

Pastor's Corner – March 8, 2020

To help internally displaced or/and persecuted people

Since last November we were looking at helping a particular family in the Idlib/Aleppo area of Syrai which family is related to parishioners of our parish. In consultation with them it was decided that actual refugee sponsorship to bring the family over to Canada was not an option. The requirements for sponsorship and the situation in which this family finds itself made it impossible. Instead we are exploring ways to send money to reputable local organizations/groups who can assist the many people and especially Christians who are internally displaced in Syria. We all have seen on TV or heard of the destruction of homes, shops etc. in the towns and villages in the disputed area of Syria. Our money can help in assuring that people have minimal shelters, food and water, medical care at a time when the area is in the grip of not just violence but also of a wintry climate. There are also organizations that try to provide trauma care and/or some schooling and formation of the children. We need to remember that a whole generation, possibly two generations, of children and youths are not receiving the basic preparation for adulthood.

As Christians we need to see this essential involvement and aid as part of living the Gospel and our faith in our times and in our world. Some 41 million people have been forced to flee from their home just like Mary, Joseph and Jesus were forced to flee more than 2000 years ago. We need to become aware and understand what is going on and then do whatever we can do to alleviate the situation and build a better future.

One of the fundraising activities in our faith community is the Art Show and Sale including an Auction which will be happening on the next two weekends. Please, support a great team of parishioners who have worked many hours to prepare this show and sale. Our thanks to these ladies; enjoy a visit of the gallery at St. Elizabeth's.

Christians in Pakistan and Muslims in India

With the increased extreme nationalism in many parts of the world we are also seeing that minority groups are being persecuted. We see this in India with Muslims as well as Christians being persecuted by Hindus.

For decades now Christians and other religious minorities in Pakistan are being persecuted; laws to protect them are not being enforced and at times completely ignored. Or laws are implemented that openly discriminate against them.

We all remember **Asia Bibi** who was on death row after having been accused falsely for blasphemy in 2009; she was finally freed in 2018 and came to Canada. She loves her homeland Pakistan and wants to return there to bring about change.

Baptized at aged eight she remembers a childhood when Christians mixed happily with Muslims. Recently she told Aid to the Church in Need that it was her faith that helped her through: "During my detention I held the hand of Christ. It is thanks to Him that I have stayed standing. Do not be afraid."

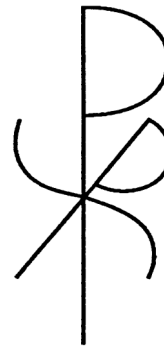
Now there is the case of a young man who was murdered. **Saleem Masih**, 22, a Christian farmer, was brutally tortured by local landowners in Kasur on charges of "polluting" a well. On February 25, Saleem had finished working in the fields in the village of Baguyana, Punjab and while he was washing himself a group of Muslim men, including Sher Dogar, Iqbal, Altaf, Jabbar and Haji Muhammad, started beating him. They cursed and beat him, calling him a "filthy Christian". They tied his hands and feet, and continued to torture him with sticks and a red-hot iron rod, causing him multiple fractures and internal and external injuries, all over his body. The attackers kept him for about three days before returning the body to his family.

Christian and Muslim religious leaders have expressed their pain and outrage for the persecution suffered by Christians and, "also recalling that suffered by Muslims in India invite (the government), for both scenarios, to avoid any discriminatory law and behavior, respecting the principle of citizenship ...and to actively promote interreligious harmony in Pakistan."

The Cross in our midst

The big cross at St. Elizabeth's remind us that the cross is very much part of our daily life. It also reminds us that we can try and live our own crosses in a similar way that Jesus did by choosing to develop in us the attitudes and virtues which brought Jesus to fully live his humanity. You are invited to write on a piece of paper that which you wish to develop during your Lenten Journey. The cross after all is made up of two cross pieces, becoming the symbol of decision: you can go one way or the other. We, the world are at the cross roads; people who have a crucifixion are people who make hard decisions and who persist. Jesus says: "Whoever does not take up his cross daily and follow me are not worthy of me (Matthew 10:38)."

Shalom, fr Rolf, OP



Saanich Peninsula Parish

A ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN COVENANT WITH ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Parish office: 10030 Third St, Sidney

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Rectory: 250-652-1557

Web site: www.spparish.com

Parish Office Coordinator: Melanie Ehrlich

Parish Council Chair: Mary McGovern

SUNDAY EUCHARIST at ST. ELIZABETH'S

10030 Third Street, Sidney

Saturdays at 5 pm, Sundays at 10:30 am.

at OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION

7742 West Saanich Road, Saanichton

Sundays at 8:30 am

WEEKDAY MASSES

Daily at St. Elizabeth's: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, First Friday: 9:00 am

Third Friday: 9:00 am at the Legion Manor, 7601 East Saanich Road, Saanichton

Last Friday: 11:00 am in the Chapel at Saanich Peninsula Hospital

Remaining Fridays: 10:00 am in a private home (for location see "This Week in Our Parish" ...)

RECONCILIATION at ST. ELIZABETH'S: Saturdays 4 - 4:30 pm, or by appointment.

2nd SUNDAY OF LENT

MAR. 8, 2020

Genesis 12: 1-4

2 Timothy 1: 8-10

Matthew 17: 1-9

Psalms 38: Let your love

be upon us, Lord, even

as we hope in you.



3rd SUNDAY OF LENT

MAR. 15, 2020

Exodus 17:3-7

Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

John 4: 5-42

Psalms 95: O that today

you would listen to the voice of the

Lord. Do not harden your hearts.



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 ___

COLLECTION

Pre-Authorized Debits (Feb.).....	\$ 5,335
Feb. Total	\$ 10,988
Mar. 1	\$ 3,102
Monthly Target	\$ 25,000

RECEIPTS FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES

2019 receipts are available for pick up in lobby

ART SHOW & SALE/AUCTION

*Sponsored by Saanich Peninsula Parish
All proceeds go toward supporting Refugees
in Syria*



St. Elizabeth's Church
SAT/SUN, MARCH 7 & 8
SAT/SUN, MARCH 14 & 15

Viewing and Bidding Times:

Saturdays - 1-5pm Sundays - 11:30-2pm

Winning bids on auctioned pieces will be contacted after Sunday March 15th

Original Art pieces, including those from our own Parishioners and Renowned Artists

PARISH DISCUSSION ON POVERTY

Parish Council will lead a round table discussion at St. Elizabeth's on Sat. March 14 from 9:15am—12:00 noon to reflect on questions relating to poverty in our community: what causes poverty; what you/we can do to make a difference, specifically here in our own community, for example re. housing, one of the main causes of poverty. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops/CCCB in Nov. 2019 released a statement entitled [Poverty in Canada: Ensuring Safe, Secure and Affordable Housing](#); review by going to the CCCB website cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Poverty_and_Affordable_Housing_EN.pdf

SUSPENSIONS DUE TO HEALTH CONCERNS

Given the flu season and current health concerns and at the direction of Bishop Gary, we are asked for the time being “to avoid hand-to-hand contact at the Our Father & at the sharing of peace; receive the Eucharist only under the species of bread.” Please, respect this. The Holy Water at the entry into church has been removed. Please, stay home if you are sick or not feeling well; practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing.

LOOKING FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

If you can contribute your time and talent please let Fr. Rolf or Council members know.

NEXT 2 WEEKS IN OUR PARISH

MONDAY MAR. 9 & MAR. 16

Office closed

1:00 pm Faith Reflection

TUESDAY MAR. 10 & MAR. 17

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth's

11:30 am Friendly Hours Luncheon

2:00 pm CWL General Mtg. (Mar. 10)

7:30 pm K of C General Mtg. (Mar. 17)

WEDNESDAY MAR. 11 & 18

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth's

10:00 am Taiji Qigong

THURSDAY MAR. 12 & 19

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth's

11:30 am Friendly Hours

2:00 pm Prayer Group

FRIDAY MAR. 13 & 20

10:00 am Mass at the home of Paula Pinder Mar. 13

9:00 am No mass at the Legion Manor (Mar. 20)

SATURDAY MAR. 14 & 21

9:15 –12:00 Round table discussion on poverty

4:00 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Mass at St. Elizabeth's

SUNDAY MAR. 15 & 22

8:30 am Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption

10:30 am Mass at St. Elizabeth's

11:30 am Coffee Fellowship

11:30 am Samahan Fellowship (Mar. 15)

For the latest schedule see tinyurl.com/sppcal

STATIONS OF THE CROSS DURING LENT

All invited to come to St. Elizabeth's to pray the Stations of the Cross every Monday eve at 7 pm.

PARISH RECONCILIATION SERVICE: APR. 3

Mark your calendar for Friday, April 3, 7:00 pm for our Parish Reconciliation Service at St. Elizabeth's. An evening of prayer, reflection and opportunity for reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation; bring your children so that they may grow in the knowledge and experience of this important aspect of their faith journey.

RECONCILIATION SERVICES ELSEWHERE

March 17 - St. Rose of Lima, 7 pm

March 25 - Sacred Heart, 7 pm

March 31 - OLO Rosary, 7 pm

LENTEN MISSIONS: MAR. 23, 24

A Lenten Mission will be offered by Bishop Emeritus Fred Henry:

Mon. Mar. 23: 9:30 am - Holy Cross

7:00 pm - St. Joseph the Worker

Theme - “When all is said and done, the only tragedy in life is not to become a saint”

Tues. Mar. 24: 9:30 am - St. Patrick's

7:00 pm - St. Joseph the Worker

Theme - “Knowing who I am in Christ - my true value”

CWL MEETING: MAR. 10

All ladies of our parish are invited to our Tues. Mar. 10 General Meeting; we will welcome our new executive & honour member milestones.

THANK YOU!

The Knights of Columbus thank all of those who attended and supported us at our latest Pasta Nite supper. Hope you enjoyed the food, socializing and the entertainment. The event was a great success; big thanks to all of you who participated in the raffle. We raised just over \$600 for our Coats for Kids charity program. Thank you to Francois Vinay, our Grand Knight, and his helpers who prepared another great meal. Also, a big thank you to Beacon Landing Restaurant (Chef Miquel) in Sidney for donating the pasta and meat sauce. Please, thank them as well by visiting the restaurant for some fine dining in the future.

CHRISM MASS: APR. 2

Chrism Mass & Transportation This year the Chrism Mass will be held at St. Peter's in Nanaimo on Thursday, April 2 at 7 pm. A bus (coach) will be departing St. Joseph the Worker parish at 4 pm that day and then departing St. Peter's at 9:15 pm for a scheduled return at 11:15pm in Victoria. Reservations are required & cost is \$25 per person (paid when booking) for the bus. To book your seat, contact Sandy or Jennifer at St. Joseph's parish at 250-479-7413 or sjtwp@rcdvictoria.org.

MINISTRY TO THE SICK & SHUT-INS

Can you spare a few hours a week to visit the lonely and sick? If so, we need you! The goal of the “Ministry of the Sick and Shut-ins” is one of caring and connecting to those in our parish who are sick and homebound, so that they feel “connected” to our community. For info. Fatima at 656-8863, bfgwarner@shaw.ca or office

LETTER FROM BISHOP GARY

On our journey through this year's Share Lent Campaign, we focus on the Amazon and its peoples. In his homily from the concluding Mass of the Pan-Amazonian Synod, our Holy Father suggests that:

The cry of the poor is the Church's cry of hope. When we make their cry our own, we can be certain our prayer, too, will reach to the clouds. Homily of Pope Francis, concluding Mass of the Pan-Amazonian Synod, 27 October 2019

Pope Francis extended this idea of an organically living earth in Laudato Si' when he described the Congo basins and the Amazonian forest as living and breathing, as the richly biodiverse lungs of our planet (Pope Francis, May 24, 2015, Laudato Si', para. 38). This delicate balance must be preserved and maintained “for we cannot overlook the huge global economic interests which, under the guise of protecting them, can undermine the sovereignty of individual nations.” To consciously damage the delicate balance of the people and the eco-system for economic gain will be to the detriment of humanity.

As stewards of this planet and its people, please contribute to the special collection for the Share Lent Campaign in support of providing assistance to the Amazonian Indigenous and the seringueiros of Brazil. This collection will occur on the 5th Sunday of Lent which will fall on March 29, 2020. In addition, to educate and inspire action in your parish community I encourage you to use the resources available from the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) website at <https://www.dev.org/en/len/resources>.

In Communion, Most Reverend Gary Gordon, Bishop of Victoria

Sand area in front of the altar at St. Elizabeth's:

Just as Jesus had to face temptations we are asked to face the deserts of our life and overcome bringing about change, turning away from and turning to. Beneath the surface of sand there are innumerable invisible seeds which can come to life with the life-giving water of Jesus' Spirit given to us at baptism and each day. At Easter the empty well will be filled, a new beginning which results in new growth, seeds of compassion and goodness will spring to life in us.