

Pastoral Letter

Fall 2020

Dear Parishioners,

It has been about six months since the pandemic has sent our world, our lives and our church into a 'whirlwind' and brought about great changes. And yet we have adapted to what many refer to now as 'the new normal'. Usually, September is the time when we resume our committee meetings and seasonal opportunities to be the visible church. However, covid 19 has disrupted this by making personal safety paramount. Our parish committees continue to lay dormant during these months. Hopefully, you have taken this time to think about your ministry and to 'keep in contact with those you worked with.' I am asking that ALL MINISTRIES wait until after Thanksgiving, October 12, to begin. After breaking for the summer months, the Revitalization Committee has resumed our meetings by zoom. Zoom is a computer program that allows our members to gather on a computer screen and talk about the needs of the parish and how to address them. We are at a crossroads with our pandemic. The new term now is 'pandemic fatigue' where people are tired of living in a 'pandemic world'. All around us cases have begun to rise and the worry of a 'second wave' is never far from our minds. And yet we will continue to gather, safely, following all protocol and recommendations that comes down to us from the Province of New Brunswick.

Pandemic Procedures: I want to tell you how proud I am of all of you for complying with all the protocols that we have put in place. And I am proud of the Pandemic Team. Each week, there are more people coming to pray with us and that is great. We need to remember that these protocols have been put in place to keep us safe. Even though our cases are very low, this is not the time to let down our guard. Thankfully, because of our dedicated Pandemic Committee who continues to help guide us through these difficult times. In ensure those currently working on this committee do not get 'burned out' we are looking for more volunteers for both worship sites to help. Therefore, I am appealing to those who serve in other ministries: member of hospitality, catechists, Knights of Columbus and so on. Mark Palmer continues to chair this ministry and may be reached by calling the parish office. Without them we would not be able to have Mass, Funerals, Weddings, Baptisms. On your behalf, I want to THANK them.

One of the responsibilities of the Pandemic Team is to ensure our safety. They are the ones who seat people in the church. In both Worship Sites, I have overheard pandemic team members ask people, "where would you like to sit?" Sorry, but right now this is not an option. We need to fill the church in an orderly, safe and quick manner. Please keep in mind that where people are placed cuts down on the cleaning procedures that need to happen after each gathering. Once the pandemic team has seated a parishioner, they should already have in mind where the next parishioner will sit. Once again, I am encouraging all parishioners and pandemic committee members to be patient and sensitive to all guidelines that have been passed down to us from the Province of New Brunswick. If we are not following proper protocol, we could be fined and/or shut down. Let us offer these temporary inconveniences up to the Lord in prayer.

Funerals: In the past month, I have had a number of funerals (average 3 a week). If funerals are held during the weekdays they will be scheduled at noon. Due to the limited number of people allowed in the church, funerals have become "invite" only. Families of the deceased are required to submit a 'guest list' prior to the funeral. If people show up and are not on the list and if the church is at its maximum limit, they will not get in. The same guidelines applies to Weddings and Baptisms and weekend Masses.

It is important that you call Bernice on Wednesday from 10-3 pm to book your seat. When you per-register, it takes less time to sign in, phone numbers, etc. Therefore I am asking for your 'understanding' if you are turned away. You will notice that some days we have a number of Mass Intentions offered for one day. We are doing this to keep up with the Masses that are coming in from funerals, along with anniversary masses. If you show up on Thursday at Noon and there is a funeral, mass intentions for this Mass will be re-booked.

Technology: I realize that some people (including myself) are not technically inclined and that many of us rely on the 'bulletin' method of communication. We have begun our weekly bulletin to help keep people informed and up-to-date. However, we do have a beautiful web page and faith book page (facebook) that is updated weekly. There are reflections, my weekly homily, and religious games for our youth! Please check it out... locations can be found on the front of our bulletin. I am pleased to announce that after our summer hiatus, we will be having another 'phone blitz' to check in on our parish members.

Finances: After a summer break, our Finance Committee met (by phone conference) to talk about our own situation. Not surprising, our collections and donations have dropped 24%. With that being said, we have cut some of our expenses. Bernice offered to reduce her working hours now that the three former parishes have been merged into one, has cut down on office procedures. She will be working Tuesday and Wednesday at St. Matthew's Worship Site and Thursdays at St. Rose Worship Site... her daily hours of 9-4 stay the same. With the aid of our Finance Committee we will continue to monitor our expenses in order to save money. There are three ways of contributing to the parish coffers: direct donations, PAD (Pre-Authorized Debit) or E-Transfers. I want to thank those who continue to support our parish during these challenging times.

On a personal note, I am grateful to God for all that has been given to us and I am grateful for all of you! However, I, too, get tired and at times overwhelmed and tired of the pandemic and its new procedures, protocols and masks. As well, I really miss the momentum that we once had with our ministries and liturgies before the pandemic. I want you to know that I am ALWAYS available for you. If you have an idea (or concern) for the Revitalization Committee, either speak to our Chair, Patti Blake or a member of our Team. It is best to write these ideas down and submit them for discussion when we meet as a group. At times, people will say, "Father, I have a great idea..." My response: "Please write it down and submit it to the Revitalization Committee."

These are difficult times that we have never experienced before. There is no book to tell us how to proceed. It is by 'trial and error' and our trust in God that we move forward. I am excited of what our post-pandemic church may be like. Therefore, I encourage all our faithful to think and to pray what this new beginning might look like. Finally, I want to assure you that I am keeping you in prayer and to keep on doing what you are doing, cut each other some slack and continue to pray for a vaccine and for each other. We will get through this... together...with God!

Blessings,

Fr. David

MASS SCHEDULE

Sep 29, 2020	Tue	St Matthew's Worship Site	7pm	Harold Carr
Oct 01, 2020	Thurs	St. Rose of Lima Worship Site	12:10pm	Parishioners
Oct 03, 2020	Sat	St. Rose of Lima Worship Site	4pm	William Parent Dorothy, Wilbur & David Doyle & DFM
Oct 04, 2020	Sun	St. Rose of Lima Worship Site	9am	Rick Lester
Oct 04, 2020	Sun	St Matthew's Worship Site	11am	Leo Oliver Gerry Dupuis Susan Roberts

Women's Society - the month of September we will be collecting school supplies for the Harbour View Sunshine Room.

Items needed are Kleenex, disposable / reusable masks, calculators, highlighters, post it notes, pens, pencils, sharpeners, markers, memory sticks, math sets, loose leaf, binders, page dividers. Thank you!

Please call the office to make arrangements for your donation drop off (506)738-2320 or (506)653-6850

Bottles for Life: A fundraising campaign for New Brunswick Right to Life. The garage at Saint Rose Worship Site, Holy Spirit Parish will be open before and after the weekend masses October 24 and 25th. Please bring your redeemable bottles for this important fundraiser. You can also contact the Saint John Chapter of New Brunswick Right to Life to have a volunteer pick up bottles from your home. sjrighttolife@gmail.com

Confirmation: The Sacrament of Confirmation will be celebrated by Bishop Christian, October 20, 7 pm at St. Rose Worship Site. Once again, following limited numbers allowed in the church, each candidate will have a number of invites only.

First Communion: We are currently working on setting a date for First Communion... please bear with us.

Prayers and Congratulations go out to Don & Adelaide Drew who celebrated 60 years of marriage on September 24, 2020

THE BIBLE THE HOLY LAND AND ME

Fr Fraser will be at St Matthew's Worship Site on Tuesday, Oct 6, 2020 from 2pm till 3pm, selling his book, **THE BIBLE THE HOLY LAND AND ME**. The book sells for 20 dollars. You will find many stories from childhood, school days, seminary, 50 years in the priesthood and a series of experiences through the Holy Land.

Many Bible references are included to enhance your reading

Sacrament of Marriage

This weekend Jeffrey Carleton was united to Jacqueline Mantle. Please keep them and all married couples in your prayers.

"Eternal Rest Grant unto them O Lord..." Our prayers and condolences go out to the families of Lorraine Wills, Claude Comeau and Laura Burrows

Holy Spirit Parish

St. Matthews & St. Rose of Lima Worship Sites

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 27, 2020

We are a welcoming community of growing disciples who share our faith, support one another, and lead others to Jesus.

***** OFFICE HOURS*****

Tue/Wed/Thurs: 9 am to 4 pm

Office Number - 738-2320 Office Number - 653-6850

Monday & Friday: both offices closed

CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: holyspiritparish@nb.aibn.com

Pastor – Rev. David J. Martin

Mailing Address: 279 Nerepis Rd, Grand Bay-Westfield, NB E5K 2Z9

St. Matthew Worship Site – (506)738-2320 Fax: (506)757-2948 Website www.holyspiritreparish.ca

Civic Address: 45 Dollard Drive

St. Rose of Lima Worship Site – (506)653-6850 Fax: (506)653-6865 Website www.holyspiritreparish.ca

Civic Address: 541 Milford Road

Confessions - The Sacrament of Reconciliation 3:15pm Saturdays at St. Rose of Lima Worship Site

DID YOU KNOW??

The New Freeman is available online on the Saint John Diocesan Website.

www.dioceseofsaintjohn.org

COLLECTION

SEPTEMBER 5th – 20th

Regular \$6,564.00 Loose - \$195.45 Building Fund \$1,382.00

PAD Weekly Average - \$1,848.00 PAD BLDG - \$172.00

Thank you for your generosity!!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

St. Matthew Worship Site – Please contact Linda Spinney at 636-0677 or email her at linspin@nbnet.nb.ca

St. Rose of Lima Worship Site – Please contact Andrea McGrath @ 672-4733 or text 651-6074, or email her at stroselima.religioused@gmail.com