

Pastor's corner – September 8, 2019 – Symbol of the Cross

This coming week on Sept. 14 we celebrate the feast of the Holy Cross. I would like to briefly remind us of the meaning of the Cross. We are so used to it as a sign even if we see fewer of them in homes. Of course, in a politically correct world most religious symbols are absent from public buildings, schools, hospitals, etc. We need to remember that for the first Christians the cross was a sign of humiliation, of defeat. Criminals and traitors were crucified and the first Christians did not wish to be identified in that way and so they used other symbols, such as the good shepherd, the sign of the fish (Ichtus) or the Greek alphabet "chi/ro" (Christus = anointed one) which Jim Russell carved on the lectern/ambo at St. Elizabeth's.

Early in the fourth century, after the conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine to Christianity, his mother, St. Helen, went to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage. Over what was believed to be the hill of Calvary a temple had been built to honor the Roman goddess of love, Aphrodite. Helen had this temple destroyed in order to build the basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. During the excavation, workers found wooden crosses and legend has it that the cross of Jesus was identified when a dying woman was healed as she touched the wood. The cross quickly became the object of great veneration as "the wood upon which hung our salvation." One of the first uses of the cross as a symbol is still visible on two huge wooden entrance doors to the Basilica of Santa Sabina in Rome, a former temple converted to a church in the early 4th century, which in the 13th century became the centre of the Dominican Order in Rome.

The cross does not glorify suffering; it should not be seen as an explanation or justification for the suffering of this world, of the crosses that people, and especially the poor, the ill, the persecuted, must bear. Rather, **the cross is a symbol of the triumph of love and faithfulness of God in Jesus, the triumph of Christ over evil and sin.** In Jesus the cross became an instrument of transformation, of redemption and glorification. At the beginning of John's Gospel (John 3:13-17) Jesus has a conversation with Nicodemus where Jesus links the lifting up of the serpent in the book of Numbers (21:4-9), which later became the symbol of the healing of medicine, to the lifting up of the Son of Man who heals the world and connects heaven and earth by his death, resurrection and ascension. John wanted his readers to remember **Isaiah 53:13: "Behold my servant shall prosper; he shall be lifted up and glorified exceedingly."** The Greek word used *hyposothēnai* – "to be lifted up" has a double meaning: it both refers to the "lifting up" of Jesus on the cross as well as to the lifting up of Jesus in glory at the resurrection and ascension. As a result of the servant's suffering, many were healed by "looking upon", that is by "believing in", God's power as symbolized in the bronze serpent. So also believers in Jesus are healed and saved by the lifting up of the crucified, risen Lord. As a result of their "looking upon", of their belief in, the crucified-exalted one, the faithful is granted life in Him, that is, a share in the same process of death-to-life exaltation (John 3:15).

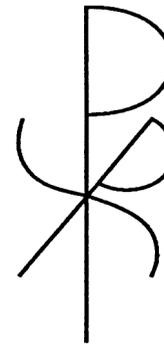
The cross became in Jesus life-giving. Our own crosses can also move us beyond bitterness and anger so as to become truly life-giving. A blind person can develop a greater sensitivity to listen to others, to the beauty of sound in nature, in music. The person with arthritis develops a greater empathy for those deformed in body or mind. The recovered alcoholic becomes sensitive to the difficulties and challenges of the power of all addictions. The person who has been through a divorce and victimized through poor relationships can learn how to heal broken hearts, or at least share pain and courage. The failures, hurts and disappointments of our own as well as of other people can make us grow as a person, make us more mature, bring us to look at what is essential in life. We try and make our kids see things in that way specially in a world that all too often overindulges and overprotects children from negatives! We are all invited to look at our lives and ask ourselves: how has this cross shaped my life? If I didn't have this cross, what kind of person would I be? Lived in faith and trust our crosses and pains can become blessings, truly life-giving!

Luckily we have the media giving us at times beautiful and inspiring images of people who became better people because they faced with courage physical, mental or emotional challenges. Let us remember that the Greek word "crisis" also means "opportunity." Let us celebrate the many people who because of their faith in God have, like Jesus transformed their own experiences of death, illness and sorrow of every kind into meaningful, life-giving experiences.

Sheila Cassidy jailed and tortured in Chile under Pinochet as a prisoner of conscience, wrote this victory poem:

"I believe no pain is lost. No tear unmarked, no cry of anguish unheard, lost in the hail of gunfire or blanked out by the padded cell. I believe that pain and prayer are somehow saved, processed, stored, used in the Divine Economy. The blood shed in Salvador will irrigate the heart of some financier a million miles away. The terror, pain, despair, swamped by lava, flood or earthquake, will be caught up like mist and fall again, a gentle rain on arid hearts or souls despairing in the back streets of Brooklyn."

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

Phone: 250-656-7433

Email: spparish@shaw.ca

Office hours: Tuesday to Friday 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Pastor: Fr. Rolf Hasenack, O.P.

Email: rhasenack@rcdvictoria.org

Mailing address: 10030 Third St, Sidney, V8L 3B3

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 - 4:30pm, or by appointment.

SEPT. 8, 2019 - 23rd SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Wisdom 9:13-18

Philemon 9-10, 12-17

Luke 14: 25-33

Psalm 90: Lord you have been our dwelling place in all generations.



SEPT. 15, 2019 - 24th SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Exodus 32: 7-11, 13-14

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Luke 15: 1-32

Psalm 51: I will get up and go to my Father.



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 ___

IN OUR PARISH COLLECTION

August.....\$ 11,086
Pre-Authorized Debits (Aug).....\$ 5,240
Sept. 1.....\$ 4,677
Monthly Target.....\$ 25,000

We offer condolences to the family of Liz Van Den Bussche who died. Funeral service will be at First Memorial on Sat. Sept.14, 10:00 am.

ARMATUS UPDATE!

Registration for "**Armatus: Learn To Protect**" has been sent out to volunteers within most ministries. To date 38 out of the 135 volunteers have completed all their modules. If you have not already received your login registration, or would like it to be resent to you, please call Melanie: 250-656-7433. Most parishioners are required to complete 3 training modules:

- 1)"**Keeping Your Church Safe**",
- 2)"**Policies – Diocese of Victoria**" and
- 3)"**Preventing Sexual Exploitation – for Ministries**"

Please look for the email from Armatus which will include your User ID and Password. Check your spam or junk mail as it may have accidentally bumped into there. Volunteers who cross-over into other ministries will only have to complete the training once. Thank you in advance for completing your modules sooner than later!

LITURGY LAY TRAINING: SEPT. 14

The Liturgy Lay Leadership Training workshop for parishioners, who will lead Sunday and weekly Word & Communion liturgies in the absence of a priest, will take place on **Sat. Sept 14th at St. Joseph's from 8:30—3:30 pm. You must register** for this important ministry training with Gwen Jahelka at gjahelka@rcdvictoria.org

FAITH FORMATION IN OUR PARISH

"*It takes a village to raise a child.*" While parents are the main source of a child's faith formation, our entire faith community plays a role in this process. Once again we are looking for a few parishioners to step up to help with this very important ministry. If you are at all interested in learning more about helping with faith formation and sacramental preparation for the children of our parish, please contact Father Rolf as soon as possible.

NEXT WEEK IN OUR PARISH

MONDAY SEPT. 9 & 16

Office closed

TUESDAY SEPT. 10 & 17

9:00 am Service of the Word (Sept. 10)
11:30 am Friendly Hours Luncheon
2:00 pm CWL General Mtg. (Sept 10)
7:30 pm K of C General Mtg. (Sept. 17)

WEDNESDAY SEPT. 11 & 18

9:00 am Communion Service (Sept. 11)
9:30 am Eucharistic Adoration (Sept. 18)
10:00 am Taiji Qigong

THURSDAY SEPT. 12 & 19

9:00 am Mass at St. Elizabeth's
11:30 am Friendly Hours Luncheon
2:00 pm Prayer Group
6:00 pm Taiji Qigong
6:00 pm Parish Council Mtg. (Sept. 12)

FRIDAY SEPT. 13 & 20

10:00 am Mass home of Joan Mitchell (Sept. 13)
9:00 am Mass at Legion Manor (Sept 20)

SATURDAY SEPT. 14 & 21

4:00 pm Confessions
5:00 pm Mass at St. Elizabeth's

SUNDAY SEPT. 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 (Sept. 15)
11:30 am Ministry Fair (Sept. 15)
11:30 am Samahan Fellowship (Sept. 15)
11:30 am Eritrean Luncheon (Sept. 22)

For the latest schedule see tinyurl.com/sppcal

MINI "MINISTRY FAIR: SEPT. 15

Have you ever wondered what a particular Ministry in our church is all about? What do they do exactly? What kind of initiatives do they offer to better our community and enrich our faith and draw us closer to God? How can I get involved and what would the commitment be? If you have thought about volunteering and have asked these questions, we invite you to stick around after the 10:30 mass on September 15th. We will have these 4 important Ministries set up with Info Booth's at the back of the church. They will be:

- **Religious Formation of children**
- **Visiting Ministry of the sick and shut-ins**
- **Music Ministry**
- **Catholic Women's League**

These Ministries serve to educate our youth, serve those who cannot attend mass or enrich our faith community spiritually in other ways. We need more volunteers for these ministries! Take time after mass to speak with the leaders of these ministries and find out how you can get involved!

OUR LADY OF PENAFRANCIA MASS: SEPT. 14

Join local Bicolanos and Marian devotees in our annual mass for Our Lady of Penafrancia! Sat. Sept 14 at 11:30 am at St. Patrick's Parish in Victoria (2060 Haultain St.) Questions: contact Aida Follero or Karen Borre Estrada at follero@shaw.ca or 778-426-2207.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS MASS: SEPT. 18

You are invited to join Bishop Gary Gordon for a special Mass in honour of health care workers and volunteers on **Wed., Sept. 18, 2019 @ 7 pm at St. Andrew's Cathedral**. A reception will follow. For more information and to register, visit <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/events/2019healthcaremass>

ERITREAN BENEFIT LUNCHEON: SEPT. 22

Annual Eritrean Benefit Luncheon: "*A lunch with a purpose*" St. Elizabeth's Church, Sunday, September 22nd at 11:45am (immediately after the 10:30am Mass) Delicious food, bake sale, treasure table, wonderful company, by donation. All proceeds used to sustain self-help projects in Eritrea, Africa. Organized by **Hanti Sidra One Global Family**

CONCERNED ABOUT THE AMAZON FOREST?

D & P invites you to a special webinar to launch the Fall campaign, *For our Common Home: A future for the Amazon, a future for all.* - Pope Francis's theme for a special Synod of Bishops.

St. Joseph the Worker , Tues. Sep. 10 from 10am-noon

DIOCESAN POSITIONS

Diocesan Job Postings: Senior Accountant, teachers, after-school care workers & casual bus drivers – See Diocesan website.

CWL- HERITAGE FASHION SHOW AND TEA FUNDRAISER: OCT 11

Join the ladies of the CWL for an afternoon of fashion and tea and light snacks on Friday Oct 11 from 1-4pm at St. Elizabeth's. Lovely models will be fashioning attire from days gone by including period pieces from the late 1800's and early 1900's with stories to go with them joined by a piano accompanist! Tickets are \$20 per person. Tickets go on sale starting in September in the lobby of the church. Mark the date now!

ADULT FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES!

Credible Christian: Countering the New Atheism - 5 Wed. evenings starting Sept 25 6:30 to 8:00 pm @ Pastoral Center.

Register on Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.com>
Beloved: Spirituality for the Autumn of Life- 6 Thursday evenings starting Sept 26th from 7:00 to 8:30 pm @ St. Patrick's Parish Victoria. No registration needed. Contact Glen Palahicky for further information. gpalahicky@rcdvictoria.org

EUTHANASIA CANADIAN LAW AND YOU

Sun. Sept. 29, 1 - 3:30 pm. at St. Joseph the Worker, **Dr. Jim Lane** will speak on the very serious implications of new regulations on Medical Assistance in Dying. The screening of the film "Fatal Flaws" will highlight the experience of euthanasia in Holland. Literature will be available to enable you to determine your own advanced care planning. Everyone Welcome.

EARTH LITERACIES FALL PROGRAMS BEGIN

Nature & Psyche with Layman Pascal, Sept 10-17 and with Gertie Jocksch SC, Sept 24-Oct 1 10am to 12pm. \$75 or \$20 Drop in. Also musical concert featuring **Jennifer Berezan** (Sept 28) & **Chris Webster** (Sept 27). All events will take place at *Friends Meeting House*, 1831 Fern St., Victoria. Check out www.earthliteracies.org

RETROUVILLE FALL RETREAT: SEPT. 27-29

Retrouville offers a welcoming and loving space to couples who have been living with the pain of a failing marriage. Marriages can be healed and restored. For information or to register, call: 604-530-6710 (leave a message to be called back) or visit www.retrouville.org and www.retrouvillevancouver.com

FAITH REFLECTION WILL RESUME ON MONDAY OCTOBER 7