

Fourth Week of Advent

The **Fourth Sunday of Advent** begins the last week of Advent, which takes us to Christmas on Saturday. The reading from Micah reminds us that of the seemingly unimportant town of Bethlehem, "from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." Luke's gospel offers again the story of Mary's going to visit her cousin. Elizabeth understands immediately Mary's situation and praises God saying, "How does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy."

Luke's Gospel is our guide this week. We have Luke's story of the Visitation. The story continues with Mary's beautiful response, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord." Then we have the naming of John by Zechariah. Finally, we have Zechariah's prayer of praise after being allowed to speak again. The scenes and canticles, or songs, which are part of the story, are so well known to us that we can miss hearing them with an open heart.

If we celebrate the **Vigil of Christmas** on Christmas Eve, **Matthew's Gospel** (though any of the gospels for Christmas may be used at any of the Christmas liturgies) offers the history of Jesus' family.

The first celebration of **The Nativity of the Lord** is the **Mass at Midnight**. The first reading is from **Isaiah**: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone." This powerful reading deserves a slow contemplation. The Gospel is from **Luke**: the journey to Bethlehem, the birth, the angels announce the birth to the shepherds. The second celebration of **The Nativity of the Lord** is the **Mass at Dawn**. The Gospel is from **Luke**: the shepherds visit the newborn child. "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." The third celebration of **The Nativity of the Lord** is the **Mass during the Day**. Here the Gospel is from the beginning of **John's Gospel**: "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth."

Daily Prayer This Week

This may be one of the most difficult weeks to be reflective throughout each day. This weekend may be quite full for many of us. Others of us may be alone, apart from the faith community we will join on Sunday and Friday, perhaps daily this week. While some of us have had guests staying with us and a house to clean, others of us will be reviewing memories and struggling, even a little, with being alone.

Whether this week is full or slow, it is a treasure-filled opportunity for reflection. Using the same means we've been using, we can let the richness of this week's readings and feasts fill the background of each day. Even on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day we can wake up, surrendering anxiety by letting the anxiety of these days take us to the scene of our Lord's birth. We can imagine the anxiety that filled the experience of Mary and Joseph. We can keep in our consciousness their trust in God. The Christmas music on the radio or at our church services and liturgies can bring the faith of these hymns and songs into our hearts. And, once it is there, these songs of faith will remain in the background all day long. When we are tempted to worry or complain, to be hurt or angry, to be frustrated or exhausted, the hymns will draw our hearts to rejoicing and gratitude.

This week can guide our hearts to reflect on the meaning of Christmas - the gift of self-giving love. We can ask ourselves, what generosity can come from the gratitude I have in my heart after celebrating the gift of redemption? Who in my world needs more love? What happens in me when I think about the people in the world who need my support?

All of us can imagine Jesus, Mary and Joseph going home. We can imagine their daily lives. We can ask for the grace to live in God's presence, just as they must have done, and for the grace to be sensitive to each other and care for each other as they must have. We can ask that we might imitate their busy lives, trusting and dependent on God. Looking on their hidden life together, we can grow in a desire to be more humble, in a peace with greater simplicity, in a courage to let God take care of us. Whether we experience the poverty of that holy stable or the ordinary simplicity of daily routine, we can enjoy this week as a special opportunity to be drawn to a greater closeness with Jesus.

[Creighton U Online Ministries](#)

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS 2021

"Do not be afraid; for behold I bring good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a saviour has been born for you who is the Messiah and Lord." (Luke 2: 10-11)

Dear Parishioners,

On our outdoor sign at St. Matthew's Worship Site are the words, "Advent is a time of hope." It is a message to encourage people, during these dark times that we are living in. I wonder how many people drive by this sign and think to themselves, "Yeah, right!" How many said or thought these same words as Jesus hung dying upon the cross... "Yeah, right!" Or those 4 words spoken by the angels "do not be afraid". In their fear no doubt the shepherds thought to themselves "Yeah right!" Two thousand years later, in our current climate that we are living in we may give the same response "Yeah, right!"

And yet, Advent is a time of hope... of great hope, and so is Christmas. This is our second Christmas amid the global pandemic. Yes, variants have arrived at our doorsteps, cases continue to climb and the fear of many is very real. Where is the hope you may ask? For me, hope is found in the protocol that we continue to follow, set down by the Department of Health; we are cautioned to limit our interaction with one another; we are encouraged to be vaccinated and to receive our booster shots. Scientists and specialists working in the field of immunization continue to advance forward with latest discoveries that will help us against covid 19.

But as well, hope is found in those who continue to serve and support us in both public and private business and industry. Hope is in the teachers, students and parents who monitor our current situation and are able to change their teaching/learning format at a moment's notice. Hope is found in the numerous branches of the medical field, who work tirelessly to keep up with the demands. Hope is found in us as we open our hearts to the needs of our community through prayer, donations and other support.

May we always remember, hope was given to us as a small babe who was born in a stable two thousand years ago. A bright light pierced the darkness as God came to dwell among us as one of us. The birth of Jesus is the embodiment of hope. As we celebrate His birthday, may we continue to as Jesus to help us, to recognize and to nourish our hope within us.

On behalf of our parish staff and the many volunteers, I wish you a blessed and healthy Christmas and a hope-filled New Year!

Fr. David

Synod Survey –You are encouraged to fill out this survey...as you are the voice...the people of God. This survey may be completed perhaps as a family or group or individually. **In the 'name' field just put Holy Spirit Parish as this survey is anonymous.** This process is open to all. This survey can be accessed on the diocesan website <https://dioceseofsaintjohn.org/synod-2021-2023> **there are spare copies in the entry way of each worship site. Please return completed surveys to the parish by weekend of January 22/23, 2022**

Eternal Rest Grant unto them O Lord..." Our prayers and condolences go out to the family of Florence O'Leary

COLLECTIONS - THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!!!
Dec 12, 2021 – Regular \$2,966.00 Loose \$166.25 eTransfers - \$70.00
PAD Weekly Average - \$1,694.00 PAD BLDG - \$172.00

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO DROP OFF OR MAIL THEIR MONETARY DONATIONS. WITHOUT THIS EFFORT WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MEET OUR EXPENSES.

MASS SCHEDULE 2021

Dec 21, 2021	Tue	St. Matthews Worship Site	7pm	NO MASS
Dec 23, 2021	Thur	St. Rose Worship Site	12:10pm	NO MASS
Dec 24, 2021	Fri	St. Rose Worship Site	2pm	Bill Fox
Dec 24, 2021	Fri	St. Matthews Worship Site	4pm	Doug Hanson Charles H., Lauretta Moyer & Son Charles
Dec 24, 2021	Fri	St. Rose Worship Site	6pm	Joseph Martin Kenny Martin
Dec 25, 2021	Sat	St. Matthews Worship Site	10am	Leonard & Eldora Martin
Dec 26, 2021	Sun	St. Rose Worship Site	9am	Joseph Martin
Dec 26, 2021	Sun	St. Matthews Worship Site	11am	Elize Robichaud Jimmy LaViolette
Dec 28, 2021	Tue	St. Matthews Worship Site	7pm	NO MASS
Dec 30, 2021	Thur	St. Rose Worship Site	12:10pm	NO MASS
Jan 01, 2022	Sat	St. Matthews Worship Site	10am	Doug Hansen Bruce Melanson
Jan 02, 2022	Sun	St. Rose Worship Site	9am	Peter Arseneau
Jan 02, 2022	Sun	St. Matthews Worship Site	11am	Parishioners
Jan 04, 2022	Tue	St. Matthews Worship Site	7pm	NO MASS
Jan 06, 2022	Thur	St. Rose Worship Site	12:10pm	NO MASS
Jan 08, 2022	Sat	St. Rose Worship Site	4pm	Emilie Thibodeau
Jan 09, 2022	Sun	St. Rose Worship Site	9am	William Parent
Jan 09 2022	Sun	St. Matthews Worship Site	11am	Victor McGowan

OFFICE CLOSED DEC 27, 2021 UNTIL JAN 04, 2022

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEUDLE

****December 24, 2021 – 2pm – St. Rose Worship Site (NOW FULL) ****

****December 24, 2021 – 4pm – St. Matthews Worship Site (NOW FULL)****

December 24, 2021 – 6pm – St. Rose Worship Site

December 25, 2021 – 10am – St. Matthews Worship Site – Please note - no 4pm Mass

January 01, 2022 – 10am - St. Matthews Worship Site – Please note - no 4pm Mass

PLEASE NOTE

As we are limited to 50% capacity at each worship site (Government Covid Rules) you will have to register for our Christmas Masses. Call the office to register. Also, upon attending your chosen Mass time you will be seated by our pandemic team so we can maximise our space.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation!

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday - Friday: 9 am to 4 pm
SMWS - Office Number - 738-2320
SRWS - Office Number - 653-6850
Monday: 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 (SMWS)
(506)738-2320 Fax: (506)653-6865
Civic Address: 45 Dollard Drive

St. Rose of Lima Worship Site (SRWS)
(506)653-6850 Fax: (506)653-6865
Civic Address: 541 Milford Road

WEBSITE: www.holyspiritrcparish.ca

HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

ST. MATTHEWS & ST. ROSE WORSHIP SITES

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

4th Sunday of Advent December 19, 2021 to Baptism of the lord January 09, 2022

Sanctuary Light at St. Rose Worship Site is in memory of Larry Joudry.
Donated by Iris Stevens

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Holy Spirit Parish –Please contact Linda Spinney at 636-0677 or email her at linspin@nbnet.nb.ca

PANDEMIC TEAM CHAIRPERSON

Mark Palmer – 506-635-5742 or email him at markj@nbnet.nb.ca

Gentle Path – Counselling Services – Pathways to Hope

Gentle Path Counselling Services provides counselling at the 28 Richmond Street Office and is now scheduling appointments at Horizon’s Market Place Wellness Centre in the Lower West Side

We offer counselling for:

Anxiety	Addictions	Grief & Loss	Domestic Violence
Couples Counselling	Sexual Assault Trauma	Self Esteem & Body Image	Sexual Identity & Orientation
PTSD	Parenting	Depression	First Nations
Kids & Teens	Blended Families	Anger Management	Work Related Issues

(Subsidies are available)

Gentle Path Counselling Services, Ltd.
Phone (506)652-7284 Toll Free 1-888-394-4022
www.gentlepathsj.com

Facebook: Gentle Path Counselling Services
<https://www.facebook.com/gentlepathcounselling-services/>

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