

March 21th, 2021 – 5th Sunday of Lent

Jesus said to Nicodemus: “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him . . . Whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.”
John 3: 14-21

Patron of those on the edge

Many of us stand pretty much on the edge of faith. There’s just so far we will go with Jesus. We love those who love us — but our own come first. We’ll forgive someone just about anything — provided they assure us they won’t do it again (and pay for the damages). We’re willing to help the poor and destitute — as long as we’re convinced they really need the help (and will be appropriately grateful).

We see the Gospel as a worthy but unattainable ideal: it would be really great if the meek could inherit the earth, if we could see Christ in the Lazaruses at our gates, if we were always in the position of crossing the busy street to be someone’s Good Samaritan. But, Lord, the world just doesn’t work that way — so, for the sake of family and career, we pragmatically confine faith in its designated time and space in our lives.

Nicodemus is one of us. This Jesus has struck a nerve in this teacher and “ruler” of the Jewish establishment. He has questions — but, given his position, he has to stay under the radar, so he comes to meet Jesus privately, late at night.

Jesus talks about God in ways that Nicodemus has never thought of: a God of compassion rather than a God of order and law; a God of forgiveness rather than a God of condemnation; a God of light who illuminates the darkness; a God who constantly calls us back to him; a God who is Father of all.

Nicodemus’ reaction to all of this is not recorded — but something clicks. When the Jewish council plots to condemn Jesus, Nicodemus will protest and defend Jesus; on Good Friday, when the body of Jesus is taken down from the cross, Nicodemus will be there, with myrrh and aloes (not an inexpensive contribution) to bury Jesus.

Slowly, Nicodemus moves from the edge of faith to the center where the Spirit of God dwells. For Nicodemus, Jesus’ image of God is no longer just an ideal but a powerful sign of compassion and mercy dwelling in our midst.

Nicodemus struggles with Jesus — as we all do. But he possesses the grace of an open heart and mind and so comes to find God. He seeks God — and finds God. And so can we.

We are all Nicodemus: We struggle to make sense of Jesus; we wrestle with trying to reconcile his Gospel with the demands of our world. In his questioning and confusion, in his fears and doubts, Nicodemus is welcomed by Jesus with understanding and compassion. Like Nicodemus, we are all seekers and Christ has assured us of his company on our journey; like Nicodemus, we find ourselves coming to Jesus in the middle of our darkest nights, seeking hope and consolation, direction and comfort — and Jesus neither rejects us nor admonishes us, but welcomes us. We discover the God that Nicodemus discovers: a God of light who transforms our despair into hope; a God of wisdom who enables us to re-create our Good Friday deaths into Easter resurrections; a God of compassion who heals our broken spirits into hearts made whole.

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Sacred Heart Parish

A Stewardship Parish in Union with Chris

Parish Information

Pastor: Monsignor Jim Robertson

Office Administrator: Dianne Russell

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am - 1pm.

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Weekend Masses:

Due to COVID-19 regulations,
Mass is cancelled until further notice.

Reconciliation:

By request

Mass During the Week:

Due to COVID -19 regulations,
Mass is cancelled until further notice.

Holy Hour of Adoration:

Discontinued until further notice.

Marriages:

Six months’ notice required. A year's notice is recommended.

Baptisms:

Please call the Parish Office to schedule preparation session.

St. Vincent de Paul:

To assist those in need. Call 638-9010.

**FACE MASKS: These masks should be worn at all times.
They may be removed if you are seated and able to maintain 2m distancing from others.**

MASSES CANCELLED - COVID ALERT LEVEL 3:

Bishop Bart has issued the following statement to deal with opening of churches with us being in Alert Level 3.

Beginning on Saturday, we will be entering Alert Level 3 for at least two weeks. During that time, we will be allowed to have funerals, weddings and religious services with a maximum of twenty people (including the Presider). Masks must be worn by all who attend for the entire service. Proper distancing must also be observed. ... If you want to hold off until we have another drop in Alert Levels, you may also do that. Under the present conditions, the Chrism Mass will be open to the priests in the immediate vicinity and those people needed for ministries, the bringing up of the oils and live streaming.

In consulting with the Cathedral Parish and other larger parishes we have decided to not reopen for mass until larger numbers are permitted.

LADIES GROUP FUNDRAISING: Even though we are unable to attend Mass in church at this time, we are continuing with our Bingo Draw to help keep funds flowing into our parish. All donations received for February have been put aside and the draw will be made as soon as Mass resumes. Donations for March draw are now being accepted. Each \$10 donation gives you one chance in the draw. Donors for this month are those with last names starting with N through Y and anyone else who would like to enter. You may drop off your donation in my mailbox at 86 Allen's Road or to Pat Jones at 11 Noseworthy's Lane., or to the parish house. Please stay safe, follow the medical guidelines, and hopefully we will be able to return to church in the near future.

LENTEN MISSION: Will be given by Bishop Bart at Immaculate Conception Parish in Deer Lake from Sunday, March 21st to Tuesday, March 23rd. Each reflection begins 7:00 pm and will be followed by some time of silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. This Mission will follow the theme: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem", and will focus in our own communal journey with the Lord, centered around the Eucharist. The Mission will also be live-streamed on Father Gabriel Selvanathan's Facebook. You can also access the Diocesan Facebook page and be linked to Father Gabriel.

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: SHARE LOVE, SHARE LENT: Did you know that advocacy by Development and Peace members resulted in several schools, parishes and municipal offices across Canada giving up bottled water? Join our Share Love, Share Lent campaign to celebrate the many ways in which Canadian Catholics show that they care for social, economic and environmental justice. To help make a difference, get your MP to commit to building back better from the pandemic. Visit devp.org/lent to learn more. Please show your support by donating generously this Solidarity Sunday, March 21st. You can also become a monthly donor and have your year-long contribution matched, thanks to the support of religious communities across Canada. Not only will you double your impact, but you will be automatically become a member of Development and Peace! Learn more at devp.org/lent. If you have any questions, please contact Patricia Walsh-Warren at pwalsh@devp.org Salt + Light Television is broadcasting a national mass Sunday at 2:30 NL time.

CHRISM MASS: This mass takes place on Wednesday, March 24th at 7:00 pm - It will be live-streamed on the Diocesan Facebook page. It will give those who have not been able to travel the long distance in previous years to at least see what a Diocesan Chrism Mass is all about.

PRELIMINARY (POSSIBLE) SCHEDULE: We do not know if there will be public celebrations of Holy Week Masses. That will depend upon government regulations allowing for public celebrations. **If permitted** mass schedule will be as follows:

Palm Sunday Mass Saturday at 4:30 and Sunday at 11am a gloved assistant will give you your Palms as you enter the church. There will be no procession with the Palms. Palms will be blessed from the front of the church.

Holy Thursday Mass begins at 7pm. There will be no washing of the feet. You are encouraged to remain behind for Eucharistic Adoration from the end of mass until 9pm.

Good Friday service at 3pm will include the reading of the Passion, the Intercessions, and Holy Communion. There will be no Veneration of the Holy Cross.

Easter vigil: Mass 9pm Saturday April 3rd

Easter Sunday: Mass 11am Sunday April 4th

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ROSARY: During lent the Knights will be reciting the Rosary Fridays at 7:00 pm on Bay of Islands Radio (BOIR) 100.1 FM and also on the website boir.ca. Please join us in praying the Rosary together. The Knights of Columbus would like to thank Father Terry Boland and BOIR for their cooperation.

CATHOLIC JOURNEY THROUGH LENT: At the beginning of each week, during Lent, a short 5-minute reflection will be available on the following week's Gospel. Bishop Bergie from St. Catherine's will be doing the reflections. These reflections can be viewed by going to the cccb.ca website.

E-TRANSFER: For your convenience you may use this option to support Sacred Heart Parish. This option is available through your online banking and can be used during this time of restriction and at anytime. **sacredheartrcparish@gmail.com** password "Church".

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION – March
Reconciliation: Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

