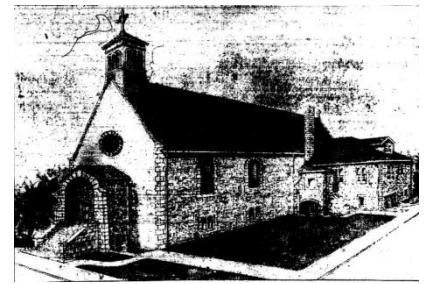


Our Lady Queen of Peace Church (since 1930)

SHRINE TO INFANT JESUS of PRAGUE (since 2003)



PASTOR Rev. John Domotor
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Carol Molloy
PARISH MUSIC DIRECTOR: Ryan Narciso



PARISH WEBSITE:

www.QOP.CA

www.LATINMASSVICTORIA.COM

www.LATINMASSVICTORIA.COM

www.SAINTJOHNHENRYNEWMANFELLOWSHIP.CA

HUNGARIAN Mass: Rev. John Domotor
TRADITIONAL LATIN Mass: Rev. John Domotor
ORDINARIATE Mass: Rev. Lee Kenyon

IMPORTANT: IN THE HOSPITAL?

If you or family member is hospitalize or is going to hospital and would like to be visited by your PARISH PRIEST, Please call the PARISH OFFICE to make this request.

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ONLY!

After office hours including weekends, holidays or during the night, you can call:

☎ 250.889.3761

KEEPING IN CONTACT: We extend our hands and hearts in Christian fellowship to you here, celebrating with us, whether long time residents or newly arrived in the Parish. We thank God that you are with us. If we may assist you, please fill out the form below and place in the collection basket or mail to the PARISH OFFICE (address on top) . Please mark the proper BOX (below on the left side).

- New Parishioner
- Have moved here is new address
- I am home-bound and would like someone to visit me
- I am going to be in the hospital, please call on me

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

☎ HOME ☎ WORK

e-mail: _____ @ _____

SUNDAY DONATIONS can be done by using:
Sunday Envelopes or by automatic bank withdrawal. (The PARISH OFFICE can supply you with necessary documents).

PLEASE NOTE: ENTER & EXIT the Church through the Community Doors Near the 3 Handicap Parking in the front.

At this time, our regularly scheduled bulletin will be published on the website and emailed to those who have given me their emails, however if you know of someone who does not have an email could you please give them a phone call and keep them informed also, thank you.

Praying that during this time of social isolation you and your loved ones are safe and healthy and that your spirits do not grow weary but remain strong in the Lord.

Liturgical Updates

Until Feb. 5, 2021. By order of the Provincial Health Officer, all in-person religious gatherings and worship services are suspended. This means, that sadly, there will be no Masses at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish.

Confessions by appointment ONLY, Tuesday through Friday, 10am to 12noon - please call the parish office .

Funerals, weddings and baptisms will continue to be celebrated with no more than 10 people.

Mass Protocols (when church re-opens)

During the current COVID-19 restrictions and provincially-mandated occupancy limits for Mass attendance, parishioners of the Catholic Churches in the Victoria region are respectfully requested to attend Masses at their home parishes only, which will allow Our Lady Queen of Peace parishioners the opportunity to attend Mass at their home parish.

All people must be registered for Mass, we need to know the names of everyone from your family who will be attending and not just the numbers. We cannot exceed 38 persons including the Priest.

Please note: (when church re-opens)

Mass registration no later than Wed. 1pm and if you need to cancel please call the office by Fri. 1pm – 250-384-3884

Attending English Mass register at the parish office (Carol Molloy) 250-384-3884 or office@qop.ca

Tues – Fri – 12:10pm

Saturday – 5:00pm

Sunday – 10:00am

Please note: (when church re-opens)

I have a waiting list for Sunday Mass, if someone calls in sick I will call you from the list.

If you registered for a Mass and you **DO NOT** show without giving us notice, your name will be removed from all future registrations.

Attending Latin Mass register with Rob McBride at yodi@telus.net

Mon. - Fri. 8am

Sun. - 8am & 12noon

Attending SJHN (Ordinariate) Mass register with Fr. Kenyon at frkenyon@hotmail.com

Mon. - Sat. 9:30am

Sun. - 2pm(except the First Sunday of the month 3pm)

Attending Hungarian Mass register with Fr. John Domotor at office@qop.ca or call the parish office - 250-384-3884

Sun. - 2pm (First Sunday of the month)

Your understanding in this matter is much appreciated.

Confessions Only by appointment - Tuesday through Friday, 10am to 12:00 noon - Please call the parish office.

(Schedule below applies Only when churches re-open)

Confessions are heard on Sat.: 4:00pm - 4:30pm

Weekdays: 11:00am - 11:30am

First Saturdays of the month from 3pm - 4:30pm

Deadlines for registering for Mass: Wed. at 1:00 pm (when church re-opens)

No one will be admitted to Mass once the doors are closed. They will be locked.

This will not prevent anyone inside from leaving should they so desire as they are all fire doors but it will prevent anyone from entering. We are bound to follow protocols and this is an important one as people cannot simply wander in at will.

Additional Details

•• Mask wearing are a must

•• Hand sanitization before entering church

•• Please note **bathrooms are** for emergencies only

•• Single file, social distancing

Online Marriage Preparation Course

During this time, we are offering our Marriage Preparation Course fully online, and couples will be able to work through the program at their own pace. The cost is \$125 per couple, and the price also includes an online individualized couple assessment as well as a liturgy planning guide. For more information, go to: <https://bit.ly/3hzgRGW> or find the course on Eventbrite. You may also find the information on the Diocese website. Questions, **contact** Louis Melendez at lmelendez@rcdvictoria.org or 250-479-1331 ext. 237

News from 'Our Place'

Winter has arrived! Donations of sleeping bags and blankets and warm coats and boots, toques and socks, especially men's things, are greatly needed. With fewer shelter spaces available because of COVID space restrictions, the number of people forced to shelter outside has increased dramatically this year. Many people we see are facing lack of shelter for the first time, particularly older adults. Donations may be dropped off at 919 Pandora in Victoria from 6:30am-9:00pm, seven days a week.

www.ourplacesociety.com

'Legacies'

Our Lady Queen of Peace acknowledges with gratitude past legacies which we use to maintain the integrity of our Church.

Please include us in your 'LAST WILL', how will we survive without it?

Legacies are a way of providing assurance that the parish has income or savings in the event of unforeseen emergencies.

The monthly 'Building Fund and Collection' pays for maintenance/replacement items.

Sacramental Information

Baptism: at Our Lady Queen of Peace you must call the office at least 3 months in advance to arrange an appointment with the Pastor. It is assumed that the family has Our Lady Queen of Peace parish connection and practices the faith by attending Sunday Mass on a weekly basis. You may meet with the Pastor and take the course even if your child has not yet been born. **Parents are expected to participate in the Baptismal preparation. At least one Godparent or both must be baptized and confirmed and are practicing Catholics. **Non-parishioners are required to have a Letter of Recommendation from your Pastor to have your child Baptized in our parish.****

Marriage: at Our Lady Queen of Peace because the Church is deeply concerned about each marriage, couples are asked to give a minimum of six months' notice prior to the intended date of their wedding. Church policy requires that marriages be performed in your home parish – unless you are registered and attend elsewhere.

Funeral: at Our Lady Queen of Peace individual arrangements with a priest. Begin by calling the parish office.

Please Note

If you suffer from Celiac disease, we are able to offer a low-gluten Host. If you are interested, please come to the sacristy before Mass and inform the priest.

Respect Life Ministry

If you are expecting a child and are feeling confused; if you are thinking that there is no way out of this situation for you; if you want to talk to someone, call, text 250.812.0087 email: respectlifem@gmail.com

Vancouver Island Crisis-Line

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society is contracted by **Island Health**. We are a registered non-profit agency whose services include:

24-hour crisis lines: 1-888-494-3888

Crisis Text Services: 250-800-3806

(from your mobile) 6pm - 10pm - 7 days a week

Crisis Chat Services: 6pm - 10pm - 7 days a week

We work in partnership with Island Health to provide public access to Mental Health & Substance Use services in the communities administered by Island Health.

'Mass Intentions'

Jan 26	TUESDAY	NO MASS
Jan 27	WEDNESDAY	NO MASS
Jan 28	THURSDAY	NO MASS
Jan 29	FRIDAY	NO MASS
Jan 30	SATURDAY	NO MASS

Feb 2	TUESDAY	NO MASS
Feb 3	WEDNESDAY	NO MASS
Feb 4	THURSDAY	NO MASS
Feb 5	FRIDAY	NO MASS
Feb 6	SATURDAY	NO MASS

Feb 9	TUESDAY	NO MASS
Feb 10	WEDNESDAY	NO MASS
Feb 11	THURSDAY	NO MASS
Feb 12	FRIDAY	NO MASS
Feb 13	SATURDAY	NO MASS

Please remember the following persons who are ill in your prayers: Helen McGovern, Ann VanNoordt, Marge Haake, Christine Stornebrink, Charles Lennaghan,

Collection Envelopes – for 2021

If you are new to the parish and would like to have a box of pre-numbered collection envelopes, please contact the parish office at 250-384-3884 or email: office@qop.ca

Parish Database - ASAP

If you have changed your address/email/phone number in the past year or so, please make sure to update your information with the parish office. Tax receipts will be prepared in Feb and this will help the parish save on postage expenses by reducing returned mail.

Please Note – Parish Office

Fr. John will be in the office from 10:00am – 12noon.

Please call ahead to book an appointment for confessions

Fr. John will be unavailable on Tues. Jan. 26, 2021

Daily Mass with Bishop Gary

As we continue to journey together during these challenging times, all are invited to join Bishop Gary Gordon from the comfort and safety of your homes as he celebrates Mass. To access the live stream link from the Diocese of Victoria website simply google: Diocese of Victoria or go to:

www.rcdvictoria.org/diocese-of-victoria-live-stream.

DAILY MASS: Monday – Friday...7:00 pm

Saturday Mass: ... (beginning with Rosary at 9am)... 9:30 am

(<https://youtu.be/SHvATRWB7QI>)

Saturday Mass:4:00 pm

(<https://youtu.be/sM0B8J4M78w>)

Sunday Mass:10:00 am

(<https://youtu.be/PgANmtRGK6g>)

Other Televised Mass Options

Salt + Light TV is also televising the daily Mass celebrated by Pope Francis from Casa Santa Marta. This airs every day at 9:00 am and will be televised in both English and French. “La Messe du jour” produced and televised by Salt + Light TV from the crypt at Saint Joseph Oratory in Montreal will now be televised on Sundays through arrangements with the Archdiocese of Montreal, enabling everyone access to the televised Mass in both French and English seven days a week. The channel number for each cable company that carries Salt + Light TV can be found at:

<https://saltandlighttv.org/subscribe>

*Please note that the Daily TV Mass is also available on other faith-based television networks besides Salt + Light TV. The various networks and Mass times can be found at <https://dailytvmas.com/about/broadcast-schedule/>

St. Andrew’s Cathedral

9-10 Club - Serving Soup to the Hungry

Did you know the Soup Kitchen is an essential service, and continues to provide food to those in need during the current pandemic. In this challenging time, we offer soup-to-go bagged meal service, and observe physical distancing and other prescribed practices in fulfilling our community mission. The 9-10 Club - Serving Soup to the Hungry is the oldest, completely volunteer-run food resource for the hungry in Victoria. The Soup Kitchen is located in the basement of St. Andrew’s Cathedral, and is open Mon. to Fri., from 8:00 to 10:00 am. We wish to extend our thanks, and appreciation, to the numerous volunteers and donors who have graciously supported our operations for more than 30 years. Further information is available at:

www.thesoupkitchen.ca

Do you like to bake?

(St. Andrew’s Cathedral – 9-10 Club)

Might you have some sweets or snacks in your freezer or cupboards you would like to donate? Things are going well with our soup-to-go bagged meal service, with most days serving 125-150 dinners. But we are often short of sweets or other snacks as a special treat for our guests. If you like to bake and wish to contribute to the cause, from the safety of your home, we would be incredibly grateful for your help. For baking - items that can be frozen, such as cookies, would be best. For snacks - items individually packaged like small bags of potato chips would be well received.

To Donate:

1. Drop off your donations at the View Street entrance between 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm Monday to Thursday. Please call the Soup Kitchen ahead - 778-440-7687 to let the Team Leader know you’re coming. You don’t even need to leave your vehicle. We’ll come out to you - ensuring safe social distancing practices.

2. Call **Sheila Connelly at 250-598-4339, or**

Dorothy Parker 250-590-2916

to arrange to drop off your donation at one of their homes.

If you are unable to drop off your baking at one of the above locations, please call Sheila, and she will arrange a day and time to have someone pick up your donation. Thank you in advance for all who can contribute!

Catholic Christian Outreach Victoria (CCO VICTORIA)

A university student movement dedicated to evangelization, challenging students to live in the fullness of the Catholic faith, and becoming leaders in the renewal of the world.

“Are you a post-secondary student in Victoria looking for a community and are open to learning more about the Catholic faith? Catholic Christian Outreach Victoria is a community for everyone from Catholicism-curious to Catholic since the cradle! Along with Catholic Christian Outreach’s faith study series, we put on events, challenge each other to grow, and we strive to build a vibrant Christ-centered community.

To learn more, we are a private group on: **Facebook** (search up CCO Victoria)

Instagram - @ccouvic

[HTTPS://CCO.CA/GET-CONNECTED/](https://cco.ca/get-connected/)

Still Available from the Parish Office

Sunday Missals - 2021



Sunday Missals has arrived. Drop by the parish office to pick up your copy (\$4 each)

Between: 9:30am – 2:45pm (Tues- Fri)

Collection Envelopes – 2021

Sunday Collection Box Envelopes are ready for pick-up through the parish office:

If you are new to the parish and would like to have a box of pre-numbered collection envelopes, please contact the parish office at 250-384-3884 or email: office@qop.ca

Thank you for your ongoing generosity.

Free - Calendars

2021 Calendars (supplied by McCalls)



Catholic Women's League

Due to the Pandemic this year we will not have CWL meetings however we will keep you informed through the Bulletins or personal phone calls therefore please we ask you to call Carol Molloy in the parish office to update your phone # or if you have an email address please send it to the parish office ASAP.

What Is The Catholic Women's League

Hello and Welcome to all women of the parish!

This is an invitation to all of our women parishioners. (16 years and older) A little info about the CWL of our parish and across Canada, we pray you will consider being a member? **Four ways to participate!**

1) Fully Active Members:

These members pay dues, attend meetings, take part in business procedures with voting privileges, serve on committees and can take advantage of the many opportunities for personal and spiritual development offered by the League.

2) Partially Active Members:

These members pay dues, but cannot always attend meetings or functions. They are willing to help when needed, on a task-by-task basis. They want to be part of the organization and make a difference but have limited time to offer.

3) Financially Supportive Members:

These members pay dues to support the national organization (is 100 yrs. old) and their local council. They cannot be fully or partially active currently but may become more involved in the future. They wish to stay informed of events and educational updates through the website and the Canadian League.

4) Prayer Partners:

They members pay dues, taking part spiritually as prayer partners-either with a specific person or generally for all members. In turn, they are included in all League prayers.

Our membership fee is \$30.00 yearly we have started collecting the monies and aiming to complete by end of January. You also receive by mail 'The Canadian League Magazine' published 3 times a year by the Catholic Women's League of Canada.

Consider becoming a C.W.L. member!

CWL Organization Convenor: Carol Molloy – (and the admin. assistant of the parish) 250.384.3884

The President - Elsie Lambton - 250.995.1531

Past President: Bertha Landrie - 250.389.1307

Mission Statement

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God.

League Objectives

The Objectives of the League shall be to unite Catholic women of Canada:

- to achieve individual and collective spiritual development

- to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- to exemplify the Christian ideal in home and family life.
- to protect the sanctity of human life.
- to enhance the role of women in church and society.
- to recognize the human dignity of all people everywhere
- to uphold and defend Christian education and values in the modern world.
- to contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice, peace and harmony

League Prayer

We humbly pray You, O God our Father, to bless The Catholic Women's League of Canada. Bless our beloved country, our homes and families. Send Your Holy Spirit upon us to give light to our minds and strength to our wills that we may know and fulfil Your great law of charity. Teach us to share with others at home and abroad, the good things You have given us. This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ and the intercession of our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. Amen

Involvement

Through our parish communities we are involved in deepening our spiritual church life and spreading the GOOD NEWS.

Members of the national executive meet annually with federal government ministers on issues raised by resolutions, which come from the parish level, and have included such issues as religious freedom, renewable energy, farmers' rights, suicide prevention, child poverty, protection of human life and building partnerships and relationships with Canada's indigenous peoples.

In our parish once a month at the CWL Sat/Sun Mass we collect for our Missions: (usually the 3rd Sun. of the month)

Esk-Omi - to help the Inuit in Northern Canada

Moricetown - Mission near New Hazelton, B.C.

North Island Catholic Communities: Vancouver Island

We collect flowers - **Easter Lillies at Easter or Poinsettia's for Christmas that decorate our beautiful Sanctuary yearly, for special Intention of family members/friends or In memory of your loved ones.**

We are active in attending the provincial meetings and others. We are active at our League member's funeral as honour guard, etc. We are active in the children's Liturgy on Sundays and for the children receiving their sacraments.

Participate when invited by other councils, for example workshops, Mass held at a local parish for our patron:

"Our Lady of Good Council" - Feast Day - Apr. 26th

This is only a brief description of the CWL, also the more members we have then we could consider booking speakers to discuss matters of concern.

Looking forward to meeting everyone when it is safe to do so, and we thank all of you in advance for your love and support of our League in the parish.

No meetings or other activities with members at this time, mandated by the Diocesan Bishop of Victoria until it is safe to do so!

Diocesan Blog

The Canadian Catholic Indigenous Council founded by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) in 1998, proposed that the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (December 12) be a National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples. We are invited to join the Indigenous Peoples in Canada in a special way through prayer and acts of solidarity. Please find below the link to the Diocesan blog post for this week which features St. Ann's Parish in Duncan.

<https://www.rcdvictoria.org/diocesanblog/st.-anns-duncan-open-hearts-and-minds>

Diocesan BLOG

St. Francis was a missionary, born in Spain in 1506, who devoted himself to works of charity and tirelessly proclaimed the Gospel and brought many to the faith. As we celebrate the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, please find below the link to the blog which features the parish in Mill Bay which is named after this great missionary.

Diocesan Blog link:

<https://www.rcdvictoria.org/diocesanblog/st.-francis-xavier-a-vibrant-community>

Bible in a Year Podcast

<https://media.ascensionpress.com/category/ascensionpodcasts/bibleinayear/>

(can be accessed in your mobile device podcasts app as well) In the Bible in a Year podcast, starting Jan. 1st, 2021, Fr. Mike Schmitz walks you through the entire Bible in 365 episodes, providing commentary, reflection, and prayer along the way. Unlike any other Bible podcast, Ascension's Bible in a Year Podcast follows a reading plan inspired by The Great Adventure Bible Timeline, a ground-breaking approach to understanding salvation history developed by renowned Catholic Bible teacher Jeff Cavins. With this podcast, you won't just read the Bible in a year ... you'll finally understand how all the pieces of the Bible fit together to tell an amazing story that continues in your life today!

Feast of St. Blaise - February 3rd

This year we will NOT have the blessing of throats on the Feast of St. Blaise.

Blessing of Candles - February 2nd

This year we will NOT have the blessing of the candles, if anyone wishes candles blessed, contact the parish office between Tues – Fri. 10:00am – 12noon Fr. John Domotor is available to bless the candles privately.

Ash Wednesday – Feb. 17th

This year, we are asking everyone to please keep your old palms in storage at home.

DO NOT BRING THEM TO THE CHURCH!!!

We will invite their return in two years but this year, circumstances as they are, we will not need them. We have sufficient ashes for distribution and if you read the article below from the Diocese you will be aware that this year ashes will be distributed by having them sprinkled on top of your head as per directives issued by the Vatican.

All will be announced in good time once we know if we will be permitted public Masses.

Cynthia Bouchard, Chancellor/Diocese of Victoria

The CCCB General Secretariat received today from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments the **attached Note** (N. 17/21) of 12 January 2021, concerning **Ash Wednesday** - (17 February 2021) and the **Distribution of Ashes in the Time of the Pandemic**. In accordance with the Note from the Congregation, this year the ashes are to be imposed by sprinkling them on the head of the faithful. The rite of sprinkling ashes on the head of the penitents is already a well-established and common practice in many countries across the world.

Anglice - Prot. N. 17/21

NOTE ON ASH WEDNESDAY

Distribution of Ashes in Time of Pandemic

The Priest says the prayer for blessing the ashes. He sprinkles the ashes with holy water, without saying anything. Then he addresses all those present and only once says the formula as it appears in the Roman Missal, applying it to all in general: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel", or "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return".

The Priest then cleanses his hands, puts on a face mask and distributes the ashes to those who come to him or, if appropriate, he goes to those who are standing in their places. The Priest takes the ashes and sprinkles them on the head of each one without saying anything.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 12 Jan. 2021

Robert Card. Sarah

Prefect

Explore Pope Francis's New Encyclical

Every Thurs. beginning Feb. 18th, 2021 (7:30-8:30pm)

during the 6 weeks of Lent we will have an opportunity to explore the new Encyclical, "Fratelli Tutti" (on Fraternity and Social Friendship). In "Fratelli Tutti" Pope Francis underlines that in our common home we all live as one family, and he proposes concrete actions to restore the world. As a Diocese we are invited to put forth this new vision of fraternity and social friendship. We invite you to explore this Encyclical during the Lenten series which will be offered via Zoom. More details and registration information to follow.

Job Posting: Executive Assistant

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria is seeking an experienced and reliable full-time Executive Assistant to support the Bishop and Chancellor by providing comprehensive administrative support in a professional, courteous and efficient manner. The ideal candidate is highly self-motivated, professional, and capable of managing their workload and prioritizing tasks to ensure optimal workflow.

Interested applicants are invited to submit a cover letter and résumé **by March 5, 2021** to:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

Attention: Cynthia Bouchard, Chancellor

1 - 4044 Nelthorpe Street - Victoria, BC V8X 2A1

Email: jobs@rcdvictoria.org

Thank you for your interest, please note that only those short-listed for an interview will be contacted.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** is being celebrated this week from January 18-25, 2021. The theme for this year is: “*Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit*” (John 15:5-9). Local and international resources are available online, placing a particular emphasis on the call to pray and work for reconciliation and unity in the Church, with our human family, and with all of creation.

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches jointly developed the international resource with the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland, a group of religious sisters from different church traditions brought together by a common vocation of prayer, community life and hospitality and by their commitment to Christian unity. The material for Canada was adapted and produced by an ecumenical writing team coordinated by the Commission on Faith and Witness of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC).

Bishop Gary Gordon participated in a special recorded joint service with our regional ecumenical colleagues in the Anglican Church of Canada, and the BC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

We are grateful to the Communications team at Christ Church Cathedral in Victoria, who shared their resources and taped the remote service for the benefit of all.

The recorded service in our Diocese may be accessed via the link: <https://vimeo.com/501039459>

The Vatican website is offering a daily reflection and further resources may be accessed via:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2021-01/bible-reflections-for-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-day-1.html>

World Day of the Sick: February 11, 2020



As the church marks World Day of the Sick on February 11, the Catholic Health Association of BC encourages everyone to pray for those who suffer from illness and for their caregivers. The theme of this year's 29th World Day of Prayer for the Sick, “You have but one teacher and you are all brothers” (Mt 23:8), calls for “a trust-based relationship to guide care for the sick.” Jesus asks us to “stop and listen, to establish a direct and personal relationship with others, to feel empathy and compassion, and to let their suffering become our own as we seek to serve them.” Pray with us on this day. To learn more about this day or to read the Pope's full message, visit www.chabc.bc.ca/world-day-of-the-sick

**January 20, 2021 - Most Reverend Gary Gordon
Bishop of Victoria**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The “Sunday of the Word of God” held yearly every third Sunday of Ordinary Time, in accordance with Pope Francis’ Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio, Aperuit Illis* will be celebrated on January 24, 2021. This presents an opportunity to recognize the important role of the Word of God in our lives and in the life of the Church.

The Second Vatican Council gave great impulse to the rediscovery of the Word of God, thanks to its Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, a document that deserves to be read anew. The Constitution clearly expounds the nature of sacred Scripture, its transmission from generation to generation, its divine inspiration embracing the Old and New Testaments, and the importance of Scripture for the life of the Church. To advance this teaching, Pope Benedict XVI convoked an Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 2008 on “*The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*”, and then issued the Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, whose teaching remains fundamental for our communities. Pope Francis reminds us that it is this “decisive relationship with the living Word that the Lord never tires of speaking to his Bride that she may grow in love and faithful witness”. (*Aperuit Illis*, 2019)

Though our liturgical gatherings are diminished at this time, there is much grace to be found in the quiet prayerful encounter with the living Word of God in Sacred Scripture. It is a good time to become more deeply People of the Word of God as we live in our small social bubbles. As we stay close to home, mindful of the needs of the vulnerable and their caregivers, we have an opportunity to open our bibles in prayerful reflection, fanning into flame the charity and gratitude that is the heart of the Christian life.

I pray that we may open our lives and hearts to the grace filled real presence of our Triune God alive in God's Word, Sacred Scripture. It is a time to enthrone God's Word in our homes and hearts to encourage prayerful reflection, which will bring us great solace and comfort. The Holy Spirit is at work during these challenging times, and will enliven and equip us to be ardent missionary-disciples engaged with a weary world in a dialogue of mercy, filled with hope, peace, justice, and charity, born of our faith in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ.

With Mary, our Mother, may we ponder and treasure all that is spoken about her Son in Scripture, and be assured of her maternal closeness to us as a pilgrim people. “Along our path of welcoming God's Word into our hearts, the Mother of the Lord accompanies us. She is the one who is called blessed because she believed in the fulfilment of what the Lord had spoken to her.” (*Aperuit Illis*) May we renew our commitment to make God's living Word the center of our lives, even at the center of our dining table, thereby making the Word of God part of our daily bread and nourishment.

**In Communion,
Most Reverend Gary Gordon
Bishop of Victoria**