

Pastor's Corner - 10 April 2011 - Stages of Spiritual Life

In the March 23rd issue of the Prairie Messenger Ron Rolheiser, OMI, wrote on how “our spiritual struggles change with the seasons of our lives.” I invite us to reflect on it’s relevance in our lives: “As a young man, Nikos Kazantzakis, famous Greek writer, contemplated becoming a monk and once spent a summer touring monasteries. Years later, writing on the experience, he recounts a marvelous conversation he had with an elderly monk, Rev. Makarios. At one point, he asked the old monk: “Do you still wrestle with the devil, Father Makarios?” The old priest sighed and replied: “Not any longer, my child. I have grown old now, and he has grown old with me. He doesn’t have the strength I wrestle with God.” “With God!” Kazantzakis exclaimed in astonishment. “And you hope to win?” “I hope to lose, my child,” the old man replied, “my bones remain with me still, and they continue to resist.” Among other things, this story highlights the fact that our spiritual struggles change as we age and go through life. The struggles of youth are not necessarily the struggles of mid-life and beyond. Maturity is developmental. Different things are asked of us as we move through life. This is also true for spirituality and discipleship.

How does our spiritual life change and demand new things from us as we grow? ... There are three fundamental stages to our spiritual lives ... The first level John of the Cross calls the dark night of the senses, which might aptly be called Essential Discipleship: this is the struggle to get our lives together. It begins at birth but becomes more our own individual struggle when we reach puberty and begin to be driven by powerful inner forces to separate ourselves from our families so as to create a life and a home of our own ... we struggle to find ourselves, to get our lives together, to create a new home for ourselves. This can take years, might never be achieved. For most everyone, some elements of this struggle will continue throughout their entire lifetime.

But, there comes a time when this is essentially achieved, when there is a sense of being at home again, when the major questions of life are no longer: Who am I? What will I do with my life? Who loves me? Who will marry me? Where should I live? What should I do? At some point, most of us find a place beyond these questions We have found our way home again.

We then enter the second level of discipleship which John of the Cross calls Proficiency and which we might call Generative Discipleship. In essence, this is the struggle to give our lives away. Our main concern ...how to give our lives away so as to make the world a better place. These are our generative years and they are meant to stretch from the time we land in a vocation, a career and a home, until our retirement years. Our questions are altruistic ones: How do I give myself over more generously and more purely? How do I remain faithful? How do I sustain myself in my commitments? How do I give my life away?

But those are not yet the ultimate questions. At some point, a still deeper question begins to arise in us, one which invites us to a third stage of discipleship. Henri Nouwen: the question becomes: “How can I now live so that when I die my death will be an optimal blessing to my family, the church and the world?” John of the Cross calls this stage the dark night of the spirit. We might call it Radical Discipleship because at this stage we are not so much struggling with how to give our lives away but with how to give our deaths away. Our question becomes: How do I live the last years of my life so that when I die my death will bless my loved ones just as my life once did? How do I live out my remaining years so that when I die “blood and water” will, metaphorically, flow from my dead body as they once flowed from Jesus’ dead body?

Too little within our spiritualities challenges us to look at this last stage of life: How do we die for others? However, as Goethe puts it in a poem, The Holy Longing, life itself will eventually force us to contemplate whether or not we want to become “insane for the light.” Shalom.

fr. Rolf

RECONCILIATION: APRIL 15

Our Lenten journey since Ash Wednesday has invited us to conversion and repentance not tomorrow but today, one day at a time. The Scripture readings have reminded us of the power of God at work in Jesus to bring forth life from death because God’s love for us never dies. God’s love is so powerful that it can bring life and renewed hope from all kinds of deaths, including sin. Today’s Gospel of the raising of Lazarus reminds us that Jesus invites us to “come out” from the death that sin has caused so that we may rise to new life in the Spirit. This coming **Friday, April 15th**, we are all invited to come and confess our sins in a communal celebration of reconciliation so that we might be brought back to life through the Spirit of the crucified and risen Jesus. Let us all come, including families with their children who need to experience the power of forgiveness and healing, offered to us by a compassionate and loving God.

Saanich Peninsula Parish

A ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN COVENANT WITH ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
Box 2116, Sidney, BC, V8L 3S6 **web-site: www.spparish.com** e-mail: spparish@shaw.ca

Parish Office: 250-656-7433, Fax 250-483-1597, Rectory: 250-652-1990

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Reconciliation: Saturdays 4:00 - 4:30pm, or by appointment.

PASTOR: Father Rolf Hasenack, O.P. **PARISH COORDINATOR:** Gary Koett

PASTORAL COUNCIL: Janet Staebell & Linda MacGowan (Co-Chairs)



EUCHARIST AT ST. ELIZABETH'S

10030 Third Street, Sidney

Saturdays at 5 pm, Sundays at 10:30 am.
Daily on Tuesdays (8:30 am), Wednesdays and
Thursdays (9 am), and First Fridays (9 am).

RECONCILIATION AT ST. ELIZABETH'S

Saturdays 4 - 4:30pm

EUCHARIST AT

OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION

7742 West Saanich Road, Saanichton
Sundays at 8:30 am

Last Friday at Saanich Peninsula Hospital at 11 am
Remaining Fridays at 9 am in a private home.
(See “This Week in Our Parish” inside bulletin.)

APRIL 10, 2011

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Ezek 37:12-14 / Rom 8:8-11 / Jn 11:1-45



BELIEVE
IN ME AND
YOU WILL
NEVER DIE.

VISITING EUCHARISTIC MINISTRY

If you know of someone who is house-bound or in a nursing home/hospital and would like a visit from the Pastor or the Visitation Team, please call the office at 250-656-7433.

MISSION STATEMENT

*Let us be open
accepting individuals
sensitive to change
and willing to take
Courses untraditional,
unknown to us.
Let us live as
examples of God's love.*

NEW TO THE PARISH? WELCOME!

Please fill out the information below so we can get to know you. Pick up one of the blue information pamphlets next to the bulletins in the foyer so you can get to know us.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____

Need Pre-Authorized Debit package? Yes ___ No ___

Need donation envelopes? Yes ___ No ___

PARISH REPORT

COLLECTIONS:

PAD's (monthly total): \$ 4,070
April 3: \$ 4,184
Monthly Target: Approx. \$ 23,000

SHARE LENT COLLECTION REMINDER

There is a 2nd collection for Share Lent today.

IN OUR PARISH

PARISH RECONCILIATION SERVICES:

- April 12, 7 pm at Holy Cross
- April 14, 7 pm at Sacred Heart
- **April 15, 7 pm at St. Elizabeth's**
(see box at bottom of Pastor's Corner)

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: APRIL 11 & 18

The Stations of the Cross will be held at St. Elizabeth's on Mon. Apr. 11 & 18 at 7 pm.

CWL LENTEN RECOLLECTION: APRIL 12

The CWL invites all parishioners on Tue. Apr. 12, 2 - 4 pm. A time for reflection, prayer and discussion on Pope Benedict's encyclical letter *Caritas in Veritate: On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth*, led by Fr. Rolf. Refreshments to follow.

MOTHER'S DAY DINNER & DANCE: MAY 6

Tickets for the CWL Mother's Day Dinner & Dance on Fri. May 6 are available in the church foyer before and after masses, from the parish office, or from Aida Follero (250-544-1704).

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU ...

to everyone that contributed to making the South Sudan Luncheon a great success. To all the generous women who brought food and bake sale goodies, to all who worked so hard preparing and cleaning up, to everyone who participated and contributed so generously. Feel good! You have assured that 7 villages in South Sudan (approx. 7000 people) will have food. As of April 7, about **\$4,700 has been raised**. This is enough to purchase 3 team of oxen, 3 ploughs and 3 yokes. Amazing! May God bless your caring and generosity.
Stephanie Schroeder.

THIS WEEK IN THE PARISH

MONDAY, APRIL 11

1:00pm Memory Plus
1:00pm Faith Reflection Group
7:00pm Stations of the Cross

TUESDAY, APRIL 12

8:30am Mass
9:00am Eucharistic Adoration
11:30am Friendly Hours
2:00pm CWL Lenten Recollection

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

9:00am Mass
10:00am Taiji Qigong
6:00pm RCIA Stations of the Cross

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

9:00am Mass
11:30am Friendly Hours
2:00pm Prayer Group
6:00pm Taiji Qigong

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

9:00am Mass at the Legion Manor,
7601 E. Saanich Rd.
7:00pm Reconciliation Service

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

4 - 4:30pm Reconciliation
5:00pm Mass at St. Elizabeth's

SUNDAY, APRIL 17

8:30am Mass at Our Lady of Assumption
9:45am Religious Education
10:30am Mass at St. Elizabeth's

IN OUR DIOCESE

UPCOMING MISSIONS:

- Holy Cross: **Apr. 11 - 13** at 9 am or 7 pm, with Fr. Moser, OMI.
- On VISION TV: **Apr. 18 & 19**, "The Heart of the Matter": at 4 pm (repeated at 7 pm). Features Fr. Jack Lynch, s.f.m., Fr. Donald Senior, C.P. & Sr. Melannie Svoboda, SND.

CHRISM MASS: APR. 19

On Tue. Apr. 19 at 7 pm Bishop Richard Gagnon will celebrate the annual Chrism Mass at the Cathedral. For more information, please see the article on page 2 in the March Diocesan Messenger. All are invited to attend.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS AND GOOD

FRIDAY MEDITATIONS: APR. 22

Fri. Apr. 22 at St. Stephen's Anglican Church, 7921 St. Stephen's Lane, Saanichton, beginning in the Hall at 10:00 am. If anyone from our parish would like to do one of the readings at a station please call Carol at 250-652-4311. All welcome!

SACRED HEART WOMEN'S WORKSHOP:

May 7: "The Journey Dance" presented by Marilyn Diehl. **For women only.** Cost: \$10 at the door. Call Paula (250-744-2588), Mary, (250-370-0083), or Marilyn (250-479-1611) for more information.

GENERAL

VIA CHORALIS CONCERT: SUN. APR. 17

Via Choralis presents Nicholas Fairbank's *Sea Cantata* & Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* at 2:30pm at St. Elizabeth's. Tickets: \$20: adults, \$10 for 18 and under, available from Tanner's Books or at the door. For more information see www.viachoralis.ca.

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE PROJECT: APR. 17

The last of a series of open houses aimed at fostering greater interfaith understanding will be the Muslim Open House: Sun., April 17, 1 - 3pm at 1250 Esquimalt Rd., Ismaili Jamatkhana.

EARTH LITERACIES PROGRAMS:

- *The New Mysticism and Ecology*: Tuesdays, Apr. 5 - 26, 10 am - noon, Cost: \$75 for all 4 sessions (drop in \$20).
- *Conversations on the New Cosmology*: Thurs Apr 28 from noon - 1:30 pm. Suggested donation: \$10.

Both sessions with Bill Wilson, SJ PhD. Location: Friend's Meeting House, 1831 Fern St, Victoria.

HOLY WEEK IN THE PARISH

FRIDAY, April 15

7:00 pm - Reconciliation Service

SATURDAY, April 16

4:00 pm - Confessions
5:00 pm - Mass

PALM SUNDAY, April 17

8:30 am Mass - Our Lady of the Assumption
10:30 am Mass - St. Elizabeth's

MONDAY, April 18

7:00 pm - Stations of the Cross

TUESDAY, April 19

8:30 am - Mass, then Eucharistic Adoration

WEDNESDAY, April 20

9:00 am - Mass

HOLY THURSDAY, April 21

(No 9:00 am Mass)

7:30 pm - Mass of the Lord's Supper

Bring bells for the Gloria;
Special collection for the poor
Following Mass - Eucharistic Adoration

GOOD FRIDAY, April 22

3:00 pm - Passion of our Lord Service

HOLY SATURDAY, April 23

(No 5:00 pm Mass)

4:00 pm - Confessions

9:30 pm - Easter Vigil

(Bring bells, flowers, and a snack to share after)

EASTER SUNDAY, April 24

8:30 am Mass - Our Lady of the Assumption
10:30 am Mass - St. Elizabeth's

EASTER MONDAY, April 25

9:00 am - Mass

Please bring large water pitchers, large bowls and towels between April 17 - 20 for the Holy Thursday Celebration.
Please bring potted flowers for Holy Thursday and Easter, or make a donation for the purchase of flowers. Place your donation in an envelope marked FLOWERS.