

## Second Week of Advent

In the **Second Sunday of Advent** we hear Isaiah write of a voice that cries out in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!" These lines from the prophet are repeated in the **Mark's Gospel** as we are introduced to John the Baptist who prepares the way for Jesus. John says, "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

December 12th is the Feast- of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in the U.S.

We focus on the first readings from the Prophet **Isaiah** this week. With the Babylonian Captivity, the temple was destroyed, the leaders of the people were taken away to Babylon and a remnant was left behind. A life-threatening desert separated the people. In this context, Isaiah proclaims God's vindication of the people in exile. The desert will be reborn. A highway will bring their liberation. And the signs will be that there is healing and peace. "Comfort, give comfort to my people," says the Lord. The valleys will be filled in the mountains leveled - every obstacle will be overcome - to build a highway for our God to come and save us. The people can hardly believe the good news. They are weak and weary of their captivity. Isaiah proclaims, "They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagles' wings." The people have been at a distance from the Lord for some time and were not obeying the commandments. The Lord says, "I am the LORD, your God, who grasp your right hand; It is I who say to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'" God promises them that if they follow his teachings, "Your descendants would be like the sand... their name never cut off or blotted out from my presence." The final first reading this week is a piece from the book of **Sirach** in which the prophet Elijah is praised. Elijah, who was destined to come again to restore order before the day of the Lord, is seen in the reading from **Matthew's Gospel** to be John the Baptist.

## Daily Prayer This Week

Finding intimacy with God in the midst of our busy lives begins with getting in touch with our own desires. Advent is a wonderful time to ask myself, "What am I looking for? What do I desire? What longing can I recognize in my heart?" The answers to those questions will be our best guide for daily prayer. The readings this week offer some ways to talk with the Lord about our desires.

We can begin by trying to get in touch with a part of my heart that is divided, perhaps with a desert separating the two parts. For example, is there a disconnect between my primary commitments and the amount of time and attention that I give to them? Is there a distance between who I say I am, and who I actually am? Do I experience something missing between what I believe and how I live those beliefs? We all have these contradictions and inconsistencies within us. These are the places into which we can let our Advent desiring grow. This week, we can imagine the prophet saying, "there will be a path between what is separate or divided or at a distance in your life!" "What is desert, barren, dry, life-less in you will come to life!" "You will find freedom and comfort, where you have been finding yourself in a captivity to pattern and routine, where you have felt weak and weary." "Learn from the Lord and learn real wisdom."

When one or more of these desires really strikes a chord in our hearts, Advent begins for us. Each morning this week, we can turn to our God, when we first wake up, while in the shower or getting dressed, and simply ask: "Come, Lord. Come into this place, into this embarrassing place of need in my life." We may be able to be specific and ask, "Please, Lord, come and be with me and bring life and hope into my morning as I face this meeting." As we go to work or do laundry or go shopping, or head home from work, we might ask even more specifically for the grace to love - to take the liberating journey across the desert and let the Lord bring us home to a place of comfort, healing and peace.

Advent is about our coming to a felt sense of our need for a Savior and letting our Savior into our hearts to save us. Advent comes alive for us as we identify our desires and let them be expressed as longing and expectant hope. Into this space our Lord comes with good news, healing and a peace the world can't give. As we taste our desires and longing grow, we can give thanks each evening before we go to bed, to acknowledge we are being given a great grace of a growing intimacy with our God, right in the mist of our very busy days.

[Creighton U Online Ministries](#)

**Eternal Rest Grant unto them O Lord..." Our prayers and condolences go out to the families of Ernest Harrity, Timmy Smith and Raymond Goguen**

## CHRISTMAS & NEW YEARS MASS SCHEDULE

**DEC 23, 2023 – 4PM – ST. ROSE WORSHIP SITE (4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT MASS)**

**CHRISTMAS EVE - DEC 24, 2023 – 3PM – ST. MATTHEWS WORSHIP SITE**

**CHRISTMAS EVE - DEC 24, 2023 – 6PM – ST. ROSE WORSHIP SITE**

**CHRISTMAS DAY - DEC 25, 2023 – 10AM – SISTERS OF CHARITY – RUTH ROSS RESIDENCE**

**DEC 30/31, 2023 - REGULAR MASS TIMES (4PM, 9AM & 11AM)**

**NEW YEARS DAY - JAN 01, 2024 – 10AM – ST. MATTHEWS WORSHIP SITE**

## SOMETHING NEW AS WE BEGIN 2024 TOGETHER...!

This past week I met with the various ministers in the Grand Bay-Westfield area. It was suggested that we begin a NEW tradition: Why not start the New Year by sharing a meal together? Therefore, on Sunday, Dec 31, 2023 following the 11am Mass at St. Matthews Worship Site we will be hosting a potluck meal at 12 noon. With brothers and sisters, along with their leadership, from the different faith traditions we will enjoy food and song together. What a great way to start the New Year by extending our hospitality to those in our Grand Bay-Westfield area and beyond. Of course this includes **all our** parishioners from Holy Spirit Parish. Why not bring a friend, your favorite dish (and musical instrument??) for a time of food and song. It is my hope that we will have some volunteers to help with this important ecumenical project.

Fr. David

***Congratulations goes out to Hannah Brezynski who will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Saturday, Dec 16, 2023 during the 4pm Mass at St. Rose of Lima Worship Site. The presider will be our Bishop Christian Riesbeck.***

## DON'T FORGET TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY!!!!

Holy Spirit Parish along with other parishes in our diocese will be participating in a parish survey about discipleship conducted by the Catholic Leadership Institute! **Please help us by participating in a 10-15 minute survey online.** <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/b000c5> . A paper copy is available in the entry way of both worship sites for those who do not have access to a computer. Please return the paper copy to the office in the **sealed envelope** provided and we will mail them from the office and cover the postage. **Another option...** you can contact the office and make an appointment to come in and use the office laptop to complete the survey.

The window to complete the survey is from **Nov 21, 2023 to Dec 18, 2023** and will ask you to reflect on your own spiritual growth and enable you to provide feedback on our parish's efforts to help us grow. All responses will be confidential and the parish will only receive information about the community as a whole.

We are trying to get the highest response rate possible. This information will be invaluable to our parish and the diocese as a whole. It will aid our various ministries as we plan for the future and strive to be the best disciples we can be. We will receive the results next spring/summer at which time we will share what we have learned with the entire parish.

Thank you for helping with this important project! **SO FAR ONLY 8% FROM OUR PARISH HAS COMPLETED THE SURVEY ONLINE.**

**MASS SCHEDULE 2023**

Dec 12, 2023	Tue	St. Matthews Worship Site	7pm	Parishioners
Dec 14, 2023	Thur	St. Rose Worship Site	12:10pm	Hal Arbeau
Dec 16, 2023	Sat	St. Rose Worship Site	4pm	Rachel Butler Stanley Gaudet
Dec 17, 2023	Sun	St. Rose Worship Site	9am	Fillippo Rocca
Dec 17, 2023	Sun	St. Matthews Worship Site	11am	Jerry Osborne June & Bud MacEachern

The Saint John High School Concert Choir, directed by Patricia Gallagher, will present a concert at the Saint John High School Denis Knibb Auditorium on Thursday, Dec 14 @ 6:30pm. Free will offering.

The Women's Society is in need of turkeys or chickens to make soup for Avenue B. Turkeys are terribly expensive these days, so if anyone is going across the border & would be able to bring back turkeys, we would really appreciate it. We would reimburse you. As well, we would love to have your turkey & chicken carcasses if you don't plan to use them. Please call Jill (639-0007) or Angie (639-6582) if you can help. Thanks!

**Donations for Horizon Recovery Centre** will run from Nov 25 to Dec 17, 2023. The Centre would greatly appreciate receiving: Bar soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, hair gel, hair brushes & combs, Toothpaste, toothbrushes, floss, safety razors, shaving cream, nail clippers, Winter hats, scarves, gloves, socks, clothes hangers, Gift bags, candy, treats for stockings as well as snacks for the men's Christmas party, Playing cards, small games, board games, DVDs, art supplies, coffee mugs, kitchen dishes, cutlery  
**Please NO mouthwash, aftershave, cologne** Thank you for your generosity

The Prayer Shawl Group is finished for 2023 – will return January 2024.

**COLLECTIONS - THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!!!**

Dec 03, 2023 – Regular - \$2,410.00 Loose Collection - \$268.00 Missals - \$144.00  
Food Bank - \$2100.00 Pro-Life - \$447.00 Avenue 'B' - \$100.00 Christmas Exchange - \$500.00  
PAD Weekly Average - \$1,713.00 PAD BLDG - \$148.00

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

**HOLY SPIRIT PARISH 2024 CALENDAR**

Thanks to everyone that participated in the 2023 Photo Contest. Over 70 photos were submitted which made for a great selection of photos for our 2024 Calendar. The calendar is now available for those who have already signed up to receive a calendar(s). The cost is \$18 each, payable with cash or by eTransfer (holyspiritparish@nb.aibn.com). If you have not requested one, but are interested in purchasing a calendar, please add your name to the list located in the church foyer. **More will be printed as required.**

**OFFICE HOURS 9 am to 4 pm**

SMWS – Tues & Thur – 506-738-2320 SRWS - Wed -506- 653-6850  
Mon & Fri: BOTH OFFICES CLOSED  
Mailing Address: 279 Nerepis Rd, Grand Bay-Westfield, NB E5K 2Z9

St. Matthew Worship Site (SMWS) (506)738-2320  
Civic Address: 45 Dollard Drive  
St. Rose of Lima Worship Site (SRWS) (506)653-6850  
Civic Address: 541 Milford Road

WEBSITE: [www.holyspiritparish.ca](http://www.holyspiritparish.ca) Email: [holyspiritparish@nb.aibn.com](mailto:holyspiritparish@nb.aibn.com)

Pastor – Rev. David J. Martin

**HOLY SPIRIT PARISH**

**ST. MATTHEWS & ST. ROSE WORSHIP SITES**

*“Where we WELCOME everyone, WORSHIP together and WITNESS to Jesus Christ”*

*Second Sunday of Advent*

*December 10, 2023*

**Sunday Exposition/Adoration: Dec 10, 2023 at St. Rose Worship Site from 1-2pm**

**THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION AT ST. ROSE WORSHIP SITE BEGINNING AT 3:15PM  
PRIOR TO THE 4PM SAT MASS**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION**

Holy Spirit Parish –Please contact Linda Spinney at 506-636-0677 or email her at  
[holyspiriteducationsj@gmail.com](mailto:holyspiriteducationsj@gmail.com)

**Gentle Path – Counselling Services – Pathways to Hope**

Gentle Path Counselling Services provides counselling at the 199 Chesley Drive, Saint John 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](http://www.gentlepathsj.com)

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

Charitable # - 85377 7175 R0001