

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PARISH

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OUR LITURGICAL LIFE

SATURDAY, September 5

4PM MASS: Pro Populo

SUNDAY, September 6

9AM MASS:
Paulette Smith+

TUESDAY, September 8

9AM MASS:
Barry Hammerton+

Wednesday, September 9

6:30PM MASS

THURSDAY, September 10

9AM MASS:
Judy Dunsmuir+

FRIDAY, September 11

9AM MASS

CHÂPEL

Open 9AM-12PM
TUESDAY - FRIDAY

RECONCILIATION

WEDNESDAY

6PM-6:30PM

SATURDAY

3:30PM - 4PM

LIVESTREAMING

SUNDAY

September 6, 11:00 AM

[https://www.youtube.com/@
StPatricksHolyCrossChurch](https://www.youtube.com/@StPatricksHolyCrossChurch)

*We acknowledge and respect the
Lekwungen peoples on whose
traditional territory Holy Cross Parish
stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt
and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose
historical relationships with the land
continue to this day.*

Report Sexual Abuse

To report sexual abuse at
[RCDVictoria.org/Responsible-Ministry](https://www.rcdvictoria.org/Responsible-Ministry)

September 6, 2026

"If today you hear God's voice, harden not your hearts." (Psalm 95)

This refrain from Psalm 95 is familiar to anyone who prays the Liturgy of the Hours, where the psalm regularly opens the day as the invitatory. It is more than a call to begin prayer; it is an invitation to become attentive. We come before God as a community united in worship and as individuals willing to open our hearts before our Maker. Listening is the beginning of discipleship. Before we speak, plan, serve, or decide, we are asked to notice how God is already present and calling us forward.

Yet the psalm also acknowledges that listening is not always easy. A hardened heart may not be openly hostile to God; it may simply be closed by habit, disappointment, fear, or certainty that we already know the answer. The spiritual life therefore asks for humility: the willingness to be interrupted, corrected, surprised, and renewed. God's voice may reach us through Scripture and prayer, but also through the quiet wisdom, needs, and hopes of those around us.

The readings for this twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time show what such listening requires. In Ezekiel, the watchman is entrusted with responsibility for others. Faith cannot become a private refuge that leaves us indifferent to a neighbour's suffering or harmful choices. At times, love asks us to speak honestly—not to condemn, but to protect, guide, and invite another person back toward life. Paul expresses the heart of that responsibility: "Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." Every Christian obligation is gathered into this enduring debt of love.

In the Gospel, Jesus gives this love a practical form. When relationships are strained, disciples are asked to begin with direct, respectful conversation, then to seek the community's help when reconciliation proves difficult. What a lesson for the whole of life: the courage to speak, patience to listen, and mercy to keep our hearts open. Jesus promises to be present wherever two or three gather in his name; not limited to moments of easy agreement, he is also among us when we seek truth, healing, and communion.

These readings speak powerfully to the beginning of my ministry at Holy Cross Parish. My arrival is itself the fruit of listening and responding through discernment and dialogue, always with God at the centre. Now a new season of listening begins. I look forward to hearing your stories, learning the parish's rhythms, and recognizing the gifts God has already cultivated here. Since its founding more than forty years ago, Holy Cross has been shaped by the dedication of pastors, assistants, volunteers, parishioners, families, and neighbours. I hope to honour that history while discerning with you where the Spirit is leading us.

May we therefore begin with open hearts. May we listen for God in prayer and in one another. May our words be truthful and loving, our disagreements become occasions for grace, and our shared life reveal Christ among us. If today we hear God's voice, may we have the courage not only to listen, but also to respond together.

Fr Erik Oland SJ



PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

Fr. Erik Oland, SJ: A Jesuit Vocation Hits all the Right Notes

In the fall of 1991, Erik Oland, a classically trained opera singer, stood on stage in Ottawa and performed his dream role — Papageno in “The Magic Flute” — a historic performance commemorating the bicentennial of Mozart’s last opera. The young singer pinched himself, certain that life would never get better. And then it did: Oland became a Jesuit.



As a child growing up along the Kennebecasis River in eastern Canada, Oland was captivated by music. His neighbor, a retired opera singer, held regular music salons, and 6-year-old Erik would perch outside her window listening to quartets and arias before singing his way home.

Soon, Oland was making the 30-minute commute to attend high school in Saint John, New Brunswick, attracted by the school’s standout music and drama department. He played a gang member in “West Side Story” and the starring role of Lancelot in “Camelot.” Remembering the performance 40 years after the fact, his rich baritone fills the room as he breaks into Lancelot’s signature ballad, “If Ever I Would Leave You.” Take that, Robert Goulet.

At Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, Oland earned a bachelor’s degree in music while performing on Canadian radio and television shows. After graduation, he joined a small opera company before being plucked up by the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto and L’Atelier lyrique de l’Opéra de Montréal, performing in European capitals and across Canada. There were heady moments like the time he was seated next to Princess Diana at a luncheon for emerging artists. And yet, something was missing.

As his 30th birthday approached, Oland questioned whether he wanted to perform exclusively for the rest of his life. Asking that question, he says, “opened up a space inside me.” And then, a moment of serendipity and grace: a scheduled tour was cancelled at the last minute, leaving Oland with a whole month free.

“I found myself with this chunk of time at the last minute and thought ‘maybe this is a gift from God.’” He picked up a do-it-yourself manual of the [Spiritual Exercises](#), a set of meditations, contemplations and prayers written by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits. Acting as his own spiritual director, Oland methodically went through the Exercises, paying careful attention to the part where St. Ignatius invites self-reflection. The light went on, he recalls. “I think I might be called to religious life.”

His Jesuit vocation “unlocked,” Oland went from professional opera singer to Jesuit novice in a matter of months. “I didn’t worry about missing music — the decision felt so right.” Oland’s formation took him from studies in Ireland to a training program in the Spiritual Exercises back in Canada to several months in Jamaica. There, he worked alongside Fr. Martin Royackers, SJ, a Canadian Jesuit whose advocacy for the rights of Jamaica’s poor hill farmers made him the constant target of death threats. When Fr. Royackers was murdered a few years after Oland’s time with him, Oland accompanied the Provincial who broke the news to the Jesuit’s family. “It was a tremendous experience to work with this man who had such a deep commitment to the poor.”

After earning a Master of Divinity degree from Regis College at the University of Toronto and a Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the Weston Jesuit School of Theology (Boston College) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Oland was ordained in 2003. His first real assignment as a Jesuit priest brought him back to something that inspired his vocation: The Exercises. Working at a retreat center in Guelph, Ontario, Oland combined his love of music and Ignatian spirituality. “There’s something in music that can be prayerful but can also lead us to prayer, so when the music stops you find yourself in this spaciousness where we can have a very deep encounter with God.”

After working as a retreat director, he served for nine years as a novice director: “I taught them all to sing. It’s all about breath control.” In March 2017, he began his new role as Provincial of the Jesuits’ French Canada Province.

As Provincial he was based at the Province headquarters in Montreal, Oland was grateful to be immersed in French Canada’s vibrant culture. “I call myself a Francophile. I love history, and my own roots go back to the origin of the country and the early French. I’m deeply appreciative of the richness of a broader culture.”

About his new job, Oland said, “Even in the early days of being Provincial, I realize that the recompense of this work is going to be the one-on-one conversations I will have with my brother Jesuits. Knowing that I can dialogue with an individual about his life, his desires, his sorrows and his challenges is life-giving for me.”

Though he had only been on the job a few months, Oland had already traveled twice to Haiti, part of the French Canada Province where there is a vibrant and growing Jesuit presence. “Haiti has suffered so much and yet we find ourselves with many vocations — I think the Holy Spirit is speaking here. There’s a desire for the people of Haiti to do something for the country, and there’s something about the charism of the Society that has touched the hearts of a number of young Haitians.” And that’s music to his ears.

So too is his Jesuit vocation. “Yes, I had this wonderful life and the opportunity to perform with very gifted people, but it was really a very narrow existence,” Oland says. “The individual Jesuit’s life of personal prayer, where you’re always looking at how you’re living your life, always coming back to your center — which is where God is — that’s how you grow.”

Having completed his tenure as Provincial, Fr. Oland is excited to embark on his new mission at Holy Cross Parish in the rich environment of community and collaboration that is very much present.

Written by Tracey Primrose (revised August 2026 by Erik Oland sj)

Fall 2026 Prayer in the style of Taizé

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church (10030 Third Street, Sidney BC) will host ecumenical prayer sessions in The Way of Taizé. 3rd Friday of the month - September 18, October 16, November 20, 2026 – at 6:00 pm.



UVic Food Insecurity Project: Collections for Back to School

School is back in session! The SEJC is asking for food donations for UVic students in need. Items donated in August, will be delivered to students in September at the Multi-Faith Centre. The green donation bins are back in the foyer. This month’s theme is canned fish, meat, beans, pasta or sauce.

7th Annual Mass for Our Lady of Penafrancia

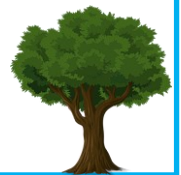
You’re invited to celebrate the The Penafrancia Festival to honour Our Lady of Penafrancia on Sept. 12 at St Patrick’s Parish. Join for a Rosary at 10am, Mass at 11am, and potluck lunch at 12pm.. Everyone is welcome.

Monthly Mixed Social Bridge

Another year of Sunday Bridge is planned at Holy Cross for the first Sunday of each month. The emphasis is social bridge in a relaxed atmosphere. If you have any questions please contact Tony Southwell at 250-882-8695 / tony_southwell@hotmail.com. Inquiries from members of any Parish in the Diocese are welcome.

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

September 1 marks the beginning of the Season of Creation, a special season of ecumenical solidarity where Christians come together in prayer and action to protect our common home. Learn more about this season, read the Holy Father’s message, and see how you can get involved at: <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/diocesanblog/season-of-creation-2026-living-water>



Pastoral Care Telephone Visits

Are you feeling lonely or know someone who would appreciate a friendly conversation? Our Pastoral Care volunteers are available to telephone those who are lonely, homebound, isolated, or simply in need of a listening ear. These calls are a gentle reminder that no one is ever alone and that our parish community is here to accompany, encourage, and support one another. To request a telephone call for yourself or a loved one, please contact the parish office at 250-477-5321 or email: office@holycrossvictoria.org.

D&P Fall Workshop

D&P animator, Raphael Freston, will be hosting a workshop at Queen of Peace Parish on Sat, Sept 19th from 9:30am to 1:30pm. All are welcome to attend either workshop. More info about the organization at: www.devp.org. Please bring your own lunch. For info: Nancy Stuart 250-580-4444

Diocese of Victoria Pastoral Care Training Fall 2026

The Pastoral Care Outreach Training series will be Saturday mornings from 9:30 – 12:00, starting Sept 26 and running until Nov 28 (with no session on October 10). Register through the office. Zoom option, or an in-person option at the Holy Cross library is available. Please register with the office by Sept 17, 2026.

Hearts for Homes Gala

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Vancouver Island invites you to the Hearts for Homes Gala. Join us on Oct 3 at the Union Club of Victoria (805 Gordon Street, Victoria, BC) for a memorable evening to support affordable housing. For tickets go to: <https://www.hibid.ca/events/hearts-for-homes>



Festival of Senhor Bom Jesus da Pedra

Our Lady of Fatima Parish invites you to the Festival of Senhor Bom Jesus da Pedra, from Sept 4 to 6. A procession and social gathering in our hall will follow after the 12pm Sunday Mass on Sat Sept 6.

Baptismal Preparation

To prepare for your child's baptism, parents must participate in a Baptismal Prep course and complete a baptism registration form. The next courses are *Thurs, Sept 10 (6 pm - 8pm)* OR *Sat, Oct 10 (10 am - 12pm)*. Please email hcsbp baptismalprep@rcdvictoria.org to register.

Nepal Flooding Relief Efforts - To learn more about what D&P are doing to help and to donate visit: <https://devp.org/en/nepal-floods-necessitate-a-deluge-of-solidarity/>

Colombia Earthquake Relief Efforts - To learn more about what D&P are doing to help and to donate visit: <https://devp.org/en/colombia-earthquake-how-to-help/>

Synchronous Marriage Preparation Courses are now available over Zoom. For details or to register please check our website: <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/marriage-prep>

COLLECTIONS

August 31, 2026

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THESE GIFTS

Envelopes	\$1,920.00
Loose	\$ 365.00
Electronic Giving	\$1,723.34
Total	\$4,008.34

HOLY CROSS PARISH OFFICE

250-477-5321
4049 Gordon Head Rd
Victoria, BC V8N 3X7
www.holycrossvictoria.org

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday-Friday: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm
Saturday-Monday: Closed

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday: 4:00 pm
Sunday: 9:00 am
See front page for daily Mass times.

New Course on Beginning Apologetics

Join a 10-week apologetics program at the St. Andrew's Cathedral from Sept 23 to Nov 25, facilitated by Bernadette O'Connor. The course is entitled: "A Catholic Perspective of Steadfast Hope expressed with Gentleness and Respect." The 1.5 hour sessions will be held Wednesdays at either (1) in person at 2pm or (2) 6:30pm on Zoom. Please contact St Andrew's Cathedral office to register.

CONTACT US

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