our Clergy; 2 nd Decade: For our parishioners;
Sun	8	IC	10:30 am	Vina	3 rd Decade: For our youth; 4 th Decade: For peace in our world; 5 th Decade: For the intentions of parishioners.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS Please note the Parish Office will be closed the week of September 25th to the 29th.

TUESDAY MASS CANCELED on both September 26th and October 3rd. Fr. Bernard has a medical appointment on the 26th and he will be away the first week of October (1st-6th). Sunday masses will continue as normal.

CATECHISM FOR 2023-2024 Fr. Bernard plans to offer catechism later this fall, so if you have children of catechetical age (school age) please contact the Parish Office or speak with Fr. Bernard. If you will be seeking sacraments for your child this year (first communion, confirmation, reconciliation) please contact either the Parish Office or Fr. Bernard as soon as possible to assist us with the planning. If you are able to assist in any way with the parish catechism program, please contact either the Parish Office or Fr. Bernard.

FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE

ALL THE FAITHFUL OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN CHURCH ARE INVITED TO A CELEBRATION OF THANKSGIVING IN HONOUR OF MSGR VALÉRY VIENNEAU who will be retiring after eleven years serving the Archdiocese of Moncton. To mark his departure, a Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated at Our Lady of the Assumption Cathedral on Sunday, September 24th at 2:00 pm, followed by a reception in the community hall on the lower level of the Cathedral. May there be many gathered to wish Msgr Vienneau well upon his departure and we encourage everyone to offer their own personal good wishes (a card, handshake, etc.) to a Pastor who has tirelessly served the faithful of the diocese. **WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th!**

BEING PRESENT: CAREGIVERS AND THE PEOPLE THEY CARE FOR The Committee Looking at End of Life Pastoral Care will re-offer a session designed for those who provide care to the sick / infirm, facilitated by Louise Ongo of Immaculate Conception Parish in Rexton. **The session will take place on Thursday, September 28th at St. Bernard's Church in Moncton, from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm.** Contact Karen at 387-4198 to register.

Each year, Pope Francis declares September 1st to October 4th to be the **SEASON OF CREATION**....a time for our Christian family to unite in a worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect Mother Earth, our common home. This year, the theme for the season is '**Let Justice and Peace Flow**'. Just like when the Prophet Amos shouted, '*Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-ending stream!*' (Amos 5:24), it is our time to act. Parts of our world (our own country) are burning, others are flooding, hurricanes are coming stronger and faster....what will it take for us to recognize the sacredness of nature? What will happen to us if we continue to try to squeeze out every last drop of oil, gas and coal from our earth? Are you ready to say, 'enough!' There is a global movement underway, asking all governments at all levels to stop any further oil, gas and/or coal investments. Entire countries have signed on....Vancouver was the first city in the entire world to sign on! **Are you ready to act?** To see what you can do, please go to this website <https://fossilfuel treaty.org> to learn about the worldwide 'Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty'.