

SACRED HEART ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Dear sisters and brothers of Sacred Heart Parish,

Blessings on your families and all of your endeavours at this time.

Because there are so many events and activities in our Parish at the moment, there are a few that I want to bring to your attention. I cannot speak to these issues to all of you in person, but you ought to be kept apprised of what is happening.

First, this weekend is commitment Sunday for the appeal. As I already mentioned during the Sunday Masses last week, our Parish is a part of a larger faith community on Vancouver Island. It was from that larger community that I was sent to Sacred Heart. All our Parishes are connected in Christ through the Sacraments and this appeal is to reflect that fact. However, the appeal is not simply for the other Parishes on the island, it also benefits our own community.

Since I have arrived at Sacred Heart, I not only noticed that our present office space is in need of a renovation, it is also due for a security upgrade. In its present configuration, space is wasted and I am sometimes concerned for the well-being of Katherene, our administrative assistant. The proposed designs are meant to accommodate all of our needs for additional meeting space, the fixing and updating of our facilities, and to have a safe but welcoming working environment for Katherene. With a successful appeal, we will not require any further fundraising efforts to achieve this goal.

Second, not only are we generous as individuals, our Parish community has a long history of generosity towards the larger community. I would like to remind you of our Parish's bazaar happening next Saturday, November 5. This bazaar and our other events are designed to be our Parish community's contribution to our local and world communities. All monies raised go directly to other charities and no monies are kept by the Parish.

Third, our fall clean-up will be on November 19, beginning at 9am. Bring your rakes and shovels, and "tarps" to clean up our Parish grounds. It is a great opportunity to meet new people and to take care of our common home.

Fourth, and also on November 19th, our Parish and the Vietnamese Catholic community of Victoria will be hosting a Pho-dinner in support of Anawim House's project to expand their live-in services to women in the city. This world is becoming increasingly dangerous for women, and women without homes are in particular danger. It is our Christian duty to help ease their burden. However, that does not mean that we cannot have a great time while doing it and I have a great time eating.

I love Vietnamese food and I especially love Pho. It is a beef soup with rice noodles with various ingredients. In conjunction with our Parish, the Vietnamese community has generously offered to support this cause by providing the food. Although I plan on helping, I also plan on bringing my appetite to support women in our city. The dinner will begin after the 5pm Mass on November 19th (Christ the King), and details will be forthcoming in the bulletin.

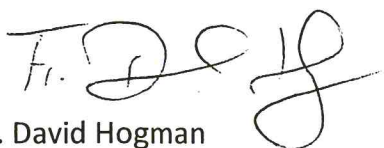
Lastly, during this coming week, we will be celebrating All Saints Day (November 1st) and All Souls Day (November 2nd). We will be celebrating a morning and evening Mass for both days, at 9am, and 6pm. These are very important days in our Church life as we remember the lives of the Saints, and we pray for our loved ones who have died. All Saints Day is a solemn feast which means that all fasting is suspended, and it is our calling to rejoice in the love that God has for us in calling us to be Saints.

All Souls Day has a bittersweet tone to it as we pray for the dead, and commend them to God's mercy. It is sweet as we are confident that God never turns away those who come to him. However, it is also sorrowful as we can still be mourning from their absence. They may be with God, but we can still feel sadness at their absence. This sadness is reflected in the colour of the vestments that the priest wears on that day.

There are three colours that the priest can wear. Each commemorates a different emotion of the grieving process. The first is white which commemorates our hope in the Resurrection, and Easter joy. Death has not conquered us, but Christ's death has defeated death. The second colour is violet, which symbolizes our obligation to pray for our dead. Violet represents prayer and penitence, and is used during Advent and Lent. The final colour is the less often seen liturgical black. In the old calendar, black was suggested for funerals, and depicted human grief. Just because we believe in the Resurrection, it does not mean that we are immune from tears. Jesus himself cried at the death of his friend Lazarus. Recently, black has not been used as much, but it remains an option, and I will use that option on November 2nd. Death has touched us all and before we can rejoice in the raising of Lazarus, we have to weep with Jesus and Lazarus' sisters.

I invite all of you to attend these Masses to deepen our life of faith, and our fellowship with all of those who have gone before us. Our Church is more than what our eyes can see and she is filled with the life of God.

God bless


Fr. David Hogman
Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish