

Mass Times: Saturday: 7:00pm, Sunday: 9:00 am and 11:00 am— Tuesday to Friday at 9:00am

Reconciliation: Saturdays 6:15pm, Sundays 8:15 am or by Appointment.

Pastor: Father Aruldhass Lucas, SAC.

Mailing address: 1088 Gillett Street, V2M 2V3—Office hours: Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm

Website: stmaryspg.ca—E-mail: stmarys.parish@shawcable.com

We acknowledge that St. Mary's Parish rests on the unceded traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh



THE ROMAN
CATHOLIC DIOCESE
OF PRINCE GEORGE

Bishop: Most Rev.
Stephen Jensen



FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME FEBRUARY 4TH, 2024



STOP BLAMING OTHERS AND START DOING GOOD

There is an old and funny little anecdote that goes something like this. An elderly man who was quite ill said to his wife, "You know, Sarah, you've always been with me through the good and the bad. Like the time I lost my job, you were right there by my side. And when the war came, I enlisted, and you became a nurse so that you could be with me. Then the Depression hit, and we had nothing, but you were there with me. And now here I am, sick as a dog, and, as always you're right beside me. You know something, Sarah, you're a jinx! You always bring me bad luck!" there is a part of us that is tempted to look for somebody else to blame for all the things that go wrong in our lives. More often than not, we blame the very people we once looked up to for an answer. Today's first reading from the book of Job is a futile attempt to answer the perennial question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" The Gospel shows us how Jesus spent himself in alleviating the pain and suffering around Galilee by his preaching and healing ministry rather than by pondering on universal solutions for the problem of worldwide evil.

READINGS AND LITURGY

Job 7.1-4, 6-7; Psalm 147.1-6;

1 Corinthians 9.16-19, 22-23; Gospel: Mark 1.29-39.

In the first reading, Job speaks of living in misery. Paul, in his Letter to the Corinthians, tells them he has an obligation to preach the Good News of the Gospel. In the Gospel, Jesus drives out demons and heals Simon's mother-in-law, and then goes on healing and preaching *throughout the whole of Galilee*.

Faith Catholic

Welcome to Our Church!

*To all who mourn or need comfort,
To all who are weary and need rest,
To all who seek friendship,
To all who desire to grow in
Relationship with God,
To all who yearn to pray,
To all who need a Saviour,
And who ever will worship,
This Church of St. Mary's
opens wide its doors,
And in the name of
Christ our Lord, says:*

WELCOME!

EXPERIENCE THE HEALING TOUCH OF GOD

Most of us are familiar with Lourdes, the Catholic shrine in southern France built at the place where the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to a young girl, St. Bernadette Soubirous, in 1858. Pilgrims today continue to throng to our Blessed Mother's shrine, hoping to be cured of their ailments. Over the decades, thousands have left behind their crutches and braces as silent witnesses to the Lord's power to make them well. This sort of thing is, of course, nothing new. Sites of holy apparitions and miraculous healings ranging from Lourdes (France), Fatima (Portugal), Guadalupe (Mexico) and Medjugorje (Yugoslavia; [not yet authenticated by the Church]), to the holy sites in our own land, have drawn pilgrims from all countries throughout the ages. These seekers have made their way to sacred temples, grottos, and hillsides in the hope of finding healing and strength. Some dismiss such journeys of Faith as childish piety, inappropriate in an age of therapeutic advances such as our own. But healing is an essential element of the Gospel message. Surely, Jesus, whose Sabbath day of preaching and healing ministry is described in today's Gospel, will not disappoint us today when we are assembled around the altar seeking his power, healing, and favor in our own lives.



MASS INTENTIONS

Fri	Feb 2	7:00 pm	Int for a Parishioner
Sat	Feb 3	7:00 pm	RIP Jose Resendes
Sun	Feb 4	9:00 am	Int for all our Parishioners
		11:00 am	RIP Sister Viammey
Tue	Feb 6	9:00 am	
Wed	Feb 7	9:00 am	RIP Beverley Scobie
Thu	Feb 8	9:00 am	
Fri	Feb 9	9:00 am	Pam Meyer's Funeral Mass
		1:00 pm	
Sat	Feb 10	7:00 pm	RIP Jose Manuel Resendes
Sun	Feb 11	9:00 am	Int for all our Parishioners
		11:00 am	RIP Wolfgang Betz

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for the intentions of: Brigitta Betz, Eldon Gauthier, Maria Levar, Beverly Stuart, Rizal Advincula, Grace Noblette, Minnie, Blair, and Korena Peters and family, Garry Kaulbach's daughter, Birdie Froment, Mia Savic and family, Joanne Rebogaliata, Manae Peters, Ruth, Wark family, Jose Ferreira, Peter Dasilva, and Minnie Peterson.

UPCOMING FUNERAL MASS AT ST. MARY'S

There will be a Funeral Mass for Pam Meyer on Friday, February 9th at 1pm at St. Mary's. There will be a choir practice on Thursday, February 8th at 5pm for all who would like to be part of the choir for the Funeral Mass. Please contact Claudia at the parish office 250-564-4097 if you would like to participate in the choir.

MASS AT SIMON FRASER SENIORS HOME

Everyone is welcome to celebrate the morning Mass at Simon Fraser Seniors Home on Saturday, February 10th at 10:30 AM.

ASH WEDNESDAY

The Season of Lent is fast approaching! On **Wednesday, February 14th**, we will be having a 9am Mass with St. Mary's School and a 7pm evening Mass to celebrate Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of our 2024 Lenten journey!



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

During our Fridays in Lent, we will be praying the Stations of the Cross at 6:30pm followed by the celebration of Mass at 7pm. The Stations of the Cross is a traditional 14-step Catholic prayer meditating on the last hours of Jesus' life, His passion, crucifixion, death and burial. It invites worshippers of all ages into deeper reflection on the great sacrifice of love undertaken by the Son of God. Consider making the Stations of the Cross and the Celebration of a weekday Mass on a Friday evening a part of your weekly practice for Lent.

PALMS FOR ASHES

Please bring your old palms and leave them in the Parish Office or bring them to the Church on the Weekend and place them in the basket by the front door, to be used for Ash Wednesday.

ST. MARY'S YOUTH GROUP

St. Mary's Carlo Acutis Youth Group is extending the invitation for the Grade 6's to join for the remainder of the school year! We will be meeting on **Wednesday, February 7th from 6pm-8pm** to prepare for our upcoming Season of Lent! All youth in Grades 6-12 are welcome to attend!

MUSIC MINISTRY WORKSHOP

Please mark your calendars! We will be having our Music Ministry Workshop on Saturday, February 24th from 10am-12pm. This workshop is for all current choir members and for those who are interested in joining the Music Ministry at St. Mary's. Fr. Aruldas will be back from his holidays and would love to see all choir members at the workshop.

GALA 2024 TICKETS GO ON SALE NOW!

Our 2024 Gala is set for Saturday **February 24, 2024** at the Prince George Conference and Civic Centre. Tickets are \$75 each. If you would like to purchase a table of 10, the table will cost \$750.00. Tickets can be purchased in the office or online via the school website. This is the first year that you can buy tickets in person or online. If you are purchasing tickets online, you need to make sure that you select "Gala Tickets" under the payment options and you must contact Jackie Boyes at the office at 250-563-7502 or via email at jboyes@cispg.ca so that she can organize the tables for the event. You can also let Jackie know if you are planning on sitting with someone who has already purchased tickets. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jackie at 250-563-7502.

ST. MARY'S FREE FORMED SUBSCRIPTION

Sign up for your free FORMED subscription courtesy of St. Mary's Parish & School: <https://formed.org/signup>
Enter St. Mary's Parish Postal Code: V2M 2V3.

Formed recommendation this week: Bakhita: From Slave to Saint. Bakhita: From Slave to Saint tells the incredible story of St. Josephine Bakhita. Originally born in Sudan, Josephine was kidnapped by slavers and was eventually sold to a merchant in Italy. By the grace of God, she lived a heroic life of forgiveness and mercy which led her to become a saint. <https://watch.formed.org/videos/bakhita-from-slave-to-saint>

MONTHLY DAY OF EUCHARISTIC EXPOSITION AND ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Emmanuel Hermitage invites you to a Personal Date with Jesus on **Tuesday, February 13th, 2024**, at the Domano Chapel, 6500 Southridge Ave. Mass will be celebrated at 7:30 AM and the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM for a day of silent prayer and adoration. We will pray for the universal Church and the world, and for the people and needs of our Diocese. In particular we will pray for the protection of all human life, for all the sick, for vocations, for Peace in our world, and for the intentions of those participating in the day. Please mark your calendar on the second Tuesday of each month for Personal Date with Jesus days.

PRINCE GEORGE SHARE HOPE

Since the invasion of Ukraine began in Feb 2022, Prince George Share Hope has helped to settle 301 displaced Ukrainians within 118 families, across our diocese. Financial support is one of many settlement supports offered by Prince George Share Hope.

We are approaching the third year of violence across Ukraine and we are currently experiencing a surge in applications from people looking to travel and settle here.

We are pleading to our supporters for more funds to help continue our efforts. If you would like to donate funds to Share Hope, there are many options for giving. Cheques can be made payable to RCEC-Share Hope and can be dropped off at any office of a Catholic Parish in Prince George, or mailed to: Share Hope, C/O Diocesan Pastoral Centre 6500 Southridge Avenue, Prince George, BC, V2N 5P9.

Donate online by Credit Card via CanadaHelps: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/70838>

E-transfer to: sharehope@pgdio.ca (In the memo field add your name and address.)

Donations to Share Hope will receive a charitable tax receipt.

For more information regarding Prince George Share Hope please contact Eva Gillis at Immaculate Conception parish or Dick Mynen at St Mary's parish via email to pg.sharehope@gmail.com

CCCB RELEASES PASTORAL LETTER

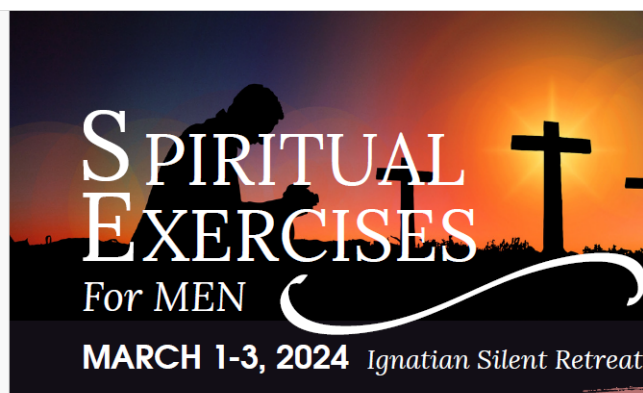
The CCCB has released a pastoral letter on the use of social media titled: "Let Your Speech Always be Gracious." It provides tools for moral reflection and self-examination, as well as suggests seven commitments for the use of social media.

Please find a copy of the letter attached to this week's Wednesday Weekly or view the CCCB announcement here: <https://www.cccb.ca/announcement/bishops-release-a-pastoral-letter-on-the-use-of-social-media/>

CCCB RELEASES PASTORAL TOOLKIT FOR WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

As the 32nd World Day of the Sick approaches, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) has released a pastoral toolkit of resources to help promote a commitment to prayer and accompaniment of the sick. The resources can be found on Google Drive here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yDVR1M1ZYa3Tb7YcwLOlToaBQRPYWshV>

Visit the CCCB website for the full press release regarding the upcoming World Day of the Sick here: <https://www.cccb.ca/media-release/pope-francis-message-for-the-32nd-world-day-of-the-sick-february-11-2024/>



SPIRITUAL EXERCISES FOR MEN

Following the Ignatian Spiritual Exercise, this retreat will provide an opportunity to discover the path God has for you moving forward in your spiritual life.

The retreat will be on March 1–3, 2024 at Pastoral Centre, Diocese of Prince George, by Fr. Kenneth LeBlanc, LC. To register, please email norman.hebert@shaw.ca. include info in the registration email: Name, address, Mobile Number, Emergency Contact Number, and Food Allergies/Requirements if Any, or call 778-890-0540.

GRIEF TO GRACE RETREAT

Through a retreat program facilitated by mental health professionals and centered on Jesus Christ, Grief to Grace helps those who have endured neglect, physical, emotional, sexual, and/or spiritual abuse in their family of origin, their community, from spouses/partners, and/or coworkers or supervisors, find healing and journey to wholeness. The next retreat in Canada is **May 14 - 18, 2024 in Kelowna**. For more information please email griegtograncelowna@gmail.com or make a confidential call to 250-808-6403.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Financial Officer: The Diocese of Victoria, located in beautiful British Columbia, is recruiting for the position of Financial Officer. The Financial Officer serves as the financial administrator of the Diocese and reports directly to the Bishop. This is an exceptional opportunity for an individual who wants to be part of the Diocese's senior management team and to oversee the stewardship of the organization's fiscal resources in support of the mission of the Diocese. The position of Financial Officer is an ecclesiastical office which is open to lay persons, and is governed by the provisions of the Code of Canon Law. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Please for details visit: <https://www.redvictoria.org/employment>

Financial Administrator: The Diocese of Nelson, which encompasses the Okanagan and Kootenays of beautiful British Columbia, is recruiting for the position of Diocesan Financial Administrator. The office is located in Kelowna at the Catholic Pastoral Centre. The Financial Administrator is responsible for oversight of all financial operations of the Diocese and provides strategic financial guidance and effective advisory support to the Bishop. This position oversees 35+ parishes and the 7 Catholic Independent Schools of Nelson Diocese (CISND). This Financial Administrator ensures compliance with regulatory requirements and fosters long-term financial sustainability of the Diocese. Please for more details visit: https://www.nelsondiocese.org/apps/jobs/show_job.jsp?REC_ID=1516

Top 10 Reasons to Go to Mass

Talking to your kids about the importance of attending Mass

“WHY DO WE HAVE TO GO TO MASS???” For many parents, this question will be asked by their children more times than they can count. For a time, parents may answer, “Because I said so” but eventually children will need better reasons. When the time comes, the following article written to teenagers, may be helpful in answering the question: why do we have to go to Mass?

For many kids the reason for going to Mass is simple - because parents make us go! (That's OK, they make us do lots of things that we may not want to do - but that are good for us!) But why **SHOULD** we go to Mass? It's important to remember that we are **NOT** going there to be entertained! Mass is something **WE PARTICIPATE** in. Most of our complaints about Mass come from the fact that we don't **UNDERSTAND** why we are there or what's going on during the mass. So why should we go?

TOP 10 reasons to go to Mass:

1. **The Eucharist.** The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ is available to us! It is the pinnacle of our life as Christians. What better way to follow Jesus than to receive Him in the Eucharist! Sometimes the teaching on the Eucharist is hard for us to understand. It was hard for His followers too - read John 6. If you have trouble with your belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist - **PRAY!** He will help you.
2. **Grace.** Grace is like Gatorade for the soul. Grace is God's life and God's help given to us to live a better life in Him. We receive grace through the sacraments. Mass is loaded with grace - ready for us to receive. The more open we are to it - by actively participating, the better!
3. **The Third Commandment. Keep holy the Sabbath.** Simple words, simple meaning. "So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; because on it God rested from all his work." (Genesis 2:2) We, too, must keep it a special and holy day. The church teaches that Mass is the most important way to do just that. It is not just a good idea - it is our obligation as People of God. Remember the words of Jesus - "If you love me you will keep my commandments" John 15:15. For Christians the Sabbath is now the first day of the week, Sunday, because it was on Sunday that our Lord rose. We start the week with a day totally devoted to our God. Liturgy Rocks.
4. **Community.** We are the Church, the Family of God. God's people are not in this world to struggle along by themselves. We are all one in the Body of Christ. At Mass we join with Him in a special way. We join with those around us. It is a time to be with others for prayer and friendship. It is a mystical connecting with all our brothers and sisters around the world, in heaven and purgatory. Through Christ we become a community unlike any we know on earth. It is a glimmer of what heaven will be like.
5. **Prayer.** The Mass is the ultimate prayer. There is singing, psalms, prayers of thanksgiving, prayers seeking forgiveness, prayers of worship and praise, the Lord's prayer and more. We pray as individuals and as a group. If you struggle with going to Mass - think of it from this perspective. The words we say are more than just a reply to the priest's words - they are prayer! Read them, say them, sing them, shout them, **BELIEVE THEM!**
6. **The Bible.** Every time Mass is celebrated we hear the Word of God. We hear from the Old Testament. It sets the stage for the Gospel reading. We hear from the New Testament - perhaps a letter from Paul or the Acts of the Apostles. In the Gospel we learn about Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Sometimes the readings are familiar, sometimes not. You hear more scripture at a Catholic Mass than at any other type of Sunday service! If you don't read the bible on your own - here is a chance to hear it proclaimed. If you do read the bible on your own, Mass is a time to get a better understanding of what you are reading. Jesus never said anything about go and write the Gospel for the world, he said go and **PROCLAIM** the Gospel. So we do.
7. **The Our Father.** One of the highlights of Mass is The Lord's Prayer. We use the words Jesus gave us and pray together as a family. Remember - it is the "Our" Father, not the "My" Father. Jesus wants us to pray together! The Our Father is the perfect prayer - we give praise to God, we ask that our lives be lived His way instead of our way, we ask for His continued presence in our lives, we ask for His forgiveness, and we pray for His strength in the battle against evil. It's all there. Pray it! Mean it!
8. **Making time with God.** If nothing else, ask yourself if you have at least one hour a week to set aside for God. Think of that. Imagine Jesus hanging on the cross, dying for **YOU** - and all He asks is that you join Him on Sunday for an hour or so, "Do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19) Can you do it? Yes. The question is - will you do it, for Him?
9. **Suffering souls in purgatory.** The souls in purgatory need our prayers. Special intentions are offered at Mass for those who have died - both as a group and individually. It is important not to assume that anyone who died is automatically in heaven - we must pray for them! And the cool part is those who are in purgatory can't pray for themselves but can pray for us.

AND 10... DRUM ROLL PLEASE

10. It's what Jesus wants us to do. Period.

Once you figure out what Sunday Mass is all about then ask yourself this question. Self, am I the type of person to always do the bare minimum? Do I only show up for the game, or do I spend time practicing? Do I only practice the piano when I have to? If you want to really be good at anything, the bare minimum is never enough. Being a Christian is no different. Try going beyond the minimum with Mass. Find a weekday Mass you can attend even one day a week. What an awesome way to say to God, I am not just trying to squeak into heaven. I want to get as much of You as I can as often as I can.

SOURCE: <http://www.catholicyouth.org/index.htm>