

Affordable housing in the Diocese of Victoria

Oct. 2, 2024

Reasons:

1. In 2015, almost 10 years ago, Pope Francis wrote *Laudato Si – On Care for our Common Home*, calling not only Catholics, but the world, to protect the planet and care for our brothers and sisters.
2. Canada and our community, Vancouver Island, currently has a housing crisis. Many people cannot afford suitable housing.

Definitions:

1. Who are we housing: seniors on fixed incomes, young working people and families
2. Affordable housing: A mixture of market rent, rent geared to income, deeply discounted rent or subsidized rent
3. Affordability: It is affordable if it is attainable and if you are spending 30% or less of your income on housing.

This presentation “Affordable housing in the Diocese of Victoria”, is to sow the seeds at how we could reuse, repurpose and redevelop church lands. This can also sustain, retain and build congregations, and also create attainable housing and alleviate the housing crisis.

You are not being asked to do this. You are being asked to allow it to be done. Someone else will do it. And that someone else will be a three-way partnership including:

- the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria – the land partner
- St. Vincent de Paul or another qualified not-for-profit housing operator partner (eg, Alberni Low Energy Housing Society)
- BC Builds – the funding partner.

Diocese of Victoria parishes sit on church land. If the land can be leased from the church, housing can be built much cheaper than if the land has to be bought. Port Alberni’s Maitland Village approved a three-way partnership and **it’s on church land!** Let’s build more of these.

There are many good affordable housing policies in place, and many funding opportunities, especially from the BC government. Please think creatively about how to take this opportunity to build affordable housing using church land. Clergy and parish administrators only have to say **YES** and other partners will do the work.

