

## The Sixth Week of Ordinary Time

On the **Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time** we hear **Matthew's Gospel**. Jesus speaks to his followers about religious laws and also of our own relationships. Go to offer gifts to God at the altar, but first, Jesus says, "Leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

Tuesday is the **Memorial of Saint Cyril, monk, and Saint Methodius, bishop**.

We continue with first readings from the **Book of Genesis**. This is the beginning of the story of salvation: Cain and Abel, Noah and the Ark, the Tower of Babel. The week concludes with the **Letter to the Hebrews'** summary of the beliefs of our ancestors in the faith.

As we follow Jesus' ministry in **Mark's Gospel**, we witness Jesus' discouragement as he again encounters the challenges of the religious leaders: "he sighed from the depth of his spirit." As they retreat to the other side of the lake, Jesus warns his disciples against the rebellious "leaven" of the Pharisees and reminds them of the meaning of the miracle of the loaves - he is like God, come to feed them in whatever desert journey they encounter. Jesus heals a blind man who first sees only in a distorted way - a scene which begins the journey to Jerusalem on which Jesus tries to heal the blindness of his disciples. Peter acknowledges Jesus as the Christ but rejects Jesus' instruction that he must suffer and die before the resurrection. Jesus rebukes him and instructs his disciples about their discipleship. It is about taking up our own cross with him: "whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the Gospel will save it." Then Jesus takes Peter, James and John and shows them his glory, to prepare them for the scandal of the cross.

### Daily Prayer

We can feel the tension in this week's readings. Jesus is trying to warn his disciples - and us - about the rebellious style of the Pharisees, about hypocrisy. And, he is trying to heal the blindness of his disciples - and our blindness - about what his mission is all about. He has come to free us from sin and the captivity we have to all kinds of self-centered patterns.

So when we stay reflective this week, we can become more conscious of how we rebel from the path of Jesus, from joining him in becoming less selfish. When we begin our days this week, we can ask, "Lord, help me see the ways I'm too self-centered this week. Help me notice the needs of those you place in my life. Stretch my heart to love more today." It is simple, but it begins to change our focus.

As we go through the week, we can pay closer attention to our resistance, the places we catch ourselves holding back. We can open our eyes to see the patterns in our lives that we might not have paid attention to before. It doesn't have to be serious evil we are choosing. It might just be ways in which we are avoiding losing our lives for him. Once we focus, start paying attention to the daily choices we make, our day becomes a day of prayer. We can be in communion with the Lord throughout the day because it becomes a day of dialogue, in the midst of all the busyness.

"Lord, as I put on this sweater, I'm aware how I just spoke to Helen. I'm sorry. That was all about my fear, wasn't it? I cut her off because I was just afraid of what she was asking of me. I became more aware of the cost to me than anything else. Please help me to continue to see how I respond to people. Please calm my fears." We can get in the habit of doing this kind of prayer every day, right where we are, in very brief moments. Finding intimacy with God in the midst of our daily lives is the goal of this kind of prayer.

All of this is reinforced by our prayer of gratitude each night. If we can feel the need for this kind of communion with our Lord each day, and thank God for it each night, there is no question that we will be developing a new pattern in our life. We tend to continue to do what we enjoy. And gratitude feeds even more openness and generosity.

[Creighton U Online Ministries](#)

**Cribbage is held on Wednesday Evenings at St. Matthews Church Hall beginning at 7pm.**

## LENT 2024

### "JOURNEY TO A MERCIFUL HEART"

"Fr. David, where do we get our themes for Lent (and Advent)?" A very good question asked of me when standing in line to pay for a grocery order. My answer, "A combination of what is going on in the world, Sacred Scripture, prayer, words that have caught my attention in different articles that I have read, or even from conversations that I have had with people." As you know every year during Lent we have had some sort of theme to help guide us during the forty days of preparation for the ultimate feast of Easter. This year, I asked the Liturgy Committee who always work so hard in planning liturgies throughout the year, to come up with a theme for this Lenten Season. They were given time between meetings to pray, reflect and to offer their own suggestion. Excellent suggestions were shared around the meeting table that could have taken us in a number of different and faith provoking directions. After sharing our ideas, we talked each one out. Eventually with shared ideas, we came up with our Lenten Theme for 2024. "**Journey to a Merciful Heart.**" A 'Merciful Heart' refers to a heart that is full of mercy, which is **kindness, forward forgiveness, and empathy.**

Throughout Sacred Scriptures, we hear about a God who's heart is 'a merciful one'... especially in the New Testament where Jesus taught us that God's heart is merciful, and so should ours. One of the most famous verses is from the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." In another instance, Jesus tells his followers to "be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Again, Jesus also demonstrated mercy in his ministry. For example, he showed compassion to the sick and the poor and forgave those who sinned against him. By being merciful to others, we obtain mercy ourselves and help others in need.

To cultivate a merciful heart in a cruel world, we need to do our own work of accountability by working on our interior life. Lent is the time for clearing out any of our own resentment, judgment, pride and sinfulness, gradually "taking the speck out of our own eye" so we can remove it from another, overflowing an increased abundance of mercy, love and forgiveness for others who haven't figured out how to do that yet.

We are given 40 days to begin this journey to a merciful heart. Throughout the Lenten weeks of preparation for Easter, we will be guided and supported and challenged on our journey to a merciful heart through Mass, Reconciliation and a time for self-reflection. I encourage you to look at your life, and ask yourself, "Is my life a journey toward a merciful heart?" "How do I reveal that?"

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I pray that this time of preparation for Easter will be a time of grace for all of us. May we begin this journey of Lent, in solidarity with our God and by aiding one another on the same '**journey... to a merciful heart.**' Have a Blessed and fruitful Lent everyone.

Fr. David

**Eternal Rest Grant unto them O Lord..." Our prayers and condolences go out to the families of Kathleen Jennings and Wayne Stymiest (husband of Francine Doiron)**

### 2023 ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

It is that time of year where we ask you to submit a report from your respective committees so we can prepare our Accountability Report for the parish.

**Please submit your Report to the office via email by February 29, 2024.**

### TALENT SHOW FUNDRAISER

**Do you have a talent?? A talent show is planned for the afternoon of Saturday May 25 at St. Matthew's worship site, as a fundraiser for St. Augustine's Memorial Garden, & we are looking for talent. Do you juggle, are you a mime, do you sing or dance or practice a martial art? What about a monologue, stand up comedy, or is acting your passion? Are you a ventriloquist, are you in a hand bell group, or are you a yo-yo pro? If you have a talent that you would like to perform at our talent show, please contact Jill at (506) 639-0007 or [jillrobillard5@gmail.com](mailto:jillrobillard5@gmail.com) or Patti (506) 738-8264 or [pattiblake07@outlook.com](mailto:pattiblake07@outlook.com)**

**MASS SCHEDULE 2024**

(Due to unforeseen circumstances pre-booked Masses may have to be rescheduled)

Feb 14, 2024	Wed	St. Rose Worship Site <b>(Ash Wednesday)</b>	12:10pm	Eldora & Leonard Martin
Feb 14, 2024	Wed	St. Matthews Worship Site <b>(Ash Wednesday)</b>	7pm	Parishioners
Feb 15, 2024	Thur	St. Rose Worship Site	12:10pm	Frances O'Leary
Feb 17, 2024	Sat	St. Rose Worship Site	4pm	Frances Hooley Tex Hughes
Feb 18, 2024	Sun	St. Rose Worship Site	9am	Parishioners
Feb 18, 2024	Sun	St. Matthews Worship Site	11am	Pat Chaisson Blanche McGowen

**SHROVE TUESDAY SUPPER – FEB 13, 2024**

Bring your family & friends and join us at The Church of the Resurrection, 20 MacDonald Ave, Grand Bay-Westfield, for a SIT DOWN DINNER between the hours of 4:30 – 6:00PM. Adults are \$10 and kids under 12 are \$5. Enjoy Pancakes, sausages, beans and dessert!! YUMMY!!!

The Women's Society is looking for someone with carpentry skills willing to donate their time to build some shelves in the rectory hall. We will cover the cost of material. Please contact Jill if you can help: 506-639-0007 or [jillrobillard5@gmail.com](mailto:jillrobillard5@gmail.com)

The Women's Society is looking for someone to deliver the monthly soup to Ave B. If you are interested or have questions please contact Jill at 506-639-0007 or [jillrobillard5@gmail.com](mailto:jillrobillard5@gmail.com)

**Evening Prayer at Carmel Chapel**, 103 Burpee Avenue, last Wednesday of each month: Jan-June, 2024  
Instrumental music by a local musician at 6:00 pm; Ritual begins at 6:30 pm. PARKING: Both sides of Burpee Ave. and Rocmaura lot off Park Street. Contact Info: 634-4970 weekdays.

Feb 28 \* Mar 27 \* Apr 24 \* May 29 \* June 26

**The Prayer Shawl Group - Wednesday mornings from 10-12 at the Rectory Hall, 279 Nerepis Road, Grand Bay-Westfield. Call Jill (639-0007) or Angie (639-6582) if you're interested. New people always welcomed!! Yarn, needles, & patterns will be supplied; you can create from the comfort of your own home.**

**COLLECTIONS – Feb 04, 2024**

Regular - \$2,655.00 Loose - \$294.25 Initial Offering - \$5.00 New Year's - \$5.00  
eTransfer - \$200.00 Indigenous \$85.00 Building Fund - \$856.00  
PAD Weekly Average - \$1,713.00 PAD BLDG - \$148.00  
**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

**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”*

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Feb 11, 2024**

**Sunday Exposition/Adoration: Feb 11, 25, 2024  
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)

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<https://www.facebook.com/gentlepathcounselling-services/>

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