



St. Anthony St. Stephen Our Lady of Fatima
Father Nilo Macapinlac
Deacon Charles Johnston - RETIRED

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Weekday and Weekend Masses are cancelled during the COVID 19 Pandemic. *****

June 14, 2020

My dear People of God: friends and parishioners;

Grace and peace to you! Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. Our readings are focused on the gifts of the Word of God and the Eucharist. This feast has deep significance to those of us living the stewardship way of life. Why? As stewards, we recognize that all that we are and all that we have been given are gifts from God. We are called to treasure these gifts and use them for God's glory. Aside from life itself, the most precious gifts God has given us are His Word and His Body and Blood. Our Solemnity today and the readings for this week invite us to a deeper gratitude and better stewardship of these two sublime gifts.

In our first reading, from Deuteronomy, Moses tells the people that God "let you be afflicted with hunger, and then fed you with manna... in order to show you that not by bread alone does man live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of the Lord. Do not forget the Lord your God." Our Heavenly Father is such a good teacher. He reminds His people that just as we experience physical hunger from lack of food, we become spiritually malnourished through lack of feeding on the Word of God. It is that important.

God's Word is alive and He intends for us to feed on it daily. Yet, it is a gift that is easy to neglect. In this noisy modern world, it can be challenging to even recognize our spiritual "hunger pangs." And it is easier to feed them with the junk food of mindless distraction and entertainment. As Christian stewards, we must recognize our dependence on God's Word, and treasure this priceless gift — out of gratitude to the Giver and so that we can share it with others.

Our Lord reveals the full meaning of this gift in our Gospel passage from John. He says to the crowds, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." In the Old Testament, God fed His people with manna. Now, He feeds us with the very Flesh and Blood of His Son. Just as the Word of God is vital to our spiritual nourishment, so, too is the nourishment of the Eucharist. Jesus could not make this any clearer to us: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." Without the Eucharist, we die spiritually. But through the Eucharist, we experience a taste of heaven right now. "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life." Notice that Christ does not say those who partake of His Body and Blood will have eternal life, but that they have eternal life — right here and right now! It is no wonder then, that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* describes the Eucharist as the "source and summit of our faith" (1324).

As we journey together in the desert of pandemic, economic crisis, racism and other forms of discrimination, senseless violence in other part of the world, terrorism and war, human trafficking, culture of death that continue to prevail, how can we find courage to make a difference in our world today? If not from the Word of God and at His table of His Most Precious Body and Blood? This Solemnity reminds us of the total self-giving of God in Jesus Christ. "For God so loved the world that He gave us His Only Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him may not perish or die but have eternal life." (John 3:16). And where today in the world we have access to that if not from the Table of the Sacrament of the Eucharist whom He instituted over 2,000 years ago and still here? As good stewards of our spiritual life, how do you nourish yourself today? Do we nourish ourselves with the best from the ultimate source revealed to us by God himself?

One of the brilliant Popes of the past said: "It is through the Eucharist that we can hasten our journey to heaven, it is already the pledge of our resurrection and eternal life."

May our parishioners, parents and Sacramental prep team for first Communion could be re-assured that what they minister is a lofty and noble calling from God Himself whose Body given up selflessly on the Table of the Last Supper and on the Cross and in the Tomb that decay can never touch. He is not only sharing His glorious Body and Blood but His new life, resurrection and eternal life through the Holy Eucharist. Oh Sacrament Most Holy, Oh Sacrament Divine, All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine." I encourage you to meet the Lord who awaits for us at the Blessed Sacrament whenever you have time. But every Friday at St. Stephen Catholic Parish in Olds, the Blessed Sacrament is being exposed for Eucharistic Adoration from 10 am to 3pm. At the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus our Lord before his arrest once said: "Can you spend an hour with me in prayer? Pray then unceasingly so that you will not be put into temptation." I would like to thank our essential volunteers, our parishioners for their love for the Lord, for rendering their services and ministry, for their financial contributions, for living the life of Christian witness and stewardship. God bless and protect you all!

Yours devotedly in Christ,

Fr. Nilo Macapinlac, pastor

Holy Mass

We are happy to inform you that we will be celebrating Holy Mass in person on Saturday June 20th and Sunday June 21st, 2020. There are new directives which indicate that we do not have to limit our numbers, therefore, we no longer need to register. However, there are a few steps that are still required.

Mass times:

Saturday – 5 pm

Sunday – Alternating weekends with Trochu – 9 & 11:15 am.

Live stream will continue on Saturdays at 5 pm for those still unable to attend.

Although we don't have to pre-register, all parishioners will still be required to reply to the health & Safety guidelines before entering the Church. In addition, each individual is required to sign in. This will take some time to get everyone through. We highly recommend arriving a bit earlier than usual to help expedite this process. Please note, that although we do not have a restriction on number of attendees, we are still limited by our ability to Social distance. If our ushers have determined that our seating has been maximized, the doors will be closed. In addition, the doors will be closed at the starting time of Mass, so it is imperative that you arrive ahead of time. Please note: we will be lining up outside as our Parishioners move through the line, so be prepared for all weather possibilities.

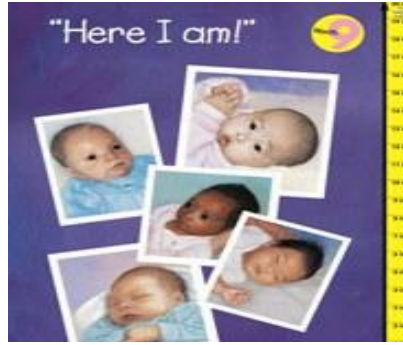
At this time, a face mask is required. You must wear a mask upon entry into the church until you are seated. It must be worn upon going up for Communion, removed to consume the Eucharist (by hand) and replaced on your walk back to your pew. It will also be worn upon your exit from the church, however, you do not need to wear it during the Mass. Our local A & W & Tim Horton's are offering free masks when you go through the drive thru. If you don't have a mask, this is available to you.

We are very grateful to the volunteers who have stepped up which allows St Stephen's to welcome you back. These essential volunteers are an integral part of moving forward. We have completed our first training sessions, but will be planning more in the near future. If you are interested in helping, please contact the office.

There will be a training session on Monday June 15, 2020 at 7 PM for anyone interested in volunteering.

Spiritual Adoption

Our Babies are born!



Thank you to all who have prayed the Spiritual Adoption prayer for the last nine months for the lives of unborn babies. Thanks to you, we were able to save nearly 70 babies through our prayers!

Let's celebrate!

Our original plan was different, but because of the Covid restrictions we ask you to consider the following options:

1) Celebrate with your family as you would the news of any baby being born to your friends or family, for example, have a birthday cake or cupcakes decorated in pink or blue icing. Say a prayer for the parents of this child, and if he or she is being adopted, for the new family. With all the turmoil in the world, all these parents were very brave to commit to life. It is a time to rejoice!

2) Share the news of the baby with someone you know. Mention that you have been praying for this baby for nine months, and how excited you are for another precious life!

3) Support in any way you can any pregnant or new moms. They all need encouragement, especially in these uncertain times.

4) Donate to pro-life organizations such as:

Campaign Life Coalition- www.campaignlifecoalition.com

Gianna Centre- <https://www.cssalberta.ca/Gianna-Centre>

The Back Porch- thebackporch.info

Mercy Counselling- www.cssalberta.ca/Our-Services/Mercy-Counselling

Good News

Birthday Greetings go out to Elaine Graham who will be celebrating a birthday on June 20th.



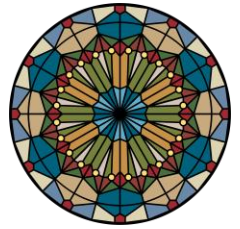
Thank you to all who donated towards the Router – your generosity is appreciated!

We are also looking for a volunteer to assist the Parish Committees with Communications & Technology – someone who can oversee/advise on the digital needs for live streaming, and Zoom/WebEx and other platforms that are needed at this time.

Did You Know

The Stained Glass window of St. Joseph was donated to the church by Tom & Carrie Jensen. It was salvaged from a convent in New York City that dated back to the late 1800's.

Thank you to C.S who shared this information with us.



Parish Giving

We are providing some additional links for sites where contributions towards the Church can be made. Your financial contributions at this time are needed more than ever. Thank you to all who have taken time to drop off or mail your donations, every little bit helps to keep us going during this time.

CAEDM- www.caedm.ca/donate - You can select St. Stephen's in the drop down box

CANADA GIVES - <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/890356249RR0001-the-catholic-parish-of-st-stephen/>

E-TRANSFERS ARE AVAILABLE NOW: A Donation can be sent via interact transfer to St. Stephen's Catholic Parish – use the email address – ststephen102@gmail.com. Please include your name and or envelope number in the message section, so donations can be recorded correctly. For anyone who has been looking for an alternate method, here is something for you.

Automatic Contribution: Paperwork is also available for anyone wishing to sign up to have their monthly contribution automatically applied through debit or credit. Please contact Mia in the office for assistance.

Resources

Quid Novum: www.caedm.ca/quidnovum

EWTN: www.ewtn.com

Find Dynamic Catholic on You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/DynamicCatholic>

Follow Father Mike on Ascension Presents:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=ascension+presents

Living with Christ – free download - <https://www.livingwithchrist.ca/index.php/intentions>

<https://caedm.ca/covid-parishes> - for more info regarding reopening of Mass

