

Pastor's Corner

A Christmas Recap. I hope you all had a blessed and merry Christmas Day. It was great to see so many folks at Mass on Christmas Eve and Day. But it was sad that, on the whole, so many of you were unable to attend. I understand why, and that it must have been very hard on you not to celebrate this great Feast at Mass.

In total we had about 1,400 folks at 8 Masses (we usually have 2,400 on pre-pandemic Sundays and over 4,000 on a typical Christmas). Although we required “reservations” we were ready to take all comers to the extent of capacity, plus we had set up the Parish Hall for an overflow to view all the Masses livestream and to receive Holy Communion. We set this up “just in case” we had a bunch of folks who don’t regularly attend Mass show up for Christmas—we didn’t want to turn anyone away at Christmas (“no room at the inn”). Although we didn’t have to make use of this “overflow,” I am glad we prepared for it, and want to thank all the parishioners who volunteered to manage it for me. Special thanks go out to Rose Jarvis and her family. And thanks to all the folks who signed up to be porters, counters and ushers. I’m sure your acts of charity were appreciated by the Baby Jesus.

And wasn’t the music great? Special thanks to Elisabeth Turco and Denise Anizen and all the cantors for their dedication and beautiful work.

Epiphany and the End of the Christmas Season. Today we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord, commemorating the visit and adoration of the magi to Christ in Bethlehem. It has historically been celebrated on January 6th since at least the 3rd century, but is celebrated in the U.S. on the Sunday falling between January 2nd and January 8th (inclusive). In the Orthodox Church and many of the Eastern Rite Catholic Churches it also, effectively, celebrates the birth of Our Lord, i.e., Christmas. This year it also represents the last Sunday of the Christmas season, which ends tomorrow, Monday, with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

The visit of the magi is rich in symbolic meanings for Christians, in particular those relating to the revealing (“epiphany”) of the Christ to the gentile world. As we think about this, it reminds us that that the Church is the Body of Christ on Earth, and so is called to continue the Christmas/Epiphany revelation of the coming of the Messiah to the world. But this is not just a responsibility for the Pope, bishops and priests: each of us baptized into Christ and members of Christ’s Body, and so each of is called to go out to the gentiles of today—those who do not share our Christian and Catholic faith—and reveal Christ to them. This can take various forms, but it begins with living our lives as if we believe in Jesus ourselves. So we live lives in keeping with the moral teaching of Christ, especially when it comes to chastity and charity. But we also must peak to others about Jesus, and His Church. Again, this can take various forms, considering prudence, our own particular talents, and the particular opportunities the Lord gives us to share our faith.

Feast of St. Raymond of Peñafort. This Thursday, January 7, is the feast of our parish Patron. Please join us for

a special 7pm Evening Mass to celebrate this Feast.

For those of you who don’t know much about St. Raymond, I invite you to read the 32-page biography we published a few years ago. If you don’t have one, they are available in the parish office.

As a brief reminder...Raymond was born of a noble family, near Barcelona, in 1175. At the age of 20 he became professor of canon law. In 1210 he left teaching to complete his studies in civil and canon law at the University of Bologna. He went on to hold a chair of canon law at that university for three years. (The date of his priestly ordination is uncertain, but it would seem to be around 1195).

On August 1, 1218 Raymond received a heavenly vision in which the Blessed Mother (“Our Lady of Ransom”) instructed him to help St. Peter Nolasco found the Order of Mercedarians, which would be devoted to the ransom of Christians taken captive by the Moors (Spanish Muslims) (the scene depicted in the mural above the Blessed Mother Statue in the sanctuary). Raymond did not, however, join that order but rather entered the Order of Preachers (“Dominicans”) in Barcelona in 1222. As a Dominican, Raymond continued to teach and preach, and devoted considerable effort working to convert Moors and Jews, coaxing St. Thomas Aquinas to write his *Summa Contra Gentiles* to help in his efforts.

At the request of his superiors Raymond published the *Summa Casuum*, a book on cases of conscience for the guidance of confessors and moralists, the first guide of its kind. This work eventually led to his appointment as confessor and theologian to Pope Gregory IX in 1230. The Pope soon directed Raymond to re-arrange and codify the canons (juridical laws) of the Church, which required him to rewrite and condense centuries of Church decrees. The Pope published Raymond’s work in 1231, and commanded that it alone should be considered authoritative. From then on St. Raymond would be known as the “Father of canon law.”

In 1238 he was elected Master General of the Dominican Order, the second successor to St. Dominic, but he resigned two years later, claiming that at 63 years old he was too old for the job. He continued his writing, preaching and pastoral work, as well as many important responsibilities entrusted to him by various popes, for another 37 years until his death in Barcelona on January 6, 1275, at the age of 100.

But St. Raymond had one last great miracle to perform. Six years before his death, King James of Aragon invited him to come to Majorca with him to preach to the Muslim inhabitants. But when he arrived on the island the saint discovered that King James had brought his mistress along. Raymond demanded he send her away, and when the King refused, Raymond went searching for a ship to go back to Spain. When he discovered that the King had forbidden any ship to let him board, Raymond simply bowed his head in prayer, made the sign of the cross, and, by the grace of God, sailed 160 miles back to Spain using just his great cape as both a skiff and a sail. This scene is depicted in the mural above the St. Joseph statue in our sanctuary.

He is the patron saint of lawyers, both canon and civil. And our patron as well! St. Raymond of Peñafort, pray for us!

Oremus pro invicem! Fr. De Celles

MASS INTENTIONS

<p>Monday Jan. 4th 8:30 am Donna & Rick Rhoads</p> <p>Tuesday, Jan. 5th 8:30 am Kay Minor Swisher +</p> <p>Wednesday, Jan. 6th 8:30 am Alfred Drouillard +</p> <p>Thursday, Jan. 7th Feast Day of St. Raymond of Peñafort 8:30 am Sophie Elmore 7:00 pm Rev John C. De Celles</p> <p>Friday, Jan. 8th 8:30 am Wilmer W Hoopes, III +</p> <p>Masses to be said Privately Jan. 4 Mary Ellen Browne + Jan. 5 Grace Radel + Jan. 6 Helen H. Glotz + Jan. 7 RE Students & their families Jan. 8 Poor Souls + Jan. 10 RE Catechists & their families</p>	<p>Saturday, Jan. 9th 9:00 am Ruth Hawranick +</p> <p>Vigil Mass 5:00 pm Daniel H. DeCelles, Sr.</p> <p>Sunday, Jan. 10th 7:00 am Jean Fullenkamp + 9:00 am Parishioners 11:00 am Peter Hansen 1:00 pm Family of Jesus Prayer Group</p>
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Please pray for our parishioners serving in Combat Zones and their families. If you have a relative serving in harm's way and would like to have his/her name included in our prayer list, please contact the parish office. **Also, please be sure to let us know when they return home.**

Anthony Nsekela

Brandon Skiba

Please pray for the sick of our parish

<p>Glenn Bliss Tom Dietz Michael O'Neill Cindy Laird Patricia Lewis Barbara McGinn Mai Pham Joan Opiela Donald Zacherl Leonora Ramos Jason Saenz Phyllis Zitnik</p>	<p>Mary K Randazzo Patricia Del Buono Michael Malachowski Juanita Boarman Angela Colom John Florio Debra Henkel Daniel Moore Maria Daugherty Lauren Hornsby Gaudencio Dizon Antoinette Baptist</p>	<p>Margaret O'Neill Ada Prabhavat Julia Oaks Christine Gloninger Joan Snavelly Paul Haynes John Sause Donald Letzkus Kory Haddock-Quinones Desiree Quinones Minnie Taylor</p>
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Feast Day of St. Raymond of Peñafort is Thursday, January 7th! We will have a special Mass at 7:00 pm that day, in honor of our patron saint. Please join us.

THANK YOU to everyone who participated in this year's Giving Tree! With your help, we were able to assist 33 families (with 187 members) provide Christmas for their children. In addition to the families we adopted, so far, we were able to help another 5 families with a total of 15 more children. We could not have done this without your help!

Men's Prayer Group: On the first and third Saturdays of each month a group of men meet in the parish hall to pray and read the scriptures. They are neither theologians, philosophers, nor great scholars. Just some guys, coming together to pray, read, and share a simple breakfast. Everyone is welcome. Please join us at 7:30 am Saturday, Jan. 16th. For more information, call Dave Wilson, 703-966-5327.

Catholic Book Club: The next Parish Book Club meeting is on Friday, Jan. 8th in the Maurer Room at 10:00 am. There is limited space but virtual attendance is possible. The book for discussion is: *Takedown: From Communists to Progressives, How the Left Has Sabotaged Family and Marriage* by Paul Kengor (256 pgs.) Newcomers welcome. If you have any questions or to register, please contact Jim Mault at bookclub@straymonds.org

Family of Jesus Prayer Group: Though our weekly meetings are currently canceled - we are still praying! If you have any prayer requests, please let us know by emailing Elaine Perricone at jpebtp@verizon.net or by calling the parish office at 703-440-0535.

Home School Group: for more information visit our website www.homeschool-life.com/va/straymondhsg/. Contact: Katherine Bogacki or Malia Cameron at straymondhsg@gmail.com.

View livestreaming of the Holy Mass at St. Raymond's!

<https://straymonds.org/view-mass-online/>

Monday through Friday Daily Mass at 8:30 am

Saturday at 9:00 am

SUNDAY MASS at 11:00 am

Confessions in the Church
(in the flower room)

Wednesdays: 6:00 pm - 6:55 pm

Saturday: 8:00 am - 8:45 am, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Please see the front of the bulletin for our current Mass, Confession, and Adoration schedules.

Face masks are expected at all Masses unless you are exempt.

The 1:00 pm Sunday Mass is "Masks Mandatory".

Sign ups are required for 9 am and 11 am Sunday Masses.

Contact the parish office.

Watch for our Constant Contact Updates! If you are not receiving emails from the parish, please contact the parish office at 703-440-0535 or office@straymonds.org to verify your email address.

"They offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh." Is God calling you to give Him the gold of your freedom, the incense of your prayer, and the myrrh of your love through a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life? Contact Fr. Michael Isenberg, michael.isenberg@arlingtondiocese.org or (703) 841-2514.

GOSPEL MT 2:1-12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea,
in the days of King Herod,
behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,
saying,

"Where is the newborn king of the Jews?

We saw his star at its rising
and have come to do him homage."

When King Herod heard this,
he was greatly troubled,
and all Jerusalem with him.

Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the
people,

He inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea,
for thus it has been written through the prophet:

*And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
since from you shall come a ruler,
who is to shepherd my people Israel."*

Then Herod called the magi secretly
and ascertained from them the time of the star's
appearance.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said,
"Go and search diligently for the child.

When you have found him, bring me word,
that I too may go and do him homage."

After their audience with the king they set out.
And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising
preceded them,
until it came and stopped over the place where the
child was.

They were overjoyed at seeing the star,
and on entering the house
they saw the child with Mary his mother.
They prostrated themselves and did him homage.

Then they opened their treasures
and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and
myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to return to
Herod,
they departed for their country by another way.

Luminaries of Holy Mary: Come join us on Feb. 6th to honor the Blessed Mother's request for making the 5 First Saturdays: Mass at 9am, then meet in the Parish Hall for Rosary, meditation and Gospel reflection. All are welcome.

SAINT RAYMOND'S RESPECTS LIFE

*Learn the TRUTH. Live the TRUTH.
Spread the TRUTH... in LOVE*

**Hail Mary,
Mother of God,
Theokotos,
Mother of all born and unborn,
blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Amen**



Thank you for your continued support of the MaRiH Pregnancy Care Center. Your generosity - accompanied by your prayers - is so very much appreciated. *There is a particular need for size 3T and 4T diapers.* **Our next support weekend will be on January 9-10.** God bless you!

Mark your calendar! The 48th Annual March for Life is scheduled for Friday, January 29th. Sign-ups for the buses will be in the narthex and online. Stay tuned for details.

Save the date! The 3rd Annual Virginia March for Life is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, April 7th in Richmond. Stay tuned for details.

Tepeyac Pro Life OB/GYN: Transforming Hearts Through Healthcare. tepeyacobgyn.com 703-273-9440. Thank you for your referrals and your support.

Natural Family Planning. A gift to your marriage. For more info visit: ccli.org

Special thanks to those who have been making such beautiful blankets!! Our *Wrapped In Love* program is up and stitching. Pray for the mothers and babies who will be wrapped in love by your efforts as you create baby blankets for distribution at Pregnancy Care Centers or for use by sidewalk counselors – wherever we find a need. God bless you for your efforts. Blankets may be delivered to the parish office or MaRiH collection box in the narthex.

Has the sorrow of miscarriage or still birth touched your life? Or perhaps you know someone in this situation. **A Mom's Peace**, a Lay Apostolate for Mothers of Miscarried and Stillborn Souls offers discreet support to families with bereavement, burial and remembrance assistance. For more information visit amomspeace.org.

To those who have suffered an abortion: Project Rachel can help someone who is carrying the grief and sorrow of a past abortion. (888)456-HOPE. Confidentiality always respected. www.helpafterabortion.org .

Give a Gift for Life! Gabriel Project helps pregnant moms welcome their babies. Please consider donating at www.arlingtondiocese.org/giftforlife. For more info, contact them at 1-866-444-3553 or GabrielProject@arlingtondiocese.org

St. Raymond's Youth Apostolate



**IMPORTANT
ANNOUNCEMENT**

Both our junior high and high school youth groups are shifting from a social focus to a more spiritual/instructional focus. This will put us in line with what is

permissible under the guidelines for religious/educational exemptions to the 10 person limit.

Junior High (7-8th Grade) Youth Group

5-6:30pm Sunday, January 3rd

Come eat pizza, make new friends and have fun all while growing in your faith! All 7-8th graders are welcome! You do not have to be a parishioner, or even Catholic for that matter, in order to attend. There is no charge, however, we do need the forms (below) on file before you come. If possible, please RSVP by emailing Jeanne, to give an idea of how much pizza we will need.

High School Youth Group

8-9pm Sunday, January 3rd (Parish Hall)

All students grades 9-12 are invited to join us to grow in faith & fellowship! No RSVP required. Make sure forms (below) are on file before coming.

High School Girls' Group

7-8:30pm Monday, December 7th (Parish Hall)

Led by an outstanding trio of young adult women, recent college graduates, who are super pumped for this opportunity to witness to and grow in holiness alongside our young women. Join us as we cultivate and witness authentic community, friendships, and space to share our faith, learn and encourage one another in ways to practically apply the faith to our daily lives. If you have questions or find yourself disagreeing with some teaching of the Church, this group is for you! If you are gung ho about your faith, this group is for you! If you are looking for authentic friendships, a place to search, a place to grow in understanding, a place to practice defending the faith, a place to laugh, to cry, to be authentically you, to have fun...and so much more...come! You are welcome here! Make sure forms (below) are on file before coming.

Youth Apostolate Participation 2 REQUIRED Forms

2020-2021 YA Info. Sheet is to be completed annually for every child *prior* participating in any Youth Apostolate function.

Youth Ministry Participant Waiver, a one-time form is to be signed and turned in for every youth *prior* to participating in any St. Raymond's Youth Ministry activity/event on or off site.

Forms can be found online at <http://bit.ly/YAforms> and should be emailed to Jeanne at youth@straymonds.org or turned in to the main office.

Happy New Year!

Jeanne Sause

Director of the Youth Apostolate (Grades 7-12)
youth@straymonds.org Call/Text: 571-334-9890
<http://bit.ly/youthapostolate>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Merry Christmas Season and a Happy and Blessed New Year to all of you!!!

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Religious Education classes resume this week: January 3, 4 and 5 with exam reviews for grades 1-8!!

Midterm Exams for grades 1-8 will take place next week January 10, 11 and 12.

There will be no Religious Education classes January 17 and 18 in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

There WILL BE classes on Tuesday January 19th to make up for missed class on 12/8.

Parents of Students who are preparing to receive the

Sacrament of Penance for the first time on Saturday, February 6th: make sure you have turned in the First Holy Communion Registry form and Certificate of Baptism to the RE Office - it was due December 16th!!

New Year Save the Dates from John Paul the Great

Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School will be hosting a number of virtual community events, free and open to anyone interested in logging on! Check out jpihegreat.org for details on the following events:

- January 8, JP priority application deadline
- January 9, HSPT hosted at JP (in-person)
- January 14, Middle School Game Night on Zoom
- January 26, Evening Bioethics Webinar
- February 6, Virtual "How to High School" Workshop
- February 10, Virtual Photography Workshop
- February 27, Virtual Super Science Saturday Workshop
- Every Day: Students studying in-person, growing as members of the Wolfpack!

St. Martin de Porres Committee - collects food on an ongoing basis for the Springfield Resource Center which services over 250 families in the Springfield area. A collection box is in the Narthex and donations are collected and distributed weekly. Suggested food items are listed, but any non-perishable food donations are welcome. For equitable distribution, smaller packaging is requested (i.e. 1 lb bags of rice vs. 5 lb. bags, 1 qt. oil vs. 1 gal oil). During this crisis the need for food is greater than ever. Please be generous. The St. Martin de Porres committee thanks all of the parishioners for your food donations. Your generosity really makes a difference in helping the needy, especially during the pandemic.



St. John Bosco Council #12846 Knights of Columbus: Are you a man of 17 ½ years of more? Are you a practicing Catholic? Then we invite you to join the Knights! Contact Deputy Grand Knight Stephen Delaney (703-627-8090) or go to www.KofC.org/JoinUs to become a Knight today!

Church Persecuted

(This column is being written early due to Christmas deadlines. Any updated information can be found at <https://straymonds.org/religious-liberty-blog>.)

From [NationalReview.com](https://www.nationalreview.com) December 15, 2020 “Supreme Court Sides with Colorado Church on Religious Service Restrictions.”

On November 25th, The Supreme Court of the U.S. (SCOTUS) temporarily blocked New York Governor Cuomo’s order restricting access to churches while allowing other facilities to operate. SCOTUS also returned to the lower courts a similar situation in California involving Harvest Rock Church.

On December 15th, SCOTUS added two additional rulings in support of religious liberty. They sent back to the lower court for review based on their November 25th decision a Colorado policy which targeted indoor religious services by subjecting them to harsher rules than other activities such as retail shopping. In response, Colorado informed the Court that they had removed the “capacity limits from all houses of worship at all times in response” to the previous Court decisions.

Additionally, in the same vein, the Court sent back to lower court for review a New Jersey challenge of a Catholic priest and Jewish rabbi who argued “that the state’s restrictions on houses of worship are unconstitutional as they target religion unfairly.”

St. Raymond’s has Adoration every Wednesday and Friday! Would you like to spend an hour in silent prayer and reflection with our Lord during weekly exposition of the Blessed Sacrament? We are in need of adorers **especially at 10:00 am, 12:00 pm & 2:00 pm on Wednesday**. If you are interested in Wednesdays, please call Leslie Schratz at 703-569-1940 or email spoiledk9s@verizon.net. If you are interested in Fridays, please call Virginia Osella at 703-440-0535 or email virginia.osella@straymonds.org. Drop-ins are always welcome!

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FAITH DIRECT: Although public Masses are limited and many parish events have been canceled, **our parish is still in need of your donations. We have operating costs (utility, maintenance, service contracts, supplies and staff payroll and benefits) that must continue.** Now more than ever we have requests for FAMILY ASSISTANCE to support those members of our parish who are in need of help. Please visit our website www.straymonds.org to join online or call directly at 866-507-8757.

Please remember that our parish’s expenses continue during this crisis! Your donations may be mailed, dropped off at the parish office, or given online through Faith Direct.

DECEMBER FAITH DIRECT

Sunday Offertory	\$51,434.00
Family Assistance	\$ 2,034.00
Maintenance Fund	\$ 6,926.00
Catholic Charities	\$ 2,899.00
Immaculate Conception	\$ 1,714.00
Christmas	\$ 4,959.00

SUNDAY, DEC. 20TH COLLECTION

Sunday Offertory	\$13,205.20
Family Assistance	\$ 3,485.00
Maintenance Fund	\$ 2,247.00

LAST WEEK’S COLLECTION

Due to an early Bulletin Deadline, Christmas & Last Week’s Collections will be in Next week’s Bulletin.

The second collection next week will be for Crossroads Walk. This collection was postponed from August due to Covid 19.