

**Pastor's Corner - February 3, 2008**

In April 2006 our Parish community agreed to collaborate with several other Christian communities in sponsoring the Awor refugee family which at that time was united in Beirut, Lebanon. After many hurdles it seems that the reunification of the family to a safe home here in Victoria will soon be a reality. We hope to be able to welcome this spring William Deng Awor (44) and his wife, Mary Arasuma Ladja Isad (36), and their three children born in Beirut: Michael (7) Josephine (6) and Dak (1½). Following is an update.

This project is a collaborative effort of four faith communities (First Unitarian Church of Victoria; St. Andrew's Cathedral Refugee Association; Sacred Heart RC; Saanich Peninsula RC) in the greater Victoria area, to provide the initial support required to reunite the Awor refugee family in Canada.

The journeys of William and Mary began from distant points in Africa and Southeast Asia. He is from the Southern Sudan and she is from a rural area on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. They met in Lebanon, married, and now have a family including three children. Yet their search for peace and freedom for their family remains an elusive goal.

William fled to Lebanon 13 years ago to escape persecution in Sudan where he was imprisoned for his religious beliefs and human rights activism. He has experienced repeated mistreatment from employers who failed to fulfill their obligation to acquire a work permit for him, been imprisoned for not having a work permit, and faced an imminent and constant threat of deportation to Sudan.

Mary came to Lebanon for employment as a domestic worker and has experienced mistreatment from her employers. She converted from Islam to Catholicism and married William. She has been denounced and threatened with death by her family as a consequence.

Both and William and Mary had come to Lebanon hoping for greater peace, safety, and economic opportunity. They have realized very little of their hopes for a better life, facing instead the ongoing threat of imprisonment and deportation and even worse threat of imprisonment or death if returned to their respective homelands. If deported, their family would also be torn apart in a way that would be almost impossible to bring together again.

The fighting in Lebanon in the summer of 2006 caused further hardship: William lost his job and, worse, the members of the family were separated. Mary and the children were assisted in fleeing Lebanon and are now staying with the Sisters of Charity in Manila, Philippines. Mary is not allowed to return to Lebanon.

The family has now been apart for 1 ½ years. William was interviewed last May at the Canadian embassy in Damascus and was accepted as a refugee applicant to come to Canada. Then it was discovered that Mary lacked any identity papers, even a birth certificate, so there was a further delay as the Sisters in Manila assisted in building up the identity papers that Mary needed.

In recent months further hardships have occurred. The young daughter, Josephine (6), was diagnosed in Manila as having tuberculosis and received treatment. In early January Mary and the children had their medical exams for the visa process; they were all found to be healthy!

William was arrested in early December on a false work permit issue, spent three weeks including Christmas in jail, but was finally freed on Dec. 31. He has now had his medical checkup and was found to be in good health.

All of the family's records are now in the final stage of processing. We can anticipate that the family will be coming to Canada in one to three months!

As you read in this bulletin a dynamic group led by members of the Parish Council is organizing a fundraising event on Friday April 4, a real spring-fling! They count on your support.

*fr. Rolf*

Fr. Rolf, OP

# 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: 656-7433**, Fax 483-1597, Rectory: 652-1990

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 8:30am - 12:30pm  
RECONCILIATION Saturdays 4:00 - 4:30pm, or by appointment.

**PASTOR:** Father Rolf Hasenack, O.P. **PARISH COORDINATOR:** Neil Lensen

**PASTORAL COUNCIL:** Chair, Bob Fowler, 655-3078

**EUCHARIST AT ST. ELIZABETH'S**

10030 Third Street, Sidney

Saturdays at 5pm, Sundays at 10:30am  
Daily at 9am Tuesdays, Wednesdays  
& Thursdays and First Fridays  
Liturgy of the Word at 9am on Mondays

**EUCHARIST AT**

**OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION**

7742 West Saanich Road, Brentwood Bay

Sundays at 8:30am  
Last Friday at Saanich Peninsula Hospital at 11am  
Remaining Fridays at 9am in a private home  
See inside bulletin

## FEBRUARY 3, 2008

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*Zeph 2:3; 3:12-13 / 1 Cor: 1:26-31 / Mt 5:1-12*

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Need donation envelopes? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## PARISH REPORT

### COLLECTIONS

Jan. 20th Collection	\$3,309.50
Jan. 27th Collection	\$4,406.90
PAD's	\$2,435.00

### PRE-APPROVED DONATIONS (PAD's)

You have the option to support our parish through the use of a pre-approved donation rather than the weekly white envelopes. On the 5th of each month, your contribution is automatically debited from your bank account. Information package are available at the back the church. If you have any questions, please call Jim Williams at 656-9658 or Neil in the office.

## COVENANT

### ST. MARY & STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCHES

Feb. 10 9:00 St. Stephen's BAS Holy Communion  
10:30 St. Mary's BCP Holy Communion

## IN OUR PARISH

### FAITH REFLECTION GROUP: FEB. 4

Monday, February 4th at 3pm at St. Elizabeth's.  
Topic: *Respect for Life*

### C.W.A. NEWS

The meeting on Tuesday, Feb 5 will be held at the home of Ev Battison, 8650 Moxon Terrace, Sidney, (656-2578) at 1:30 p.m.

### ASH WEDNESDAY - FEB 6th

Special Mass - 7:30 p.m.  
Everyone is invited to attend the start of our Lenten journey as a community.

### DEVELOPMENT & PEACE:

Wednesday, Feb 6 - the beginning of Lent and also of our Share Lent Campaigns. Please look at the display in the Foyer and help yourself to any of the materials on the table. D&P Committee.

## THIS WEEK IN THE PARISH

### MONDAY, FEB. 4TH

9:00am Liturgy of the Word  
3:00pm Reflection Group

### TUESDAY, FEB. 5TH

9:00am Mass  
11:30am Friendly Hours  
7:30pm KofC Executive Meeting

### WEDNESDAY, FEB. 6TH

9:00am Mass  
10:00am Taiji Qigong  
7:30pm Ash Wednesday Mass

### THURSDAY, FEB. 7TH

9:00am Mass  
11:30am Friendly Hours  
2:00pm Prayer Group  
6:00pm Taiji Qigong  
7:30pm RCIA

### FRIDAY, FEB. 8TH

9:00am Mass in home of Joan Gilbert  
992 Barkway Terrace 652-9294

### SATURDAY, FEB. 9TH

9:00am FSNA General Meeting  
5:00pm Mass at St. Elizabeth's

### SUNDAY, FEB. 10TH

8:30am Mass at OLO Assumption  
9:45am Children's Religious Education  
10:30am Mass at St. Elizabeth's

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Many children and their families have now entered the final stage of their journey towards full participation in the sacraments of Holy Eucharist and /or Confirmation. During today's celebration, these children will be 'called by name' as they were in baptism, and will be enrolled as candidates for First Communion and/ or Confirmation. We have an important role to support these children and their parents, to welcome them, and to give them a stronger sense of belonging to the caring Christian community of St. Elizabeth's. Please remember to pray for these children and their families.

### K OF C PASTA NIGHT: FEB. 22

Tickets are \$10 each. Support a great cause and enjoy an evening of fun and visiting.

### SPRING FLING/TALENT NIGHT/POT LUCK

APRIL 4th - Fundraiser for the AWOR family. Volunteers and talented entertainers needed. Please call Bob Fowler 655-3078 or Janet Moir 655-6781. MARK YOUR CALENDAR.

### GOOD FRIDAY COMMUNITY WORSHIP SERVICE

As in previous years you are invited to pray together with members of other Christian Churches on Good Friday morning. This year the community worship service will be held at the Mary Winspear Centre. Stations of the Cross precede the service. Join like minded Christians, on Sun 24 Feb 6:30 - 7:30 pm at the Jazzaniah Café, 106 - 2376 Beacon Ave, Sidney praying for the success of the above APCC Good Friday Service.

### COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Join a select group of volunteers by assisting with the task of preparing the coffee, etc short period. Coffee preparation takes about 20 min. before Mass and clean up afterwards. Only May and June remain open. For details call Helene at 656-0572, helene.dizy@shaw.ca

### CWL NEWS

Support BIRTHRIGHT by donating baby clothes special box in the foyer.  
CWL general meeting Tue, Feb 12, 2 pm - DVD "After the Tsunami" will be screened during the meeting. It's a must see!  
Help needed at Bake Sale Mar 8 & 9 after Mass

## GENERAL

### Celebrate Catholic Schools Week

St. Patrick's Catholic Elementary School will have an "Open House" Sun Feb 10th 12-2pm & Tue Feb 12th 9-10:30am at 2368 Trent Street, Victoria Tel: 592-6713 check out our success stories! Spaces are available in some grades. St. Andrew's Elementary open to you on Feb 14

11:30 - 1:30pm. Enjoy a complimentary light lunch and an exciting taste of the academic excellence that is a tradition at St. Andrew's.

### HOLY CROSS 25TH ANNIVERSARY: FEB. 22

Holy Cross Parish invites all former Holy Cross parishioners to a buffet dinner at the church, 4049 Gordon Head Rd., on Friday, Feb. 22nd at 6pm. Tickets are \$30 per person. Contact the office at 477-5321 for further more information or e-mail office@holycrossvictoria.org.

### LENTEN MISSIONS:

Feb 25 - 28 at St. Andrew's Cathedral with Fr. Dominic Borg, OCD: morning and evenings each day.  
Mar 3 - 5 at St. Patrick's in Victoria with Fr. Rolf, noon and evenings each day.

### LENTEN NOON FORUM - FEB 6

Church St. John Divine, 1611 Quadra, Wendy Fletcher on Leadership in a Re-Mapped Social Christianity: Power, Place & Practice.

## WORKSHOPS / LECTURES

**QUEENSWOOD** 2494 Arbutus Road, Victoria  
www.queenswoodcentre.com

For Registration or Information call 477-3822  
Or e-mail info@queenswoodcentre.com

Mid-Life Directions Weekend Workshop Feb. 8 - 10 Facilitator Barbara Baillie. *Is mid-life a time of crisis, transition or renaissance?* Fee is \$190 for live-in or \$140 for commuter. The fees include some meals and the manual.

The Creative Power of Dreams Feb 9 - Facilitator Mary Jane Wilson, cnd. The fee for this day is \$60 and includes lunch. *Do you dream in technicolour or black & white.*

### PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES: FEB. 6

Centre for Studies in Religion and Society UVic. Wednesday, Feb. 6th, David Strong Building, Rm C118 at 4:30pm. Presenter: James Young, Dept. of Philosophy, Uvic. Theme: *"Varieties of Cultural Appropriation."* A 40 minute talk with discussion - open to the public.