

**Our Sacred Stories**  
**Earning God's Love?**

John's Gospel tells a story of Jesus visiting the Temple in Jerusalem (John 2:13-25). The Gospel relates the story as a lead into seeing our relationship with God in a new light. In Israel, the Temple was the sign and symbol of God's presence in their midst. As Jesus speaks to the people in the Temple, he redirects their attention from the physical building to himself, as the Temple.

The Gospel account points out that this all came to make sense to the disciples after the Resurrection. Jesus then, becomes the sign of God's loving presence among us. He represents a new way of seeing our relationship with God. God's care and love is not dependent on what we offer to God. It is not affected by sacrifices we might present. It is not the result of bargaining with God. Our relationship with God is a free and unconditional gift from God. We do not have to earn or win God's love and we cannot lose it. It is always there for us. This is a remarkable discovery, a great surprise.

Even in the Old Testament, this is the relationship between God and God's People, Israel. It was not always apparent to this People, but it was there nonetheless. Israel saw itself in a covenant relationship. God called them as a people to be God's own. They in return lived according to the law and in doing so, they had a fuller, happier life as special to God and caring for each other.

The relationship we see in the Old Testament appears to be one in which, like all covenants or alliances, each side promised something to the other in exchange for their bond with each other. That is, they appear to be *bargaining*. But can this happen between two very unequal parties? In this case, the relationship between God and Israel is indeed unequal – between the divine and the human.

The covenant of the Old Testament is in fact unusual. The relationship results from the free gift of God's love to this People. Over the course of the Old Testament, we learn of this quality of free gift again and again. No matter how many times Israel drifted from God, God continued to reach out in love for them. They could not live this love, nor could they lose it.

The great expression of God's love comes in the New Testament, with Jesus. Jesus proclaims it a little further on in John's Gospel as describes Jesus in conversation with a Pharisee named Nicodemus. He says to Nicodemus: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,..." (John 3:16).

The piece we hear today in the Gospel reading comes earlier in the Gospel, but it presents that same core element of our faith. Jesus is the sign of God's loving presence for us, the new Temple. Our relationship is not based on our doing something for God. It is not dependent on sacrifice or offering. It is not affected by how we keep rules or commands. It is not the result of some arrangement arrived at by bargaining with God. It is in fact a free gift of God's unconditional love, a love we do not win, and we cannot lose. Our covenant is a gift, a gift we are called to give away to other.

**Q/ How might accepting that God loves me unconditionally, affect the way I live?**

*John Jennings*



*St. Gertrude*



*Sts. Simon & Jude*



*Mission Churches*

# ***St. John the Baptist Parish***

**105 Union St. † Woodstock, NB † E7M 2W4**

**(506) 328-3306 † E-Mail: [sjbnb@rogers.com](mailto:sjbnb@rogers.com) † Website: [www.stjohnthebaptistnb.com](http://www.stjohnthebaptistnb.com)**

**Facebook page : <http://www.facebook.com/st.g.church.1>**

**Pastor:** Fr. Martin Arputham

**Mass Times:** **St. Gertrude** Saturday 4:00 pm

**Office Manager:** Diane Dube

Sunday 11:00 am

**Pastoral Council Chair:** Stuart Kinney

*Reconciliation* Saturday 3:00-3:30 pm

**Property & Finance Chair:** Marg McCallum

**St. Simon & Jude** Sunday 9:00 am

**Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 10:00 am- 1:30 pm**

*Reconciliation* Sunday 8:15-8:45 am

***Mar 7, 2021***

***3rd Sunday of Lent***

Saturday	Mar	6	4:00 pm St. Gertrude.....	Bill McCarron
Sunday	Mar	7	9:00 am Sts. Simon & Jude .....	Parishioners
Sunday	Mar	7	11:00 am St. Gertrude .....	Walter, Florence & Eugene Allison
Monday	Mar	8	.....	No Mass
Tuesday	Mar	9	9:00 am adoration 10:00 am	ts. Simon & Jude All souls in purgatory
Tuesday	Mar	9	12:15 pm St. Gertrude .....	<i>Rosary Led by CWL</i>
Wednesday	Mar	10	9: am Adoration 10:00 Mass St. Gertrude .....	Keenan DMF
Thursday	Mar	11	12:15 pm St. Gertrude.....	Jeannie Doran Bridgeo & DMF
Friday	Mar	12	9:00 am St. Gertrude.....	Don Robichaud
Saturday	Mar	13	4:00 am St. Gertrude.....	Wayne MacDonald
Sunday	Mar	14	9:00 am Sts. Simon & Jude .....	Parishioner
	Mar	14	11:00 am St. Gertrude.....	Mary & Eugene Bowlin

***Please contact Fr. Martin at 328-3306 if someone requires a visit.***

***Please have items for Bulletin by Wednesday***

**Please pray for the sick:** Nora Gagnon , Brenda Nason, Gordon Reinhart, Martha Cummings Sincennes, Bridget Keenan Wort, John Gallagher, Pat & Ed McGuire, Lori Young, Diane Ridley, Vicki Guerrera, Peter Hallihan & Arlene LaForest.  
**Those who have died:** Diana Keilty & Maxine McGrattan, sisters of Jack Keilty & Mercedes Pacheco Gamboa.

**CWL- PRAYER LINE:** Prayers will be said daily for two weeks by the CWL women, on request. All requests are confidential; no information is required. To have prayers said, call Jocelyn Keirstead (328-9485) [jkeirstead52@gmail.com](mailto:jkeirstead52@gmail.com)

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS:** (proud Supporters of Parish Activities): Monday **Bingo. Door opens at 6:00 pm.**

**50/50 – Mar. 1, 2021 Nonwinner** Tom Stanley **\$260.00** Tickets are \$2/week available at Martin's Corner Store on Broadway or bulk food store on Connell St. Tickets must be purchased by 6 pm Sunday.

### Ministries

*For St. Gertrude's, please arrive 15 minutes before scheduled Mass if you are a lector. Please arrive ½ hour before Mass if you are a Door Greeter or Screener. Please let Myrna or Ann know you are present to serve. If unable to serve, please let Myrna 328-9640 or Anne 328-8398 know in advance or find a replacement. Thank you so much for your generous offer to serve during these unique pandemic times.*

Date	Time	Lector	Hospitality/Door Greeter	Screener
Mar. 13	4:00 PM	Vicki McLean	Marjorie Allison-Ross	Charlene Prosser
Mar. 14	11:00 AM	Debi Lutes	Rudy Nadeau	Debi Rae
Mar. 20	4:00 PM	Ben Kilfoil	Gerry Crawford	Veronica Steeves
Mar. 21	11:00 AM	Brittany Harris	Claude Dube	Sharon Tenhave
Mar. 14	9:00 AM	<b>1st Reading</b> Pat	<b>Prayers Faithful +</b>	<b>2nd Reading</b> Rita
Mar. 21	9:00 AM	<b>1st Reading +</b> Tom	<b>Prayers Faithful</b>	<b>2nd Reading</b> Jacqueline

**Sts. Simon and Jude: Adoration** 9am and **Mass** 10 am Mar. 2nd rescheduled due to storm will be celebrated Tuesday March 9th. The Sacrament of **Reconciliation** will be available during Adoration.

**Sts. Simon & Jude: Meditations on the Stations of the Cross** is Friday at 7 pm . If this is to be continued throughout Lent, people need to attend. Come, bring a friend! The Stations of the Cross are usually observed during Lent, especially on Lenten Fridays and most importantly on Good Friday. It is one of the most popular devotions for Roman Catholics. The devotion consists of meditating on 14 events which form the 14 stations of the cross.

**Community Volunteer Income Tax Program** can assist people file their tax returns. This free service for people with modest income. There are no in person clinics this year, however volunteers are available to do the returns. For more information contact Jocelyn 323-0343, Terrance 328-5162 or Dorothy 276-4604.

St. Gertrude collected 88 lbs of food and delivered to the Foodbank.

**SEASON OF LENT**--The season of Lent is a time for prayer, reflection, fasting, and repentance as part of our spiritual preparation for Easter.

**The following prayer services and activities will be taking place during Lent:**

**Stations of the Cross: Every Friday** evening, beginning at **7 pm** at Sts. Simon and Jude, and at St. Gertrude

**Solidarity Sunday**, Development and Peace collection (March 20/21 weekend)

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** will be held the first Tuesday of the month at Sts. Simon and Jude (9 am), and every Wednesday morning at St. Gertrude (9 am).

**Rosary** will be held every Tuesday, 12:15 pm at St. Gertrude.

**Attention:** St. Gertrude's Church will be using the "Reservation" process for some of the liturgies during Holy Week and Easter. This process will be similar to what was used for the Christmas Eve masses. Final details for dates and times of services are being worked out at this time. Information regarding "Reservations" will be in next weekend's bulletin. Stay tuned!

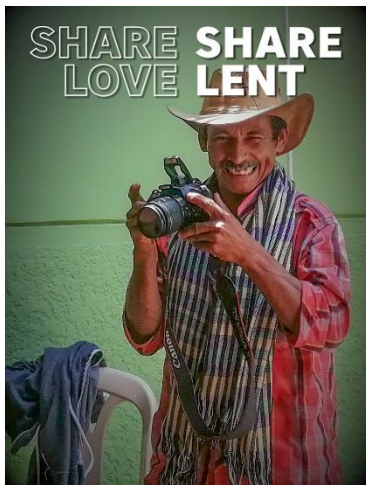
**Offertory February 27/28th**

	St. Gertrude	Sts. Simon & Jude	St. Thomas
Loose	50		
Envelops	1,510	922	90
PAD	1,747	249	77
E-Transfer	120		
Initial Envelope	<u>30</u>		
	3,457	1,171	167
Global South	20	St. Bonaventure	30
Dev & Peace	5	Lynn Lake	220
St.			
Lawrence/Benton	10	Ash Wednesday	80
Poor & Needy	40		

Donations in Memory: \$50.00 St. Thomas Cemetery in Memory of Maxine McGrattan

**WEEK 3: MARCH 1 TO 7, 2021**

**Share Love, Share Lent: Strengthening vulnerable communities.**



Did you know that Development and Peace supports a school for peasant filmmakers in Colombia?

This week in the *Share Love, Share Lent* campaign, discover the creative ways in which we assist communities in speaking for and taking charge of their own development.

In keeping with the Catholic Social Teaching principle of participation, let your Lenten journey make a difference in the world. Learn about our work and consider giving to help sustain it.

Discern and donate at [devp.org/lent](http://devp.org/lent).

