

**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 Aruldhhas 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 OF EASTER

APRIL 28TH, 2024



### MY GOD, POOR KID. WHAT HORRIBLE PARENTS!

A teacher from Primary School asked her students to write an essay about what they would like God to do for them. At the end of the day, while marking the essays, she read one that made her very emotional. Her husband, who had just walked in, saw her crying, and asked her: 'What happened?' She answered- 'Read this. It is one of my students' essay.' The essay went like this: Oh God, tonight I ask you something very special: Make me into a television. I want to take its place and live like the TV in my house. Have my own special place, and have my family around ME, to be taken seriously when I talk. I want to be the centre of attention and be heard without interruptions or questions. I want to receive the same special care that the TV receives even when it is not working. Have the company of my dad when he arrives home from work, even when he is tired. I want my mom to want me when she is sad and upset, instead of ignoring me. I also want my brothers to fight to be with me. I want to feel that family just leaves everything aside, every now and then, just to spend some time with me. Last but not least, ensure that I can make them all happy and entertain them. Lord, I don't ask you for much. I just want to live like a TV. At that moment the husband said: "My God, poor kid. What horrible parents." The wife looked up at him and said: "That essay is written by our son."

### READINGS AND LITURGY

Acts 9.26-31; Psalm 22.25-31;

1 John 3.18-24; Gospel: John 15.1-8.

*In the first reading, Barnabas introduces Saul to the Apostles in Jerusalem. In the second reading, John teaches that we remain in Jesus by keeping his commandment to love one another. In the Gospel, Jesus uses vineyard imagery to describe our relationship with him and his nurturing Father. Jesus is the true vine, we remain in him as his branches, and his Father is the vine grower pruning us to bear much fruit.*  
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!

### THE VINEYARD AND THE GARDENER

*In First Things First, Roger Merrill relates the story of a busy man who decided to landscape his grounds. He contacted a talented woman with a doctorate in horticulture and experience in landscaping and expressed his desire to hire her to set a garden. But he emphasized to her the need to create a maintenance-free garden with automatic sprinklers and other labor-saving devices because he was too busy to spend much time on upkeep. But she said, "There's one thing you need to deal with before we go any further. If there's no gardener, there's no garden!" — In today's Gospel Jesus asserts that he is the vine, we are the branches and his Heavenly Father is the gardener.*



# MASS

## INTENTIONS

Sat	Apr 27	7:00 pm	RIP Ljuba Mijatovic
Sun	Apr 28	9:00 am	Int for all our Parishioners
		11:00 am	RIP John and Serafina Furtado
Tue	Apr 30	9:00 am	
Wed	May 1	9:00 am	RIP Dos Anjos Bronco
Thu	May 2	9:00 am	
Fri	May 3	7:00 pm	RIP Ana Buljevic
Sat	May 4	7:00 pm	RIP Erwin Egli
Sun	May 5	9:00 am	Int for all our Parishioners
		11:00 am	Int for Wishart Family

### 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, Manae Peters, Ruth, Wark family, Jose Ferreira, Peter Dasilva, Ruth Henwood, Rob Hagymasy, Les Martin, and Rose Binnie.

### FIRST FRIDAY MASS AND ADORATION

Join us for our First Friday Mass and Adoration this May 3rd at 7:00 PM. Please note there will be no morning Mass on this day.



### ST. MARY'S YOUTH GROUP

St. Mary's Carlo Acutis Youth Group is Meeting this Wednesday, May 1st from 6pm-8pm at St. Mary's in the School Gym. All youth in grades 6-12 are welcome to attend.

### HE LEADETH ME BOOK STUDY

We are meeting at 5pm on Friday, May 3rd for a Pizza Party Dinner, followed by our discussion on the Prologue-Chapter 4. We will be joining the celebration of First Friday Mass and Adoration after our meeting!

### A/V POWER POINT VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for volunteers to assist with the slides at Mass, especially at the 9am Mass. Please contact Claudia at the parish office if you are able to volunteer.

### TIME, TALENT, TREASURE

Please see the back of this week's bulletin for a wonderful article on Christian Stewardship! St. Mary's is looking for more volunteers to assist with our many ministries!

What is the gift you would like to share with your St. Mary's Parish Community to help your brothers and sisters experience the love of Christ and grow together in our role as missionary disciples?

### ALTAR SERVER WORKSHOP

Thank you to all participants of our Altar Server Workshop. It was a blessed time.



### SEEKING VOLUNTEERS TO SHARE THE GIFT OF MUSIC WITH OUR ST. MARY'S PARISH COMMUNITY!

Psalm 150 proclaims '...everything that has breath give praise to the Lord!' The choir supports and enhances the singing of the assembly. Music can inspire people to forgive, to be more joyful, to pray better and to "love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength"-Mark 12: 30. It expresses things that we are unable to express in words alone.

St. Mary's Music Ministry is looking for more choir members to sing at our 7pm Saturday evening Mass, Sunday 9am and Sunday 11am Mass. All ages and experiences are welcome!

Do you play an instrument like the piano, guitar, flute, oboe, violin, saxophone or trumpet and would like to contribute?

We are also looking for choir leaders! Have you led a choir at another parish? Are you interested in learning how to lead music at Mass? We welcome you to share your gifts with us!

Please contact Claudia at the Parish Office at 250-564-4097 or by email: clowdy1@hotmail.com

### CWL EDUCATION GRANT

The St. Mary's CWL is offering a 500 dollar Education grant for the Fall 2024/2025 School Year. This grant can be used in any accredited post secondary institution. Parishioners at any age or level are welcome to apply. This includes current grade 12 students looking to apply to Post Secondary in the fall. Application forms are available at the parish office or by contacting Cortnie Weir at: cortnie17@gmail.com. Applications are due by June 28, 2024.

## **ARE YOU READY TO START SPRING CLEANING?**

The CWL is organizing a clothing drive in support of the St Vincent de Paul Thrift Store the weekend of May 11 and 12th. Please bring your gently used clothing (infants to adults), shoes and linens to St Mary's on May 11 and 12. Shopping bags (both plastic and recyclable) are also needed. Please place your donations in the St. Eugene room before or after Mass. The CWL will deliver them to the Thrift Store! Kindly bring any other household items directly to the Thrift Store. Thank you for your support! All proceeds go to help those challenged by poverty in Prince George and the local area.

## **BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN**

Advokate Life and Education Services' annual Baby Bottle Campaign will take place from May 12th to June 16th. The mission of Advokate is "to bring hope in action to vulnerable women and low-income families facing unplanned pregnancy while promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every human being."

## **DIOCESAN YOUTH CONFERENCE**

Two Dominican Sisters, one Benedictine Monk, our priests, and a group of Catholic young adults – The Diocesan Youth Conference 2024 is going to be beautiful.

Who: For all youth Gr. 7-12

Where: The Pastoral Centre, Prince George

When: May 24-26th

How: Registration Opens April 15th

Email: Lisa Findlay with all your questions: [lfindlay@pgdiocese.bc.ca](mailto:lfindlay@pgdiocese.bc.ca)

## **BURYING THE DEAD, GRIEVING WELL**

The Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops has recently produced the guide, Burying the Dead, Grieving Well: A Guide for Catholics on Bodily Disposition and Grief. A presentation on the Church's teaching regarding the treatment of the body of the deceased (i.e., "bodily disposition") from the perspective of bereavement ministry. The Guide reflects on how we treat the bodies of the deceased and how we live out our grief when faced with the death of a loved one. It deals with death and the various forms of bodily disposition, as well as the Catholic liturgical and pastoral practices that accompany the grieving process. We hope it will be useful for families and friends dealing with the loss of a loved one, and those who welcome and accompany the bereaved.

The Guide is available online at: [bit.ly/cccb\\_buryingthedeath](https://bit.ly/cccb_buryingthedeath)

## **NATIONAL FAMILY AND LIFE WEEK**

This year's National Family and Life week will take place from **May 13 to 19, 2024** and the theme, "Love hopes all things," is drawn from the words of St. Paul: "[Love] endures all things, trusts all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13:7).

In preparation, the CCCB Standing Committee for Family and Life has prepared a Pastoral Toolkit which can be found on the shared Google Drive here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yWLR81Bx4fpG8gmxOkSJR89n4lZJv7DF> The pastoral kit includes a message from the CCCB President, the NFLW2024 logo, a catechesis, prayer intentions and daily activities for families and parishes, graphics for social media campaigns and pastoral suggestions for a Mass for family and life.

## **RIGHT TO LIFE SOCIETY PRAYER VIGILS**

Our next First Sunday of the Month Prayer Vigil will be held on Sunday, May 5th, from 2-3:00 pm on the footpath at the intersection of Hwy 16W and Ferry Avenue.

Also, in unity with the Walk for Life in Ottawa, we will be gathering for our Stand Up for Life Prayer Vigil on Thursday, May 9th, from 4-5:00 pm at the same location.

Please come and join us and be a visible witness to the sanctity of all human life from conception until natural death.

## **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: Guard What Has Been Entrusted To You** - A Sermon for the Feast of St. Joseph Guard What Has Been Entrusted To You A Sermon for the Feast of St. Joseph by Bishop Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet. <https://watch.formed.org/videos/guard-what-has-been-entrusted-to-you>

## **WALK FOR LIFE**

The annual "Walk for Life" fundraiser hosted by Advokate Life and Education Services will take place on June 1, 2024 this year.

To sign up for Walk for Life, visit <https://walkforlife.ca/> and Click "Fundraise"

Register. Click "Register Now" and complete the online registration form, ending with "Submit", at the bottom of the page. This will take you to...

Create your fundraising page. Click "Prince George – Create My Fundraising Page."

Click "Create a fundraiser." This is where you decide on your fundraising goal.

Invite your friends and family to sponsor your walk/run!

Your fundraising page link can be copied and shared on social media, email, or text for anyone to sponsor you. Hardcopy pledge forms are available at Hope for Women for in person donations such as cash and cheque.

## **RACHEL VINEYARD RETREATS**

Spring retreats for the BC interior. For emotional and Spiritual Healing. Rachel Vineyard weekend retreats offer a supportive and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release and reconcile painful post-abortive emotions to begin the process of restoration, renewal & healing. Registering now. Confidentiality assured.

**Merrit retreat April 30–May 2.** Contact Nancy at 250-867-5081 phone or text [rvkamloops@yahoo.ca](mailto:rvkamloops@yahoo.ca).

## **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](mailto:griegtograncelowna@gmail.com) or make a confidential call to 250-808-6403.

# To Be a Christian Steward

## A Summary of the U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship

*"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Pt 4:10).*

What identifies a steward? Safeguarding material and human resources and using them responsibly are one answer; so is generous giving of time, talent, and treasure. But being a Christian steward means more. As Christian stewards, we receive God's gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.

### **Disciples as Stewards**

Let us begin with being a disciple—a follower of our Lord Jesus Christ. As members of the Church, Jesus calls us to be disciples. This has astonishing implications:

Mature disciples make a conscious decision to follow Jesus, no matter what the cost.

Christian disciples experience conversion—lifeshaping changes of mind and heart—and commit their very selves to the Lord.

Christian stewards respond in a particular way to the call to be a disciple. Stewardship has the power to shape and mold our understanding of our lives and the way in which we live.

Jesus' disciples and Christian stewards recognize God as the origin of life, giver of freedom, and source of all things. We are grateful for the gifts we have received and are eager to use them to show our love for God and for one another. We look to the life and teaching of Jesus for guidance in living as Christian stewards.

### **Stewards of Creation**

The Bible contains a profound message about the stewardship of material creation: God created the world, but entrusts it to human beings. Caring for and cultivating the world involves the following:

Joyful appreciation for the God-given beauty and wonder of nature;

Protection and preservation of the environment, which would be the stewardship of ecological concern;

Respect for human life—shielding life from threat and assault, doing everything that can be done to enhance this gift and make life flourish; and Development of this world through noble human effort—physical labor, the trades and professions, the arts and sciences. We call such effort "work." Work is a fulfilling human vocation.

The Second Vatican Council points out that, through work, we build up not only our world but the Kingdom of God, already present among us. Work is a partnership with God—our share in a divine human collaboration in creation. It occupies a central place in our lives as Christian stewards.

### **Stewards of Vocation**

Jesus calls us, as his disciples, to a new way of life—the Christian way of life—of which stewardship is part. But Jesus does not call us as nameless people in a faceless crowd. He calls us individually, by name. Each one of us—clergy, religious, lay person; married, single; adult, child—has a personal vocation. God intends each one of us to play a unique role in carrying out the divine plan. The challenge, then, is to understand our role—our vocation—and to respond generously to this call from God. Christian vocation entails the practice of stewardship. In addition, Christ calls each of us to be stewards of our personal vocations, which we receive from God.

### **Stewards of the Church**

Stewards of God's gifts are not passive beneficiaries. We cooperate with God in our own redemption and in the redemption of others. We are also obliged to be stewards of the Church—collaborators and cooperators in continuing the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, which is the Church's essential mission. This mission—proclaiming and teaching, serving and sanctifying—is our task. It is the personal responsibility of each one of us as stewards of the Church. All members of the Church have their own roles to play in carrying out its mission:

Parents, who nurture their children in the light of faith;

Parishioners, who work in concrete ways to make their parishes true communities of faith and vibrant sources of service to the larger community; All Catholics, who give generous support—time, money, prayers, and personal service according to their circumstances—to parish and diocesan programs and to the universal Church.

### **Obstacles to Stewardship**

People who want to live as Christian disciples and Christian stewards face serious obstacles. In the United States and other nations, a dominant secular culture often contradicts religious convictions about the meaning of life. This culture frequently encourages us to focus on ourselves and our pleasures.

At times, we can find it far too easy to ignore spiritual realities and to deny religion a role in shaping human and social values. As Catholics who have entered into the mainstream of American society and experienced its advantages, many of us also have been adversely influenced by this secular culture. We know what it is to struggle against selfishness and greed, and we realize that it is harder for many today to accept the challenge of being a Christian steward. It is essential, therefore, that we make a special effort to understand the true meaning of stewardship and live accordingly.

### **A Steward's Way**

The life of a Christian steward models the life of Jesus. It is challenging and even difficult, in many respects, yet intense joy comes to those who take the risk to live as Christian stewards. Women and men who seek to live as stewards learn that "all things work for good for those who love God" (Rom 8:28).

After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. As the Mother of Christ, she lived her ministry in a spirit of fidelity and service; she responded generously to the call. We must ask ourselves: Do we also wish to be disciples of Jesus Christ and Christian stewards of our world and our Church? Central to our human and Christian vocations, as well as to the unique vocation each one of us receives from God, is that we be good stewards of the gifts we possess. God gives us this divine-human workshop, this world and Church of ours.

The Spirit shows us the way.

Stewardship is a part of that journey.

Source: <https://www.usccb.org/committees/evangelization-catechesis/stewardship>