

Saanich Peninsula Parish

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

Our 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."

St. Elizabeth church & parish office: 10030 Third St, Sidney, V8L 3B3

Parish office: 250-656-7433 **Rectory:** 250-652-1557 **Fr Rolf cell:** 250-652-1990

Email: spparish@shaw.ca

Web site: www.spparish.com

Office hours: Tuesday to Friday, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Pastor: Fr. Rolf Hasenack, O.P. **Parish Office Coordinator:** Melanie Ehrlich

Email: rhasenack@rcdvictoria.org **Parish Council Chair:** Mary McGovern

SUNDAY EUCHARIST

ST. ELIZABETH'S, 10030 Third Street, Sidney: **Sat. 4:30 pm and Sunday 10:30 am.**

OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION, 7742 West Saanich Rd.: **Mass suspended temporarily**

WEEKDAY MASSES

AT ST. ELIZABETH'S: Tues., Wed., Thurs. & first Friday of the month: 9:00 am

RECONCILIATION at ST. ELIZABETH'S: Saturdays 3:30 – 4:00 pm or by appointment.

NEXT 2 WEEKS IN OUR PARISH

SATURDAY, May 20 & 27

11:00 am Funeral Mass for Jack Cullen (May 20)

3:30 pm Confessions

4:30 pm Mass at St. Elizabeth

SUNDAY, May 21 & 28

10:30 am Mass at St. Elizabeth

TUESDAY, May 23 & 30

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth

WEDNESDAY, May 24 & 31

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth

10:00 am Taiji Qigong

THURSDAY, May 25 & June 1

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth

FRIDAY, May 26 & June 2

9:00 am Fr. Rolf on Pender Isle (May 26)

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth (June 2)

SATURDAY, May 27 & June 3

3:30 pm Confessions

4:30 pm Mass at St. Elizabeth

Pastor's corner : Ascension and Pentecost May 21 & 28, 2023

There are a number of feast days which we celebrate with wonderful music, great liturgies, good food and great company. I am sure we can all name them: Christmas, New Year's, Easter, the baptisms of our children/grandchildren. And then there are those other feast days which in our consumer world take on ever greater dimensions: Valentine's Halloween, Mother's Day, Father's Day, anniversaries, etc. All these feast days are celebrated with their holidays, their gifts and cards, with special flowers and balloons, specialized food, etc.

Well, there is another very important and great feast day which so far has escaped the consumer mentality but which for us Christians is really as great a feast day as are Christmas and Easter: yes, Pentecost! **Just as Christmas would have no meaning without Easter and vice versa, so the Ascension and Pentecost are an inevitable outcome of Christmas and Easter. They are all linked and very important.**

Easter was the celebration of the highlight of our faith: in Jesus God became flesh and lived within our human existence. Jesus tried to tell us who God is for us. Jesus' whole life, his words and his actions revealed to all of humanity the incomprehensible,

illogical and irrepressible love of God for all of humanity. In Jesus, we learned that God loves us as brother, as father, as sister, as mother. God's love, God's mercy and healing, God's wisdom and strength became real, became flesh in Jesus and were present in our midst. And all this so that Jesus might by his suffering and death free us from all that binds and oppresses us and bring us "home" to God. At the feast of the Ascension we celebrate that the Christ event came full circle and that the risen Lord, born the vulnerable babe in Bethlehem, has

gone home to God and glory after a full life of joys and pains, struggles and hopes. The feast of the Ascension is a reminder to us that we too are destined to go home and live in the glory of God, that **we might become sharers in God's divinity**.

Jesus the anointed one needed to leave us. Why? Well, Jesus himself gives us a response. In the Gospel of John Jesus will say that he has lost nothing of what the Father had given him. Jesus is not returning to God and glory empty-handed! Jesus has taken with him everything that is ours. He has taken us with him because he loved us so intensely, so closely that we could not possibly be separated from him! God remains close to the ones he loves, to all of us. How? By the gift of the Holy Spirit: "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him/her to you (**John 16:7-8**)." This Spirit God is already in us!

It took a while for the first disciples of Jesus to understand that the physical presence of Jesus in their lives would continue with the greatest gift that Jesus could give them: the Spirit of God which had encouraged him in his life and which raised him from death. At first they were frightened, confused at the loss of their beloved Jesus but then God again took the initiative and the gift of the Spirit overpowered their fear and paralysis and empowered them to become messengers of the good news by their words and actions. The power of the Spirit had no limits in them and now in us.

Yes, the Spirit is here in us and yet not fully here. When Jesus' Spirit is in us, then we are the Lord's and he is ours. And yet, there is still the pain of waiting for the Spirit's fulfillment in eternal life, the pain of hope not completely fulfilled, the pain of a pilgrimage not ended. But we do not look up toward heaven or to the future like the men of Galilee in **Acts 1:10**: "People of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?" We are called to keep our eyes fixed on the present. We are called in our daily lives to make real among us the "first fruits" of the gift of the Spirit in us. **Karl Rahner** in his book "The Content of Faith" tried to explain this paradox of the already here and the not yet by writing: "When the Spirit performs the miracle of faithfulness and courage in our poor lives from day to day, there is the Spirit of Christ. And where the Spirit of Christ is present, the true festival of the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated."

Let us today pray that we may come to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the gift of the Holy Spirit given to us at our baptism and renewed especially at Pentecost. Already described in **Isaiah 11:2-3**, these seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are later described by Saint Ambrose as poured out on a believer at baptism and confirmation as being: **Spirit of Wisdom; Spirit of Understanding; Spirit of Counsel; Spirit of Strength /courage, Spirit of Knowledge; Spirit of Godliness /reverence; Spirit of Holy Fear / awe and wonder**. Let us pray that we may once more receive these seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and that our daily lives may bear it's fruits described in **Galatians 5: 22-23** as being: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." I think we can all agree that we and our world need to strengthen these fruits of the Spirit both personally and collectively so that this world might be a better place. Shalom, Fr. Rolf, OP

Report Sexual Abuse

To report sexual abuse by a clergy member, religious, employee, or volunteer,

visit RCDVictoria.org/Responsible-Ministry or call
1-800-968-3146

To report sexual abuse or cover-up by a Catholic Bishop, visit
BishopReportingSystem.ca or call
1-866-892-3737

KIDS CORNER !! [Click Here for May 21, 2023 Children's Liturgy](#)

[VISITING MINISTRY MEETING: Tues. MAY 23 at 9:30am](#)

The Parish will restart the regular visiting ministry of the sick and shut-ins in the hospital, nursing homes or in their homes. A number of people have already expressed their intention to join this wonderful ministry. If you are also interested, please come to this meeting on Tuesday May

23 at 9:30am. For more info contact **Fatima Warner** at **250-656-8863** or the **Parish Office** at **250-656-7433** or e-mail spparish@shaw.ca

LIBRARY CORNER

Our display on books on Mary continues plus books written by or about women can be seen in the library. As the library ministry expands we require assistance with future activities, no experience needed. We have decided to form a Friends of the Library group. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Cathy at 250-652-2365 or Theresa at 250-652-9828 or see us after Mass on Sunday. Thank you.



LOOKING FOR A STAGE MANAGER FOR A FUNDRAISER AT ST. ELIZABETH'S

Melanie is bringing a comedy production of **The Carol Burnett Show** to St. Elizabeth's in August: all proceeds going towards helping refugees in Aleppo, Syria. The local cast (some from our own church!) are getting ready to begin rehearsals in June, but we need a stage manager! Can you assist? This key role helps the director (Melanie) by keeping notes of actors' entrances/exits and stage scene set up and requirements. This person

would attend rehearsals a couple of nights a week starting in June. Interested in helping out? Please contact Melanie at the parish office: **250-656-7433** or cell: **250-886-0858** or email her at melanie.ehrlich@hotmail.com

FOOD FOR FAMILIES: MAY 27 & 28

Please help end hunger in our community. The Knights of Columbus will be collecting donations of food and funds during the Mass on May 27 & 28. Many in our community are struggling through hardship and unable to provide for their families. Food for Families help ensure that as few possible go hungry. Your help is appreciated!

FAITH STUDY: "Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues"

St. Andrew's Cathedral is offering a 8-week Summer Faith Study on Bishop Robert Barron's study on sin and virtue. Classes both in-person and online. In- person sessions will be at **2:00 pm on Wednesdays at the Parish Office (740 View Street), starting June 7**. Online sessions will be on **Zoom at 7:00 pm on Thursday evenings, starting June 8**. There is a fee of \$25 to cover participant workbook and access to Bishop Barron's video recording (a subsidy is available if the fee is not affordable). Please email Bernadette O'Connor, Course Facilitator, at det.oconnor@gmail.com to register or phone the parish office at 250-388-5571.

NEWS from the DIOCESE:

The **Diocesan Family Camp & Conference** will be held on August 17th – 20th. Registration opens for all families of the Diocese of Victoria on April 8th. Register before May 15th for the early bird price! On May 15th, registration will open for all families, including those beyond our Diocese. For more info and to register, please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/9th-diocesan-familyconference-august-2023-tickets-593430365197>

Roots of Reconciliation May 29 – June 1 at Holy Cross Parish in Victoria from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm each day: a four-day workshop along the Returning to Spirit reconciliation model (<https://www.returningtospirit.org/>). Insights developed during the workshop create space for participants to discover how previously-held behaviours, judgement, assumptions or perceptions have kept them stuck in a disempowering story. This is for you if you want to explore your own assumptions, judgements and behaviours

To register and for info visit <https://www.returningtospirit.org/workshopcalendar>, email info@returningtospirit.org, or call 204-889-4579 or 1-855-244-3963. Participate in this powerful and potentially life-transforming experience!

Rachel's Vineyard will be hosting their first retreat on Vancouver Island from Aug. 25-27 at the Bethlehem Centre in Nanaimo (2371 Arbot Rd). This ministry is a safe place for people to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. Weekend retreats offer a supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release, and reconcile painful post-abortive emotions to begin the process of restoration, renewal, and healing. For info contact Nicola at: rachelsvineyardvancouverisland@gmail.com

[CCCB Letter to Government of Canada](#)

We are all well aware that mental health has become a major health issue. Unfortunately, it is precisely at this time that the federal government is in the process of expanding the “eligibility criteria” for euthanasia and assisted suicide to persons whose sole medical condition is a mental illness. We urge you to read this open letter from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops which echoes the concerns raised by many mental health and disability advocacy groups and other faith groups. You will find two documents on line at <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/news/cccb-message-on-permitting-persons-living-with-mental-illness-to-access-euthanasia>

*“The Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) remains committed **to advocating for a culture of social responsibility and care for human life at all stages and in all circumstances.** In recent years, Canadians have grown in their realization that persons living with mental health challenges, including mental illnesses, and their caregivers require more support, encouragement, and resources. Individuals and families can attest that **healing and hope are possible** with the accompaniment of qualified mental health caregivers as well as the support of families and engaged communities. We are called, as Christians today, to continue to give witness to our Lord’s actions and presence by following His example:*

LET US respond with compassion and tenderness to persons struggling with mental health challenges, including mental illnesses; LET US advocate on their behalf for greater access to professional and community supports; LET US work to remedy factors which can adversely affect mental health, such as loneliness, marginalization, stigmatization, poverty, and abandonment.

As members of the CCCB Permanent Council, we remain profoundly concerned about, and strongly disagree with the expansion of the ‘eligibility criteria’ for euthanasia and assisted suicide (i.e., ‘Medical Assistance in Dying’ or ‘MAiD’) to persons whose sole medical condition is a mental illness.^{1 2}

Expanding access to euthanasia and assisted suicide for individuals living with a mental illness closes the door to any hope of recovery. Furthermore, as the CCCB has affirmed on a number of previous occasions, euthanasia/assisted suicide undermines the universal and inviolable dignity of human life and harms the building up of society; it cannot be condoned under any circumstances.³ It is even more objectionable, therefore, when the government extends euthanasia/assisted suicide to individuals whose mental condition may predispose them to suicide, especially since it is known that health care across Canada is failing to provide accessible and reliable treatment for patients living with mental health challenges, including mental illnesses. To enable or assist in the suicide of these patients directly contradicts national suicide prevention strategies and reneges on our collective social responsibility to provide persons living with mental health challenges with treatment, support, and hope through therapeutic interventions.

Recognizing our common dependency on one another in varying degrees throughout life, we are called to support each other with compassionate care and meaningful encouragement. Yet, oversight bodies and news media are reporting a growing number of troubling cases of people choosing ‘MAiD’ because of loneliness, poverty, social pressure, as well as lack of support and access to care. A patient diagnosed with a terminal condition, or living in a situation of prolonged suffering must be offered whatever life-affirming relief and hope are available. Therefore, in addition to robust medical care, patients should have access to comprehensive **palliative care.**

United with many others, we urge the Catholic faithful to continue asking the federal and provincial/territorial governments to direct more funding toward palliative care.

*We also encourage the faithful to grow in their own [education about palliative care](#) and to help raise awareness about its benefits which, on top of robust medical care, can improve the **affective, social, spiritual, and psychological well being of the patient.**⁴ We encourage individual Catholics and their families, faith communities, Catholic healthcare professionals and any other people of good will to continue courageously and unwaveringly **to witness to life, to tend to and accompany the sick, to resist pressure to support or participate in ‘MAiD,’ and to pray that our law makers may see the harm in what they are permitting to take place.***

*Finally, let us not forget **to pray for those living with mental health challenges, including mental illnesses,** and for those who care for them, that God may strengthen them in hope, and that they may find the support they need from family, healthcare professionals, faith communities, and others.”*