



## Sacred Heart Parish Bulletin

Mass: 9:30 am – Sunday  
Fr. John Yake, I. V. Dei  
(902) 535-2053

February 18, 2024

First Sunday of Lent

The **First Reading** is from the *Book of Genesis 9:8-15* and is about the covenant between God and Noah not to destroy the world again by water.

The **Second Reading** is from the *First Letter of St. Peter 3:18-22*. In this passage St. Peter is exhorting the newly converted Christians to live according to the Christian faith, no matter what trials they may have to endure because of it.

The **Gospel** is from *St. Mark 1:12-15*. The very thought of our divine Lord's suffering hunger, loneliness, and humiliation at the hands of his enemy—and that all this was for us—should make us feel ashamed at the little bits of suffering and humiliation we are willing to suffer for our own selves. He had no sin to atone for. He was making atonement for us and for our sins. He was the Son of God and his home was heaven, but he left it for a while to assume human nature, so that he could through his humiliations and sufferings bring us to share his eternal home with him. What is the thanks he gets from us? Ingratitude, forgetfulness, and even worse: insults and disobedience.

While the Church has eased the strict fasting and penances of Lent, we are still expected to do some private fasting and penance. It need not be fasting from food, but we can all do some daily penance which will help to keep our unruly minds and bodies in check while at the same time it will show that we are grateful to our loving Savior for all that he suffered for us. A few extra prayers each day, control of our temper in the home, less talk and especially less uncharitable talk among our neighbors, a little helping hand to a neighbor in need, a fervent prayer and where we can spare it (perhaps by doing without some luxury) a donation toward helping the starving millions in other lands. The sincere Christian will find a hundred such ways in which to thank and honor Christ during this holy season of Lent. We can all keep the last verse of today's reading before our minds with great profit. "Repent and believe in the gospel." This is the essence, the marrow, of Christ's teaching. Turn away from sin and come back to God. Anyone who believes in the gospel, who believes that there is an everlasting life after death prepared by God for all those who do his will while on earth, should not find it hard to give up offending that loving God who thinks so much of him. This life is only a passing shadow, every step we take, every breath we breathe is bringing us nearer to our earthly end and to the grave. But the believing Christian knows the grave is not the end. Rather, is it the beginning of the true life—provided we use this passing shadow, these few years, properly.

Now is the time to take these words of Christ to heart. He is asking each one of us today, to repent and to believe the gospel, that is, to act according to its teaching. Christ, in his mercy, will make this appeal to men again and again, but will we be here to hear it? If we answer his appeal now and start living our Christian faith in all sincerity, we need not care when death calls us. It will find us ready to pass over to the future, happy, unending life.

—Excerpted from *The Sunday Readings* by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.

**Support:** If you want to support Sacred Heart Parish, through your envelopes or just a donation, we are now set up for e-transfer: Please e-transfer to [sacredheartjohnstown@gmail.com](mailto:sacredheartjohnstown@gmail.com). Please include your envelope number. If you do not currently have a church envelope, please include your civic address. Receipts will be issued.

**Bulletin:** If you want to add a notice to the bulletin, please send an email to [louisecampbel@gmail.com](mailto:louisecampbel@gmail.com)

## Collection

**No collection on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, no Mass**

## Notices:

**1: Community Drop-in** All are welcome on Wednesday mornings 9:00 am - 11:30 am at the District 10 Volunteer Fire Department for a social gathering. The coffee pots will be hot and the conversation will be flowing. Sponsored by the Bras d'Or Lakers Club.

**2: Lenten session:** You are invited to join us for a Lenten session on prayer and exploring spiritual conversation as a way to deepen our relationship with God, and with each other. You may choose any of the following:

Saturday, March 2, 2024 from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm at **Our Lady Of Fatima Church Hall**

Saturday, March 16 from 10:00am until 1:00pm at Bethel Presbyterian Church Hall, Brookland St, Sydney.

Sessions are facilitated by members of the Cape Breton Local of the Atlantic Association of Spiritual Directors.

There is no fee, but registration is required. To register, please contact: Winnie Odo

([twinnieodo@seaside.ns.ca](mailto:twinnieodo@seaside.ns.ca)) (902-862-2330) or Gary Fancey ([gafancey@netscape.net](mailto:gafancey@netscape.net)) (902-862-7580) or Julia Townsend ([juliat@eastlink.ca](mailto:juliat@eastlink.ca)) (902-562-8423)

**3: TEA and TALK** Sydney Tuesday, February 20, 2024 1:30 -3:30 pm

An invitation to join with other women to share at Holy Redeemer Convent 24 Neville St. Whitney Pier, just behind the Pier Post Office. This invitation is open to women of all ages. This is an attempt to provide an opportunity for women to join with others to simply share a cup of tea and to experience the joy of being together. For further information phone

902 270 4840 or 902 539 6331

## **4: From Bishop Kirkpatrick Season of Lent 2024**

My Dear People

Pope Francis says, "In the desert one hears the Word of God, one finds intimacy with God and the love of the Lord." It is not easy for us to be in the desert when we are surrounded by water. Without any difficulty we can transfer the brown sand of the desert to the white snow of winter. We can walk amid the snow and find the solitude of the desert. We can find a place to dialogue in silence with the Lord. This solitude increases our sensitivity to those who cry out for help. This is why we invite you to become involved with Development and Peace to help such people in the Global South, Stand for the Land. We are invited to share our solidarity with those who defend the lands, waters, and forests that sustain them, as well as the culture, history, and identity that defines them. <https://devp.org/en/?s=Stand+For+the+Land+Campaign> The feast of the Presentation of the Lord on February 2 marked forty days since celebrating the birth of Jesus at Christmas. This day also marks the halfway point of winter. It may not seem likely, but spring is on the way with each passing day, as we notice the lengthening of the daylight. The word Lent comes from the Old English word, lencten, which refers to the lengthening daylight hours and to springtime which is a time of renewal and new life.

This year, the secular celebration of Valentine's Day falls on Ash Wednesday which marks the beginning of Lent. Although one is temporal, and the other is spiritual; they are complementary since they both focus on love. One focuses on the sentiments of love but the other focuses on the essence of love. This forty-day Season of Lent is a time for fasting, almsgiving and prayer. Fasting is an act of self-denial and a way of directing our thoughts away from ourselves and towards our God. Almsgiving is the act by which we give of ourselves in order to assist someone in need. Prayer should be the centre of our Christian lives lifting up our hearts in praise and thanksgiving to our God who loves us. The exercise of these virtues keeps us close to God and keeps us focused on service to others. We deny ourselves because we love.

May this Season of Lent lead us to renewal in our faith.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ Wayne Joseph Kirkpatrick

Bishop Wayne Joseph Kirkpatrick