

EXPLORING OUR FAITH – Cowboys, Kraft Dinner, and Racial Stereotypes

I recently had a conversation about watching old movies, specifically the John Wayne-type of westerns. In the 1970s and early 1980s you could watch a John Wayne western any Saturday afternoon on one of the two fuzzy channels we received on television in rural New Brunswick. I experience good, warm feelings when I think of these westerns, recalling memories of feeling safe, sitting on the floor in front of the television eating Kraft Dinner and buttered Saltine crackers prepared by my father. Meanwhile, on the television, heroic white cowboys toted guns, rolled cigarettes, drank whiskey from a flask in a manly fashion, and rode horses through valleys of great danger to save the woman, possibly from the villainous “Indians.” During this conversation about old westerns, one person confessed his wife likes to watch them still but feels she needs to hide them from her children and grandchildren on account of the outdated and stereotypical messages around race, ethnicity, gender, and sex.

If you think about it, there is a lot going on in these nostalgic television scenarios. In one respect they represent good memories of Saturday afternoons at home with my father, but in another respect, they are set to a backdrop of racist, misogynist images and messages; images and messages that were acceptable at that time, but by most standards today, considered offensive. A couple of years ago I encountered one young woman who told me she allowed her small children to ONLY watch these westerns (and similar movies) because they were wholesome and more aligned with what she considered to be traditional Christian values. It was her way of protecting her children from what she saw as the evils of a secular world.

For me, these examples raise a couple of questions. **First question, is it possible to have good feelings connected to something that was problematic all the time and I was unaware of it?** In my experience, I think we do it all the time. I tell the story about the Saturday afternoon westerns not as an indictment of the time or of my parents and what they allowed me to watch on television. We always see things more clearly in the rear-view mirror. I tell the story because at times I think it is tempting to do this with the Church of our past. I think it is natural for me to want to return to a place of safety and comfort, when the world seemed simpler, but unfortunately it is not possible for me to do this if I am trying to grow in my faith. While we have much to learn from our past, we cannot grow into the past, but out of the past. Through the grace of God alone, we have developed a broader understanding of God, Jesus Christ, one another, our lives, the world, and all of creation. Trying to view the beautiful complexities, contradictions and mysteries of God working in our lives through the lens of another time will not lead us to a place of spiritual growth.

Second question, can I compartmentalize my life into sacred and secular areas? I think that while it is tempting to do so, I have not found it to be helpful. To be perfectly honest, I do not spend a waking moment separating my life and the rest of the world into “sacred” and “secular”. Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM says that everything is sacred if we know how to see. He writes: *“Almost every religion’s history begins with one massive misperception; namely, making a fatal distinction between the sacred and the profane. Religions often put all their emphasis on creating sacred places, sacred time, and sacred actions. While I fully appreciate the need for this, it unfortunately leaves most of life “un-sacred.”*

I have learned that black and white assertions are largely unhelpful and gloss over the meaningful messages God communicates to me ways I have not even considered possible. Jesuit priest Fr. John Foley questions whether we are not in fact placed in the world... *“to be holy in it, to be friends with the things of Caesar? To work in the world of sin in spite of our own sins? ... What if, in spite of the voices within you that say you are not worth much, in spite of the setbacks of life, the losses, the flatness, in spite of all these, what if God created you with room inside you where God, out of love for you, can be quietly present?”*

As one priest I know reminds us often, God is at work constantly even through painful, difficult situations where we feel certain God is absent. Several years ago I attended a catechetical conference in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, where Sr. Janet Schaeffler, OP was the keynote speaker. She was a brilliant facilitator, filled with hope and enthusiasm for the future of our Church, but one quote (paraphrased) stood out for me above all others, and I return to this often in my own prayer and reflection: *“If all you see around you is evil and a world with problems that need to be fixed, then you are the one that needs fixing.”* If the first or only thing I see about you are your flaws and what is wrong with you, I am the one who needs fixing.

~Trevor Droesbeck, Office for Evangelization and Catechesis
Archdiocese of Moncton

Our Lady of Hope Pastoral Unit

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time 22 October 2023

Immaculate Conception Church, Rexton

St-Peter's Church, South Branch



Parish Office:

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Phone: 506-523-6817

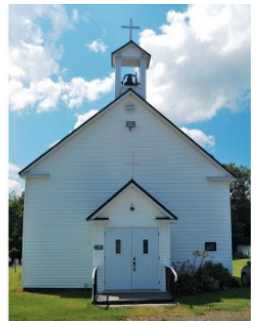
Email: icprexton@rogers.com

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

	Scripture 1	Scripture 2	Scripture 3
Mon	Romans 4:20-25	Lk 1	Luke 12:13-21
Tue	Romans 5:12-21	Ps 40	Luke 12:35-38
Wed	Romans 6:12-18	Ps 124	Luke 12:39-48
Thu	Romans 6:19-23	Ps 1	Luke 12:49-53
Fri	Romans 7:18-25	Ps 119	Luke 12:54-59
Sat	Ephesians 2:19-22	Ps 19	Luke 6:12-26
Sun	Exodus 22:20-26 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10	PS 18	Matthew 22:34-40



PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LAST WEEK

Immaculate Conception

Loose: **\$322.00**; Envelopes: **\$804.00**; Propagation of the Faith Env.: **\$410.00**; Hall Rental: **\$110.00**; Other Donations: **\$770.00**; September Masses: **\$40.00**
TOTAL: \$2,456.00

St. Peter's

Loose: **\$58.00**; Envelopes: **\$130.00**; Propagation of the Faith Env.: **\$35.00**; September Masses: **\$25.00**;
TOTAL: \$248.00

Thank you for your generosity!

MASS INTENTIONS FOR UPCOMING WEEK

Sat	21	SP	4:00 pm	Wallace Best †	Lois & Richard
Sun	22	IC	4:00 pm	Kathleen Thompson Warwarak †	Bill & Stuart
Tue	24	IC	4:00 pm	Delores Chevarie †	Geralda Comeau
Sat	28	SP	4:00 pm	Linda Fagan †	Dwight & Jeannette
Sun	29	IC	11:00 am	William & Normand Hines †	Bill LeGoff

LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR NEXT WEEKEND

				Lectors		Eucharistic Ministers
Sat	28	SP	4:00 pm	1 st Reading & Psalm: 2 nd Reading / Intentions:	Lois	Stella
Sun	29	IC	11:00 am	1 st Reading & Psalm: 2 nd Reading & Intentions:	Donna Gloria / Harvey	Marilou

ROSARY SCHEDULE FOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

				Leader	Intentions
Sun	29	IC	10:30 am	Gail	1 st Decade: For our Clergy; 2 nd Decade: For our parishioners;
Sun	5	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.



WE PRAY FOR STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

ALVERIE ROBICHAUD. CHRISTIAN ROBICHAUD

ROGER MAZEROLLE

ALL RESIDENTS LIVING IN SPECIAL CARE HOMES

CHANGE IN MASS SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER 22ND Please note the 11:00 am mass on Sunday, October 22nd will be moved to 4:00 pm. The Redemptorist Provincial Superior will be in the area for a number of days and would like to visit and meet with each community where a Redemptorist priest serves as pastor.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE Warning against a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza and ongoing conflicts elsewhere, Pope Francis has called for a day of fasting, penance and prayer for peace in the world Oct. 27. "War does not solve any problems, it only sows death and destruction. It increases hatred, multiplies revenge. War erases the future," he said at the end of his general audience talk in St. Peter's Square Oct. 18. "Silence the weapons. Listen to the cry of the poor, the people, the children, for peace," the pope said. He urged all people of faith to take "just one side in this conflict: that of peace. But not with words, with prayer, with total dedication." For this reason, he said, he has decided to call for a day of fasting, prayer and penance Oct. 27. The pope invited men and women of every Christian denomination and other religions as well as those committed to the cause of peace to participate in any way they feel is appropriate. There will be an hour of prayer starting at 1:00 PM in St. Peter's "implore for peace in the world," he said, and local churches are invited to organize similar initiatives.



The proclamation of Christ is one of hope. He knows the anguish and hope we bear in our hearts, the joys and struggles that mark our lives, the darkness that assails us, and the faith that we raise to Heaven like a song in the night.

Pope Francis, via X

FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE

We are excited to announce a return to our **THEOLOGY ON TAP** series of guest speakers. Our first guest will be Dr. Andrew Wilson who will give a presentation entitled **Scared Sacred: Halloween as Christian Carnival**. The session will take place on Monday, October 23, 2023 at Five Bridges (121 Pine Glen Road, Riverview) from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm. Please contact Karen at karen.diocese@gmail.com or 387-4198. You may also register online by going to www.diomoncton.ca → Pastoral Offices → Adult Faith Development → Formation Opportunities, and then click on the Theology on Tap Poster.

FR. PETAR LJUBICIC will speak at St. Bernard's Parish on Monday, October 23rd at 5:30 pm (Rosary at 5:30 pm to be followed by mass and talk.) Fr. Ljubicic was chosen to announce the Medjugorje Secrets and he will speak about this on October 23rd. Sponsored by the Ave Maria Centre of Peace.

HAS SCIENCE KILLED GOD? You are invited to a presentation and discussion about faith and reason in the modern world! October 26th from 7 - 9 p.m. at Holy Family Church (52 Falkland St. Moncton) Our guest speaker will be Eugene Aucoin, a retired human resources director and university professor who has spoken across Canada and around the world about nurturing human potential. Can faith in God and modern reasoning be reconciled? Eugene's book, *Has Science Killed God?* looks at three powerful ideas that will reignite your faith! (See: www.eugene-aucoin.com)