

**St. Rose of Lima Church
Third Sunday in Advent
December 17, 2017**



Pastor:

Father David Martin

Masses:

Thursday: 12:10 PM Saturday 4:00 PM Sunday: 9:00 AM

Confession:

Saturday at 3:00 PM

Baptisms:

Please call the Office 653-6850 for arrangements.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

DEC 24, 2017	ST. MATTHEW	3PM
DEC 24, 2017	ST. ROSE	3PM
DEC 24, 2017	ST. AUGUSTINE	5PM
DEC 24, 2017	ST. ROSE	5PM
DEC 24, 2017	ST. MATTHEW	7PM – TAPERS
DEC 24, 2017	ST. ROSE	9PM
DEC 25, 2017	ST. AUGUSTINE	10AM
DEC 25, 2017	ST. ROSE	10AM

The People in Darkness have seen a great Light..." Isaiah 9:2

Last weekend, I went to another parish for Mass. At this celebration two infant boys were baptized. It was interesting to participate 'from the seats with everyone else' gaining a new perspective for me. The godfathers lit the smaller baptismal candles from the larger Easter Candle and then handed them the godmothers...interesting...! Overtones of Joseph and Mary, who were entrusted with the Light of Christ? Perhaps? Or was it for both godparents to share in this sacrament? Regardless, it was really beautiful. Unfortunately, the babies were not taken around the assembly (as we do here). I thought... "something was missing!" So, why do I take babies around the assembly when after they are baptized?

This practice is one of the many gifts given to me by my own pastor, Fr. Kevin Barry of St. Alphonsus, Hampton. The primary reason is to introduce the 'newly baptized' to the greater Christian Community. It's rather interesting that as the newly baptized is taken around the church, those in the assembly or at least closest to the end of the pew always want to touch the newest creation (reborn in Christ)...a wiggle of their little hand or a touch of their foot. And when that happens...your faces glow! Why? Well, despite the darkness that each of us experienced, the challenges of life: the fears and helplessness, we are reminded of the gift of hope that God gave us in the gift of His Son, Emmanuel.

My dear brothers and sisters, in these darkest days of the year, the shortest days we make a place for Jesus, a place where hope can grow as he did in the virgin womb of Mary. One way to do this might be to be honest about the fear and helplessness that we so often experience. If we dare to open this creaky, low door to the Divine Child, our fears and sorrows may become a great open place to welcome him. From this most unlikely place-as smelly as the straw of Bethlehem-from this of all places, a tiny hand will reach out toward us, and touch our hearts (not necessarily wiggle our hand or foot). God is crying a message that "we are not able to be afraid." We can be unafraid; we are dearly loved by a God who dares to become a little child... Emmanuel... God With Us !

Blessings,
Fr. David

LOOKING FOR HELP!

- 1) If you would be willing to help **count the collection** on Saturday or Sunday, please call the Rectory at 653-6850.
- 2) **MITTEN TREE** – Once again this Christmas, the **CWL are collecting mittens** and other knitted items for the children of our community. There will be a basket at the back of the Church. Thank you!
- 3) **Decorating for Christmas:** This year our decorating "party" will be December 22nd at 6:00 PM. Father David will be cooking pizza. All welcome – it is a very joyful event!
- 4) **Knights of Columbus #8094** – Looking for ways to give back? Become a member of one of the most active councils in New Brunswick! See what the excitement is all about! Contact Bob at 653-0625. Merry Christmas!
- 5) **Alter Servers** - Training provided!
- 6) **New Ideas?**

Revitalization & REALIGNMENT: What is this? What does it mean for us?

By Fr. John Jennings (added March 17, 2017)

We've been talking a lot about Revitalization & Realignment. What's the connection between the two? What does Realignment mean for us in the Diocese of Saint John? Let's begin by noting that Revitalization is intended to help us grow as disciples of Jesus. In fact, it's aimed at becoming what Pope Francis calls for in *The Joy of the Gospel* (27) "I dream of a 'missionary option', that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything..." This is a vision of church as a community of disciples, working to share the message and carry out the mission of Jesus Christ in our world. This vision is what Revitalization is all about.

But what is Realignment about? What does it mean for us? The short answer to these questions is that to realign is to become a church capable of carrying out this vision. For our diocese in 2017, it means we must examine how we are structured and how we are able to grow. Realignment will allow our local church, our diocese, to be a community of disciples on mission.

Both Revitalization and Realignment are directed to the whole Diocese of Saint John. They are not projects of individual parishes, nor of only part of the diocese. This is a project of the whole diocese. Every parish will be impacted. Not a single parish will be unaffected. Put in another way, the status quo is not an option. The structure of the whole diocese will change with Realignment.

For 175 years, our ancestors - the Catholics of this area - have held the vision of living their faith and passing this faith along to the next generations. They planned and worked to make this dream a reality for their children and their children's children. They gave of themselves to build communities of disciples who shared their faith with others. In doing so, they responded to the settings and the times in which they lived. As times changed, so did their way of being communities of disciples. Sometimes this meant adding new communities. Sometimes it meant that communities merged with others or even ceased to exist. Change is a reality of life and growth.

Realignment of our diocese is the examination and response to the changes of our own time. It means we're responding as our ancestors responded, addressing the need for change and looking to the future with hope. The population of our province is shrinking and at the same time, it's aging. Like the general population, our parish communities find fewer persons who are active. At the same time, we have fewer priests in our diocese. They too are aging and many of them are nearing retirement. More than this, the parish of the 21st century exists in a new reality. We need to work much harder at evangelization, to put more energy into sharing the Good News, both within and beyond our walls.

As Pope Francis has said, we are called to be a missionary church. He sees the church as an "evangelizing community". That means a community that shares the Good News and calls and forms every single member to be a missionary. To this end, Pope Francis calls for a reform of our structures "to make them more mission-oriented." (See: *The Joy of the Gospel* 25-28)

Realignment in the Saint John Diocese requires us to look at our current parish structures and ask ourselves: how can we realign our parishes in a way that strengthens us as evangelizing disciples? What must we do to have full churches, celebrating vibrant liturgies? How can our parishes offer a broad range of opportunities for faith formation to children, youth and adults? How can we develop communities with an outreach that touches our world, sharing the Gospel in both word and action?

What does all this promise for our future? It means our whole diocese will be different. It will have fewer parishes and missions. Parishes will be larger and will be served by a number of priests. As well, these parishes will have a support staff of lay persons. All of this is intended to provide more services, assisting the formation and growth of communities of disciples, reaching out to all ages.

A revitalized church in the Saint John Diocese will have parishes with sufficient people, material and financial resources to be missionary evangelizing communities. To turn again to Pope Francis, he has called upon us to make our parishes “environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented.” (The Joy of the Gospel 28)

We should be very grateful to our ancestors for responding to the needs of the church in their time. If we don't look to the future with hope we will be letting them and ourselves down.

In the charity of your prayers, please remember: Norma Brown, Regis Doucet, Raymond McDevitt, Corinne Delucry. Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord.

**Sanctuary Lamp in Memory of Mary Clarke
Mass Intentions**

Thursday, December 21	12:10 PM	Malvina Dignard
Saturday, December 23	4:00 PM	Ned Morrissey
Sunday, December 24	3:00 PM	William Fox
Sunday, December 24	5:00 PM	Eudore Theriault
Sunday, December 24	9:00 PM	Gail Melanson
Monday, December 25	10:00 AM	Mary May

*****NO MORNING MASS ON DECEMBER 24th.**

Stewardship for the week ending December 10th 2017

Envelopes	1822.00
Loose	188.80
Pro-Life Collection	885.55
Pre-Authorized Debit	438.65
Total	3335.00

Please note: as a Christmas present, no counters will be required for next weekend's Masses. Eucharistic Ministers' schedule is provided at the back of the Church for the remainder of December only. A new schedule for both counters and Eucharistic Ministers will appear next week.