

February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> marks the beginning of Lent. In his Lenten message to the Universal Church, Pope Francis begins with the quote: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem" (Mt. 20:18). In doing so, he not gives direction to our lives, but offers us a clear purpose for the coming days.

"Behold". This word is used on several occasions in the Gospel narratives, most notably in John the Baptist's proclamation, "Behold, here it is the Lamb of God!" A phrase so re-echoed in the Church's Liturgy, when the presiding priest holds up the Body and Blood of Christ prior to the distribution of Holy Communion. The word is telling us to take notice, to ready ourselves and to pay attention; three important dispositions of the Season of Lent.

"We are going up". Notice that the road we travel is not a solitary journey. Far from being a personal discipline that separates us from others, the spiritual journey, and the journey of Lent, is a shared journey that brings us in closer proximity to our brothers and sisters in Christ, and even to our brothers and sisters of other religions and beliefs. Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are not meant to isolate us into a false sense of suffering and deprivation, but bring us closer into communion with the sufferings of others and give voice to the hope that is ours as a community of faith.

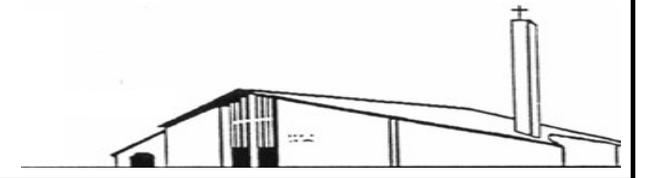
"To Jerusalem." God gives direction to our journey. In a world, where so many of us have had the experience of going in circles or running helter-skelter with little focus, Jesus sets our eyes on the City of God, a place known for both his passion, death, and resurrection, but also representatives of our True Eternal Home. Together with the sufferings we are asked to carry, as individuals and as Church, some caused by our own sinfulness, we are strengthened by the one who leads us, and bears our sufferings on the cross. Let us never fail to heed the invitation of Christ: "Pick up your cross and follow me."

It is for this reason that I ask you to consider your Lenten actions in the context of family, parish and community prayer, fasting and charitable works. For it is, when we walk together with Christ, as brothers and sisters all. that our lives take on greater meaning and our "Journey to Jerusalem" leads to Easter Joy.

Fraternally in Christ,  
Bishop Bart van Roijen

## St. Stephen's Parish

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Email: st.stephens.parish@nf.sympatico.ca  
Web: www.ststephensparish.com



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### BISHOP OF CORNER BROOK & LABRADOR: Most Rev. Bart Van Roijen

**Administrator:** Fr. Krishnarao Mekala (Kris)      **Associate Priest:** Fr. Vanathuraj Rayappan (Ray)

**PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR**

Debbie Wilton

Rosa Dollard

**St. Anne's Guild**

**SECRETARY**

President, Millicent Penton

Amanda Rideout (Temporary)

**RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY COORDINATOR:** Theresa Dollimont

**LITURGY COORDINATOR:** Bernice Maddock

**Knights of Columbus** - Grand Knight Clyde Russell

**4th Degree Assembly** - Faithful Navigator Bob Miller

**MARRIAGES.** Six months notice is required; a year's notice is recommended.

**BAPTISM PREPARATION-** *Please call to register.*

#### ST. STEPHEN'S PARISH SCHEDULE

##### SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday Evening - 6:00 P.M.  
Sunday Morning - 10:30 A.M.

##### REGULAR WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday and Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 9:30 a.m.

#### MARIA REGINA PARISH SCHEDULE

##### SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday - 4:30 P.M.  
Sunday - 9:00 A.M.

##### ROSARY

Saturdays at 11:00 am  
**RECONCILIATION**  
By Appointment

#### PRAYER MEETINGS:

St. Stephen's Prayer Group and Word & Spirit Prayer Group Meetings have been cancelled until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**OFFICE HOURS:** MONDAY - 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm,

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, FRIDAY - 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

**CLOSED DAILY 12:00 - 1:00 PM**

## RECEIVED WITH THANKS

January 31<sup>st</sup> - \$2070.00

February 7<sup>th</sup> - \$2600.85



## SCENT-FREE

**Please be aware that some people have allergic reactions to perfumes and other scents. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.**

## MASS INTENTIONS

### **Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup>**

For the late Phyllis White

For the late Kay Brenton

Special intentions for unknown person

### **Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup>**

For the late Albert White

For the late Douglas & Margaret White & deceased family members

### **Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>**

For the late Gordon & Bridget Keating

For the late Raymond Ryan

### **Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>**

For the late Melinda Hurley

### **Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>**

For the late Mary Ryan

## BAPTISMAL PREPARATION

If you wish to have your child Baptized, please call the office at 643-2523 to register.

Baptisms will be done **by appointment only** due to COVID-19. This preparation is for parents and Godparents. We offer an update on the meaning of this Sacrament together with a practical walk-through of the liturgy.

## SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

LEVITICUS 13:1-2; 44-46; CORINTHIANS 10:31 - 11:1; MARK 1: 40-45

1) We live in a throwaway culture

- a) Pope Francis once said: “We have become somewhat accustomed to this throwaway culture; too often the elderly are discarded! But now we have all these young people

with no work, they too, are suffering the effects of the throwaway culture.”

- b) In your society, who and what gets cast aside, marginalized, or thrown away? The elderly, the unborn, immigrants, the poor, LGBT people, those with addictions; the list can go on.
- c) Today’s first reading begins, “The Lord said to Moses and Aaron,” and then the community responded to God’s commands. How much of our “throwing away” as Christians is deliberate, done with full knowledge that it contradicts God’s word? Sometimes we even use some isolated elements of our faith as weapons to do so.
- 2) Jesus built a culture of encounter
- a) Jesus listened: Jesus heard the story of pain and the cry for help
- b) Jesus did outreach: Jesus identified the leper as marginalized by society. Not only did the leper feel safe to reach out to Jesus, but Jesus felt compelled to reach out to him: “He stretched out His hand and touched him.”
- c) Jesus prioritized the pain of the leper: Jesus was moved by what He encountered. You don’t see Jesus blame the leper or reinforce His exclusions; rather He allows Himself to be moved by what or who He encounters.
- d) Jesus healed: The long-experienced wounds of the individual leper were healed but Jesus didn’t stop at the personal dimension of healing. “Showing yourself to the priests” highlights the social dimension; this healing is also a healing of the entire community as the former leper is called out from the margins and welcomed into the body of the community.
- 3) We are called to imitate Christ and build a culture of encounter.
- a) Paul reminds believers that they are to refrain from seeking their own benefit and to

be imitators of Christ, building a culture of encounter.

- b) Jesus still encounters the “lepers” in our world. When we intentionally encounter those on the margins, we open ourselves to a divine encounter just as St Francis did.
- 4) From bitterness to sweetness, God invites us to conversion, to take steps toward personal and societal healing.

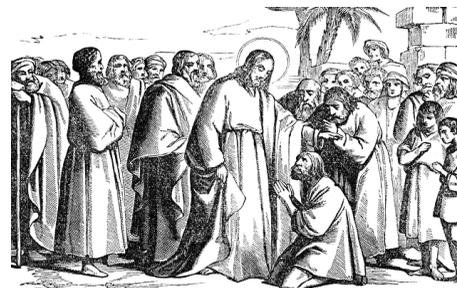
*(Franciscan Media, Sunday Homily Helps: 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 14, 2021, Series B Readings, Lectionary #77)*

## REFLECTION-TOUCHING

Many of us are afraid to touch other people.

We give a few pennies to a beggar, but make sure there is no contact between us, not even eye contact. Jesus didn’t stand off or keep His distance. He wasn’t afraid to touch others. He touched lepers, sinners, sick people, and even the dead. Physical contact is precisely what gives people, especially the sick and the wounded people, a sense of warmth and joy. By the very act of touching another person, we accept that person exactly as he or she is. Lord, give us a warm heart and kind hands.

*(Flor McCarthy, New Sunday & Holy Day Liturgies: Year B, Dominican Publications, Dublin (Ireland), 1999, p193)*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## APPOINTMENTS

We are aware of the rising number of COVID cases in our province and continue to follow measures in place to help prevent the spread within our Parish. To minimize the amount of traffic within our Parish offices, we ask that you call ahead of time before coming to the Parish office for any reason, including picking your tax receipts, purchasing religious articles, meeting with the priest outside of emergencies, and any other reason.

## ASH WEDNESDAY

St. Stephen's Parish will be holding their Ash Wednesday Mass on

February 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. and the evening Mass will be at 6:00 p.m.

To pre-register for the Ash Wednesday Mass, please call Debbie Wilton at 649-1958.

## THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ARE RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS.

If you are 18 years of age and a practicing Catholic then you are eligible to join this dynamic organization with over 2 million members worldwide. Knights of Columbus members are heavily involved in charitable works such as food bank, annual Christmas dinner, and community café. Members also serve as a foundation of support to all major projects in our Parish, particularly during this time of pandemic. In addition, the order offers a world class insurance program for the protection of brother knights and their families. You can join your local Council directly or join online for free until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. For more information please contact Clyde Russell at 709-721-0127 or Bob Miller at 709-643-2632.

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