

Last week I wrote about Advent being a time of preparation during which we are not just waiting but during which God is waiting for us. I hope you were able to make your own Advent wreath and to see it as a daily reminder that we need to renew the search for God in our daily lives, in the ordinary events and daily activities of our lives. Even the Christmas celebrations which already occupy people's attention such as the Christmas parade, the beautiful decorations everywhere, the music, the calls for help for the people in need, the office or volunteer work related parties, all these can remind us that we need to prepare our hearts for the God who is awaiting us. But let us make sure that we leave something for Christmas itself. You might wish to decorate your house in stages with at first only a bare tree, a simple green wreath on the door with a purple bow, the beginnings of a nativity crèche without the figures, etc. Little by little you add to these, each time reminiscing past Christmases, the stories which bind you together as families, as communities, and, yes, as people of faith. A simple heart-felt prayer of thanksgiving, of hope expressed in your own words or/and the meditation on one of the rich readings of God's Word this Advent time could be added. All these help us to put Christ back into Christmas. We need to balance the sacred and the secular and find the presence of God in the world.

One of the international events which remind us of God's presence in our world is the continued presence in our midst of refugees and the call in the Gospel asking us to welcome the stranger in our midst: "Be not forgetful to welcome strangers for thereby some have welcomed angels unawares." The arrival of the twins in the Schroeder household, the happy settling in of the Awor family into permanent housing in the faith community of Sacred Heart in Victoria, these are part of the overall responsibility we have to do something about the some 35 million refugees in the world.

On several occasions in the past I invited us to pray for and remember the plight of Christians in countries such as India (Orissa State where several tens of thousands Catholics have been driven from their villages into refugee camps), Pakistan (the burning of Catholic churches and the imprisonment for blasphemy of innocent people) and the Middle East. In Iraq some 40 Christians have been killed this year alone and more than 12,000 have fled, mostly into refugee camps in the Iraq/Syria border area. Their religious leader, Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho (65), was kidnapped in February 2008; his tortured body was later found in a shallow grave on March 13. This past month the Chaldean Catholics in Iraq elected Emil Shimoun Nona (42) as the new Archbishop of Mosul, northern Iraq, where we as Dominicans have a community of men as well as the Sisters of St. Catherine. On November 26 the church of St. Ephrem was bombed and the motherhouse of the Sisters was damaged. The Archbishop: "We need prayers, help, moral and material support ... to rebuild people who are afraid and are losing confidence and hope."

Vancouver area parishes have sponsored and welcomed some 90 Chaldean rite Catholic refugees. I believe we can and must do something here in Victoria. To this end we have joined the Anglican Diocese here on Vancouver Island in asking RSTP, a Toronto-based non-profit group, to organize a training session on Friday and Saturday, February 5 and 6, 2010. It is open to all those who wish to know more about the sponsoring of refugees and who are willing to help. Please, mark your calendar for this New Year's resolution; details will follow in January.

Shalom. 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: 250-656-7433, Fax 250-483-1597, Rectory: 250-652-1990
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 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:** Gary Koett
PASTORAL COUNCIL: Chair, Tim Leadem 250-656-5628

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

EUCHARIST AT
OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION

7742 West Saanich Road, Saanichton
Sundays at 8:30am
Last Friday at Saanich Peninsula Hospital at 11am
Remaining Fridays at 9am in a private home
See inside bulletin



2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 6, 2009

Bar 5.1-9 / Phl 1.3-6, 8-11 / Lk 3.1-6

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 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 _____

Phone# _____

Need Pre-Authorized Debit package? Yes ___ No ___

Need donation envelopes? Yes ___ No ___

PARISH REPORT

COLLECTIONS:

PAD's (monthly total):	\$ 3,455.00
November 1st	\$ 4,369.75
November 8th	\$ 5,674.45
November 15th	\$ 4,895.50
November 22nd	\$ 3,564.90
November 29th	\$ 4,156.75
Monthly target:	Approx. \$23,000.00

WELCOME

To Fr. John Domotor, who is replacing Fr. Rolf this weekend.

We offer condolences to the families and pray for the repose of the souls of:

Patrick McCarthy
Frances Worrall

CHURCH ENVELOPES ...

Are ready for pick up. This year they are sorted by envelope number (in the past they were sorted by name). If you don't remember your envelope number, you can look it up on the "Envelope Listing by Name" sheets next to the envelopes. If you switched to Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) in 2009 your envelope number will have changed (also, the envelope boxes for PAD donors is smaller, as it only contains the special collections).

PRE-APPROVED DONATIONS (PAD's)

Please consider supporting our parish via pre-approved donations instead of weekly envelopes. This is a convenient way to contribute to the parish. Each month your contribution will be automatically debited from your bank account. Packages are available in both churches. If you have any questions, please call Gary in the office at 250-656-7433.

COVENANT

ST. STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Dec. 13, 9am - St. Stephen's BAS Holy Communion

IN OUR PARISH

FUNERAL SERVICE: DEC. 7

The funeral service for Frances Worrell is on **Monday, Dec. 7** at 1 pm at St. Elizabeth's.

THIS WEEK IN THE PARISH

MONDAY, DEC. 7

1:00pm Memory Plus
1:00pm Faith Reflection Group
1:00pm Funeral for Frances Worrall

TUESDAY, DEC. 8

9:00am Mass
11:30am Friendly Hours

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 9

8:30am Mass
9:00am Eucharistic Adoration
10:00am Taiji Qigong
2:00PM CWL Christmas Party

THURSDAY, DEC. 10

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

FRIDAY, DEC. 11

9:00am Mass in the home of Vera Gear,
7993 W. Saanich Rd., 250-652-2774
7:00pm **Advent Journey Reflection**

SATURDAY, DEC. 12

5:00pm Mass at St. Elizabeth's

SUNDAY, DEC. 6

8:30am Mass at Our Lady of Assumption
9:30am Religious Education
10:30am Mass at St. Elizabeth's
11:30am **Breakfast with Santa**

ADVENT JOURNEY THROUGH SONG AND REFLECTION: DEC. 11

An evening of songs, images and story-telling that will take you through the dark days of Advent to the humble light of Christmas. **Fri. Dec. 11 from 7:00 - 8:30 pm** at St. Elizabeth's featuring "Noteworthy" - Ray Folk, Karen Morwick and Maureen Hertz. Donations gratefully accepted. All funds raised will go towards a new keyboard. Come join us!

BREAKFAST WITH ST. NICK: DEC. 13

St. Nick will be visiting us with a treat for all the young children. Join us after mass on Sunday, Dec. 13, for pancakes with whipped cream and strawberry toppings. Adults: \$4. Children are FREE!

A GIFT FOR SOMEONE SPECIAL!

Buy a card to pay one years school fees for a child in a village school in Eritrea. Cards for other needs are also available. Cards are \$20 each, and are available after masses (or contact Stephanie Schroeder at 250-655-3635).

GIFTS FOR NEEDY PENINSULA CHILDREN

We are again into the Christmas season with gifts, baking & family gatherings. Remember the less fortunate - there are now more of them than ever! Please assist us to help as many as possible to know the Christmas feeling. Take a tag or two from the tree at St. Elizabeth's (two less expensive gifts doubles the number), buy the suggested gift or something similar, and return it **UNWRAPPED** with the tag attached. Our parish is known for it's generosity. Gifts **MUST** be in by Dec. 13. Thanks and blessings to you all, Fran & Clem Tisserand.

CWL CHRISTMAS PARTY: DEC. 9

The CWL Christmas Party is on Wed. Dec. 9 from 2 to 4 pm. Bring an exchange gift valued at \$5, an item for our food bank basket, and a food treat for the party if you are able. Information: Rhoda-Marie 1-250-629-6292. If you have been thinking of joining our group come and meet our members. If you need a ride to the party please call Rhoda. Time for fun!

CHRISTMAS PACKAGES: DEC. 12/13

The Grade 6/7/8 Religious Ed. Class will be assembling Christmas packages for St. Vincent de Paul again this year. If you have any new men's gloves, toques, socks, razors or shaving cream to donate we would appreciate it. The students plan to speak to the congregation and collect money to purchase some of these items over the weekend of Dec 12-13. For more information contact Liane Funk, 250-656-1204. Thank you in advance for your support.

TAIJI QIGONG CLASSES CHRISTMAS BREAK

The last date for Taiji Qigong will be on Thu. Dec. 10. Classes will resume on Wed. January 13.

CWL THANK YOU

The CWL would like to express their appreciation for the support they received from the parish during the luncheon and bake sale last weekend. Funds raised will be directed to the local charities and the CWL work with shut ins and our elderly members. God bless you all for your generosity. Rhoda Waddington.

RECONCILIATION SERVICE: DEC. 17

Thursday, December 17, 7:00pm at St. Elizabeth's.

GENERAL

ADVENT CANDELIGHT SERVICE: DEC. 6

"Through Frozen Nights We Wait". St. Paul's United Church, 2410 Malaview Ave. is hosting an Advent Service of Candlelight & Hope on Sun. Dec. 6 at 7pm. It is an evening of music with the St. Paul's Choir accompanied by Maria VanderHoek in Cello and guest poet, Barbara Colebrook Peace. Admission by donation.

ST. ANDREW'S REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS: DEC. 10 & 16

- **Advent Mass:** Thu. Dec. 10 at 11 am
- **Advent Service:** Wed. Dec. 16 from 7 - 8:30 pm at Sacred Heart Church - entertainment & celebration through drama, music, readings and prayer.

SPONSORING FAMILY MEMBERS: DEC. 8 & 15

ICA, a unique non-profit organization that combines arts and social services to address the needs of immigrants and refugees and promote the embracing of cultural diversity in our community will offer two sessions: *Sponsoring a Parent or Grandparent*, on Dec. 8 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm and *Sponsoring a Spouse, Common-law or Dependent Child* on Dec. 15 from 6 - 9 pm at the BCGEU Building, 2994 Douglas. To register call Gaylene Turner at 388-4728, ext. 113.

CHRISTMAS TURKEY LUNCHEON: DEC. 19

Peace Lutheran Church, 2295 Weiler Ave., Sidney is offering a free Christmas turkey lunch on Sat. Dec. 19 from 11:30 - 1:00 pm. Everyone is welcome!

FUNERAL SERVICES:

CARE Funeral Services has opened an office at 9787 Fourth St., Sidney between Beacon and Bevan.

WORKSHOPS / LECTURES

QUEENSWOOD 2494 Arbutus Road, Victoria:

- **Annual Queenswood Christmas dinner and concert:** Sun. Dec. 6 (meal 5pm, concert 7 pm)
- **Forgive and Be Free:** Dec. 11-13

For more info see www.QueenswoodVictoria.ca, call 250-477-3822, or send an e-mail to info@queenswoodcentre.com.