

Dear members of our faith community;

October 18, 2020

I hope you were able to celebrate **Thanksgiving** last weekend in some form. After all, **we have so much to be thankful for: for our faith which gives us hope and courage, for the gift of life and freedom, for the gift of family and community, and as one of the children said: “for living in Sidney where we are safe”!** The pandemic has made us even more aware how important family and community are, how important are all those elements which bring us and keep us together. As we celebrate the Eucharist together either virtually or physically with social distancing and limited live music, let us remember how the Eucharist, this meal of thanksgiving, continues to give us strength and hope for the journey ahead assured as we are of God’s presence with us on the journey.

**Blessed as we are at the table of plenty, at the table of hope (remember Joey Velasco painting of street children in a Last Supper painting), we are called to share our resources with those who have less or have little including right here in our own Diocesan Family Community and with who we are connected. This year’s Diocesan Appeal, named appropriately “Horizon of Hope” by our Bishop Gary Gordon, is calling us to help others in our Diocesan community.**

**There are programs and parishes in the Diocese that have suffered from lack of income. As a result the Diocesan Appeal is more important than ever. Many of you will have already or will receive in the mail “Horizon of Hope” pledge forms. I encourage you, even urge you, to give whatever you can to this years’ appeal so that with your thanksgiving gift we will be able to reach our goal of \$ 46,000.-.** If you have not received an appeal form, please make out your cheque to “Diocesan Appeal” (writing “Saanich Peninsula parish” on it) or put cash in an envelope marked in the same way. You can leave your donation either at the back of the church or in the mail slot.

**As you may remember 20% of whatever our Parish will raise will be given back to our Parish. This year the Parish’s 20% portion of the Diocesan Appeal will go to support our “twin partners” here on Vancouver Island which are the parishes of Holy Family in Ucluelet and St. Francis of Assisi in Tofino. These parishes with no priest are being served by Sister Janet Bayron, RVM and Sister Lilia Semeniago, RVM from the Philippines.**

I discussed this “**twinning**” with our finance committee in July and with our Parish Council in August. **Both agreed with this objective.** Catholic Missions Canada will no longer support the “missions” in outlying areas of the Diocese of Vancouver Island. As a result our Diocese needs to do so to a greater extent. Several parishes have come forward: Holy Cross Parish will help the small parishes in the North: Port McNeill, Port Alice, Port Hardy, Alert Bay; St. Joseph the Worker will help the parish of St. Peter and St. Paul in Gold River. Several of our parishioners have relatives/friends in Tofino and Ucluelet; **through twinning we can and are encouraged to establish and maintain an ongoing relationship with these communities. Please, let us know in what way you see this possible and desirable.**

**To access the Bishop’s Appeal website and watch Bishop Gary’s inspiring message of hope click here: <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/horizonofhope2020> Scroll down after the video to the “Missions & Outreach” section to look at what we did with our parish portion of the 2019-20 appeal; have a look at the pictures from Pasobolong and our stained glass window!**

**Important ! Please, read for your information and consideration:**

- The celebration of **baptisms, weddings and funerals** have and will continue to be possible but with limitations and observance of strict protocols. Most of the time the families decide to make these private and for very small gatherings. If you wish to receive the **Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession)**, please, contact me to arrange for a day and time.
- Because the **Religious Formation** program for children cannot continue in the traditional way, there is now a **Saturday 3:00 pm children's mass for school-age children together with their parents/grandparents**. If you and your children/grandchildren wish to attend, please let us know 😊.
  - On **Saturday November 7 at 3pm, we will celebrate together the Baptism of 2 children and the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist** of those children who followed the religious format program in 2019/2020.
- Regarding our **Cemetery**: We are continuing to bury the remains of loved ones at our northerly part of **the cemetery on West Saanich Road** near Our Lady of the Assumption Church since the cemetery is registered in the name of the RC Bishop of Victoria. Prior to the burial I inform the Chief of the Tsartlip Nation of the burial assuring him that we respect and observe their tradition of burying loved ones before noon. Peter and Liz Kuhr and I continue to look after the general upkeep of the cemetery. **Thank you, Liz and Peter**. Please, help in clearing the graves of your loved ones of plastic and glass.
- Regarding **in-person-meetings: Alcoholic Anonymous/Noon Serenity**, which is an essential service and ministry, is now meeting in the reception area of **St. Elizabeth's on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays at 12:00 noon**. Thank you to the volunteers who designed a precise concrete plan and who organize these very important gatherings observing all the necessary protocols of our Parish and of BC Public Health.
- Melanie has developed a "**Saanich Peninsula Parish**" profile on **Facebook**, which we hope will enable parishioners to ask questions, discuss issues, provide news, all for the spiritual wellbeing of parishioners. We invite those of you who are Facebook users to join this **Private group!** Look for the profile that shows our stained glass window!
- The hospital and **home Visiting Ministries** will continue to be by phone or electronically.
- **The next special collections:**  
**Evangelization of Nations (World Mission Sunday): this Sunday October 18**  
**Development & Peace (Share Lent): Sunday November 8**

**Please note: NO MASSES ON SATURDAY OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup> (BC Election Day)**

Due to the BC Election on Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup>, when St. Elizabeth Church will be used as a polling station, there will be **NO 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm MASS on Sat. October 24<sup>th</sup>.** **Instead there will be a mass on Friday October 23 at 5pm.**



Our “**CALLING BEE**”, formed by more than 20 volunteers under the direction of Melanie, has begun contacting fellow parishioners (YOU!) via phone to reach out and say “Hello”. This is a simple and direct way to see how everyone is doing and if there is anything that we as a parish can do for you. At the same time they will be confirming your contact details and household members. We would like to ensure that we have the correct information on file! Thank you in advance for your participation and thank you to those wonderful volunteers who have stepped forward to assist with this ministry 😊

Enjoy the following video of 50 countries around the world affected by Covid19, singing “Amazing Grace” - [Click Here!](#)

**Please, let us know your ideas and suggestions at 250-656-7433.  
Shalom, Fr. Rolf, OP**

**Mass Registration & Guidelines to follow that will help us:**

- Continue to let the Parish Office know by **Thursday at noon** if you wish to attend an available mass time. Call 250-656-7433 or email [spparish@shaw.ca](mailto:spparish@shaw.ca)
- **Do not substitute your spot for someone else to attend.** We need you to keep your spot for contact tracing.
- **No church hopping.** If you are a member of Saanich Peninsula Parish, you should be staying here. The other churches in the Diocese are doing their part, like us to keep availability to their members.
- If you are absent for **more than 2 weeks and there is no communication to the office**, we will have to remove you from the roster.
- **Please, follow the social/physical distancing and other regulations. They are for the protection and safety of other people in the community as well as for your own. And remember, other people feel safer when you observe them.**
- **We thank you for your cooperation, flexibility and understanding.**

## Summary:

There are now 5 Sunday Masses, all at St. Elizabeth's:

- **Friday 10:00 am Mass** Please, remember that during this pandemic time such a weekday Mass is considered to be **your** Sunday Mass.
- **Saturday 3:00 pm Mass** (This is a children's family mass)
- **Saturday 5:00 pm Mass**
- **Sunday 8:30 am Mass**
- **Sunday 10:30 am Mass**
- Sunday 1:00 pm Mass in French at St. Jean-Baptiste in Victoria

**As a reminder, we are still unable to gather at Our Lady of the Assumption and there are no weekday masses at St. Elizabeth's.**

**Aside from sacramental and other "essential" ministries, all "in person" meetings/gatherings of various groups and organizations remain suspended.**

## **PLEASE, DO NOT DROP-OFF ITEMS AT THE CHURCH**

Due to Covid19, the St. Vincent de Paul Society is not picking up clothing, books, housewares or garden items etc. of any kind from our church. Please do not drop off/leave any items at the church either outside or inside! You will need to look for alternative means of donating your items. ***Our library is also not accepting books during this time.***

## **SHARING OUR BOUNTY – FOOD DRIVE DURING MONTH OF OCTOBER**

Thanksgiving reminds us of how fortunate we are. Each October we are invited to share with those in need in our community by bringing non-perishable food items for our Food Drive. During October we are invited to share with those in need in our community. Please bring **non-perishable food** and place in front of the altar. Thank You.

## **OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION**

Thanks to all who are continuing your weekly donations including the Pre-Authorized Debits (PAD's) and E-Transfers. This is essential for the Parish to stay afloat and to keep our staff. If you wish to send via E-Transfer, you can do so directly to the Diocesan Development Office at [developmentoffice@rcdvictoria.org](mailto:developmentoffice@rcdvictoria.org). Include your Full name and Parish Name "Saanich Peninsula Parish" in the e-transfer message so it can be passed on to our parish. Let us know at [sparish@shaw.ca](mailto:sparish@shaw.ca) once completed so we can track it.

**If you give donations for several weeks, could you, please, consolidate them into one donation or cheque and place it into one envelope.** It helps our counters a great deal!

The Diocese and the Parish have received three payments under the "Canadian Federal Emergency Wage-subsidy" program (CEWS) for March, April, May. The Diocese and we

were not eligible for June. The CEWS program is continuing from July to December with new guidelines but at a much lesser (50%) and every month at a declining rate; we have received **2 payments for July and August of \$1785/month**, which is slightly less than one quarter of our monthly payroll. Please, express gratitude to our Canadian Government.

### **CELEBRATE MASS ONLINE AT ST. ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL IN VICTORIA**

Join **Bishop Gary Gordon** and other celebrants for mass, Monday to Friday at 7 PM as well as on Sundays at 10 AM through live stream from the Cathedral. Simply click on:

[www.rcdvictoria.org/diocese-of-victoria-live-stream](http://www.rcdvictoria.org/diocese-of-victoria-live-stream)