Pastor's Corner

LENT. The Season of Lent begins this Wednesday, February 17, 2021, with **Ash Wednesday**. As I've said many times, this is my favorite time of year, in that it gives us a great opportunity to meditate on the immense love of God that would lead Him to suffer and die for our sins. At the same time, then, it's also a time to consider our sins—how we have failed to love Him—and to work to overcome them, through our diligent efforts and cooperating with His grace. In short, it can be a time of intense growth in our personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Lent, of course, brings a much busier <u>parish schedule</u>, which we've laid out in detail in this week's "Lenten <u>Schedule" flyers</u>. Please keep this flyer in a central place in your home—maybe on your fridge door—to remind you of the many opportunities for spiritual growth the parish offers this Lent.

Ash Wednesday. Ashes will be distributed at all Masses on Ash Wednesday: 6:30am, 8am, 12 noon, 5pm and 7pm. Since ashes are merely symbolic (a "sacramental" not a "Sacrament") they may be received by anyone who wishes to repent their sins, Catholic or not, in "good standing" or not. (Note: There are no confessions scheduled on Ash Wednesday).

Due to COVID, the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments has allowed a modification in the distribution of ashes. Before the Priest gives the ashes individually, he will say the formulary to all present: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Then, those who wish to may come forward to have the ashes imposed on their foreheads.

Remember, Ash Wednesday is never a holy day of obligation, but we are highly recommended to attend Mass to begin Lent. Also, again, ashes are not s sacrament, and their imposition is not itself a blessing (although the ashes have been blessed). Even so, the ashes are an important sign of and PUBLIC WITNESS to our faith in Christ Crucified, His Gospel of repentance, and His grace of forgiveness.

Nota bene: For the distribution/imposition I will most likely wear a face mask, since it is radically different than distributing the Body of Christ in Holy Communion (Also, the ashes tend to mess with my sinuses—I'd almost wish I could wear a mask every year).

Fasting and Abstinence. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of both <u>fasting and abstinence</u>, and <u>every Friday in Lent</u> is a day of <u>abstinence</u>. Failure to "substantially" keep these penances is grave matter (e.g., potentially a mortal sin).

The <u>law of abstinence</u> requires that no meat may be eaten on these days, and binds all Catholics who are <u>14 years</u> old or older. No other penance may be substituted.

The <u>law of fasting</u> binds those who are <u>between the ages of 18 and 59</u>. The Church <u>defines "fasting</u>," for these purposes, as having <u>only one full meal</u> a day, with two additional smaller meals permitted, but only as necessary to keep up strength and so small that if added together they would not equal a full meal. Snacking is forbidden, but that does not include drinks that are not of the nature of a meal.

Even though these rules do not bind all age groups, all are encouraged to follow them to the extent possible. Children in particular learn the importance of penance from following

the practice of their older family members. <u>The sick, pregnant</u> or nursing mothers, and other folks with special physical circumstances may be partially or totally exempt from these <u>rules</u>—use good judgment and take care of yourself.

Doing Penance. Of course, all Catholics are encouraged to do personal acts of penance throughout the season of Lent, traditionally of three types: **almsgiving** (including acts of charity), **sacrifice** (what you "give up"), and **prayer**. Please choose your penances carefully, considering your health and state in life. Challenge yourself, but pick things you can actually do, rather than things that are so difficult that you may easily give up on them. Offer all this in atonement for your sins and as acts of love for the God who, out of love, died on the Cross for your sins.

Sacrament of Penance. Confession is key to a fruitful Lent. I strongly encourage that you take advantage of our extended Lent confession schedule—it is my plan to hear confessions every day in Lent starting Feb. 22nd, except Sundays, Ash Wednesday and Holy Thursday (see today's "Lenten Schedule" flyer for exact times). This requires that I bring in some outside priest-help, so it's possible that some weeks I may have to modify the schedule, so it would be a good idea to check the parish website before you go to confession, especially on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Please <u>do not postpone your confession to the end of Lent</u>. First of all, spiritually it's important to start the season on the right foot, repent early so that Christ's grace may flow freely and unimpeded throughout the season. But also, more practically, what so often happens is we have just a few people coming to confession every evening week during Lent, but then in the last week the lines are much longer.

Lenten Series. I am very sorry, but we will NOT have a Lenten Series this year. Even if we have visiting priests give the series, it always involves extra work on my part. This year, I just can't do that. I am more disappointed than you are.

HOME REPAIR NEEDED? With all the uncertainties of Covid, I've decided not to send our high school kids to the Diocesan Work Camp this year—their plans are just too "up in the air" for us to commit to them. As an alternative, we'll be doing our own parish work camp.

So, our High School Youth Apostolate is looking for opportunities to help St. Raymond's parishioners with intermediate skill projects and manual labor this summer, June 21st-25th. Could you use help? We are looking for projects involving basic carpentry, landscaping, hardscaping, and home maintenance. Examples include: deck repairs, fence repairs, walkway/patio repairs, staining, painting, power-washing, gutter work, etc. But there are some restrictions: All work must be outdoors; no project can require a county building permit; no projects higher than one story will be considered; projects that expose volunteers to mold, lead based paint, or asbestos will not be considered.

If you or someone in the local area that you know could use help, please email Jeanne at youth@straymonds.org by March 1st with your/their name and contact information.

Oremus pro invicem. Fr. De Celles

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday Feb. 15th President's Day

10:00 am The Doan Family

<u>Tuesday</u>, <u>Feb. 16th</u> 8:30 am Ofelia Cruz

Wednesday, Feb. 17th Ash Wednesday

6:30 am The Elder Family 8:30 am The Fuller Family Noon The Jarvis Family 5:00 pm Roland Escalante + 7:00 pm The Jensen Family

<u>Thursday</u>, <u>Feb. 18th</u> 8:30 am William Bihner +

Friday, Feb. 19th 8:30 am Laurel Stone 7:00 pm EFM (Latin)

Masses to be said Privately

Feb. 16 Joshua Schweitzer Feb. 18 The Jerez Family Feb. 19 The Lofgren Family

Saturday, Feb. 20th

9:00 am Charliann Pharse +

Vigil Mass

5:00 pm **Fr. De Celles** Ellie Garcia

Sunday, Feb. 21st

7:00 am Fr. Rippy
Karol Golinowski +
9:00 am Fr. De Celles
Parishioners
11:00 am Fr. De Celles
Jerold M. Brown +
1:00 pm Fr. Miserendino
The McDonald Family

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

Starting Monday, Feb. 22 we will have Additional Confession times for Lent!

Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays 6:30 pm Fridays at 6:00 pm

Stations of the Cross

Every Friday during Lent at 6:30 pm

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

<u>Face masks</u> 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. Visit our website or 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.

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 Colleen McFadden

Please pray for the sick of our parish

•		•
Glenn Bliss	Patricia Del Buono	Ada Prabhavat
Tom Dietz	Michael	Julia Oaks
Michael O'Neill	Malachowski	Paul Haynes
Cindy Laird	Juanita Boarman	Minnie Taylor
Patricia Lewis	Angela Colom	Dwayne Taylor
Barbara McGinn	John Florio	Donna Foster
Mai Pham	Debra Henkel	Mervyn Carter
Joan Opiela	Daniel Moore	Bernadette
Donald Zacherl	Maria Daugherty	D'Agostino
Leonora Ramos	Lauren Hornsby	Judy Knight
Jason Saenz	Gaudencio Dizon	Karen Salinetti
Phyllis Zitnik	Antoinette Baptist	Christopher Quan
Mary K Randazzo	Margaret O'Neill	Al Piombo
		Ted Tolpa

Federal Holiday—Monday, Feb. 15th is Presidents' Day. One Mass only at 10:00 am. Parish Offices are closed.

Ash Wednesday is Feb. 17th. Mass times will be 6:30 am, 8:30 am, Noon, 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm. Ashes will be distributed at all the Masses this day.

February 14 is VALENTINE's DAY! The American Heritage Girls (AHG) Troop VA 0638 is selling Chocolate & Roses for Valentine's Day at all Masses this weekend (Feb 13/14). Please stop in the Narthex of St. Raymond's after Mass and purchase some delicious Ghirardelli Chocolate and lovely roses.

Fasting and Abstinence

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of both fasting and abstinence, and every Friday in Lent is a day of abstinence. Failure to "substantially" keep these penances is grave matter (e.g., potentially a mortal sin). The law of abstinence requires that no meat may be eaten on these days, and binds all Catholics who are 14 years old or older. No other penance may be substituted. The <u>law of fasting</u> binds those who are between the ages of 18 and 59. The Church defines "fasting," for these purposes, as having only one full meal a day, with two additional smaller meals permitted, but only as necessary to keep up strength and so small that if added together they would not equal a full meal. Snacking is forbidden, but that does not include drinks that are not of the nature of a meal. Even though these rules do not bind all age groups, all are encouraged to follow them to the extent possible. Children in particular learn the importance of penance from following the practice of their older family members. The sick, pregnant or nursing mothers, and other folks with special physical circumstances may be partially or totally exempt from these rules—use good judgment and take care of yourself.

GOSPEL MK 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged Him and said.

"If You wish, You can make me clean."

Moved with pity, He stretched out His hand, touched him, and said to him,

"I do will it. Be made clean."

The leprosy left Him immediately, and he was made clean.

Then, warning him sternly, He dismissed him at once.

He said to him, "See that you tell no one anything,
but go, show yourself to the priest
and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed;
that will be proof for them."

The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter.

He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly.

He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to Him from everywhere.

St. Raymond's Lenten Women's Retreat led by the Women's Apostolate to Youth (WAY) will be on February 27, 2021 from 8:30am-1:30pm. This year's theme is 'Faithful and True: Confessing Christ in a Time of Testing" and the retreat will include Mass, talks, Confessions, Adoration, and lunch. Please register on the parish website at https://straymonds.org/womens-lenten-retreat/ or contact the parish office at 703-440-0535 or office@straymonds.org for help. No cost to attend. Space is limited, so please register ASAP.

The St. John Bosco Council Knights of Columbus are co-sponsoring a blood drive on Saturday February 20, at the Church of the Nativity parish hall from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Please consider signing up for a 15-minute time slot within that period and giving the Gift of Life. You may sign up either on-line at www.inovabloodsaves.org or in the Narthex after all Masses in the coming weekends.

ANNUAL FIVE-CAR RAFFLE: Car raffle tickets have been mailed to each family. Through ticket sales, charitable causes and parishes (including our own) throughout the area are able to provide for many needs such as family assistance. In addition, each purchaser has a chance to win five cars! This makes "selling" at work or to family and friends more like an opportunity – just show them the ticket – it will sell itself! Please note that raffle tickets must be processed at All Saints. Please mail directly to All Saints in the envelope provided. Checks should be made payable to ALL SAINTS. Questions? Contact Larry Saenz at lsaenzl@verizon.net or 703-832-1042

Support Trail Life Troop 0683 - buy mulch and topsoil! Trail Life Troop 0683, the troop sponsored by St. Raymond of Peñafort, is kicking off its annual mulch and topsoil sale to help parish families prepare for spring lawn and garden care. Your support will help our growing troop buy camping gear, advancement and recognition badges and instructional material. You can mail in your order or order online. You will find instructions for ordering at: https://straymonds.org/trail-life/. We offer home delivery for an extra donation. Questions? Contact Eric Michael at 703-372-1240. Thank you very mulch!

SAINT RAYMOND'S RESPECTS LIFE

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

"The real question today is not when human life begins, but what is the value of human life?" President Ronald Reagan

Thank you for your continued generosity to the MaRiH Pregnancy Care Center. Your generosity - accompanied by your prayers - is so very much appreciated. God bless you!

Please see the parish website for updated information regarding COVID-19 Vaccines and their relation to aborted fetal cell lines. You can speak up!

Spring Campaign Feb 17- Mar 28.
Our Parish Witness Weekend will be
March 20/21. Sign Ups are in the narthex and on the parish
website.

Bishop Burbidge will celebrate a Mass for Life on Saturday Feb 27 at 12:30 at St James Church. A Rosary will follow in front of the Falls Church abortion clinic 900 S Washington Street. All are welcome.

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: <u>ccli.org</u>.

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.

Home Repair Needed?

Our High School Youth Apostolate is looking for opportunities to help St. Raymond's parishioners with intermediate skill projects and manual labor this summer, June 21st-25th. Could you use help? We are looking for projects involving basic carpentry, landscaping, hardscaping, and home maintenance. Examples include:

deck repairs, fence repairs, walkway/patio repairs, staining, painting, power-washing, gutter work, etc.

- All work must be outdoors.
- Project cannot require a county building permit.
- Projects higher than one story (including gutters and roofs) will not be considered.
- Projects that expose volunteers to mold, lead based paint, or asbestos will not be considered.

If you or someone in the local area that you know could use help, contact Jeanne <u>youth@straymonds.org</u> 571-334-9890 by March 1st with your/their name and contact information.

St. Raymond's Youth Apostolate

Junior High or HS Youth Group will NOT meet 2/14 However, HS Girls' WILL meet 7-8:30pm on Monday 2/15! Both Jr. High & HS Youth Group will resume Sunday 2/21.

Talitha Koum: High School Girls' Group MONDAY! 7-8:30pm Monday, February 15th (Parish Hall)

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. New girls always welcome! Make sure forms (below) are on file before coming. YES, we ARE meeting on the holiday

WorkCamp (June 19th-25th) Update!

Due to a variety of factors, St. Raymond's will be holding our own version of WorkCamp this summer. WorkCamp is open to current 9-12th graders.. See "Home Repair" note above. We will have daily Mass, work in crews on projects, have evening program etc. but sleep at home. More details coming soon!!

Youth Apostolate Participation 2 REQUIRED Forms Forms can be found online at http://bit.ly/YAforms



Podcast: The Bible in a Year with Fr. **Mike Schmitz** With this podcast, you won't just read the Bible in a year ... you'll THE BIBLE IN A YEAR Bible fit together to tell an amazing story that continues in your life today!

Each episode is only 20-25 minutes & includes:

- Two to three scripture readings
- A reflection from Fr. Mike Schmitz
- A guided prayer to help you hear God's voice in his Word

To listen, search for "Bible in a Year" on your favorite podcast app or go to http://bit.ly/biblepod to listen online.

Jeanne Sause

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There WILL BE NO CCD classes tonight, Monday and Tuesday, February 14-16 in observance of the Presidents' Day holiday.

Parents of 7th Grade students: Confirmation Registry form with Certificate of Baptism attached was due in the Religious Education Office on February 4th.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION for Parents of 8th grade Confirmation candidates: Please make note of a change in venue for the Confirmation Retreat - the Retreat will be held here at St. Raymond's on March 13th and not at St. John Paul the Great High School. More information will follow.

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.

Catholic Book Club: The next Parish Book Club meeting is on Friday, March 12th in the Maurer Room at 10:00 am. There is limited space but virtual attendance is possible... The book for discussion is: Dangers to the Faith: Recognizing Catholicism's 21st-century Opponents by Al Kresta (208 pgs.) Newcomers welcome. If you have any questions or to register, please contact Jim Mault at bookclub@straymonds.org.

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 Suggested food items are listed, but any nonweekly. 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.

AHG Tiny Saints Fundraiser: Have you ever seen an adorable saintly zipper pull hanging from someone's jacket or backpack, and wondered where they got it? Likely from the Tiny Saints website! This site features 100+ saints in cute charm form, as well as some sweet board books, plush animals, and even a rosary! For the month of February, if you select "American Heritage Girls Troop VA0683 - Alexandria, VA" from the drop-down menu (we are third on the list!), our troop will receive 25% of all purchases. Please check out this great site for uniquely Catholic gifts for birthdays, Easter, or just to make someone smile, and support our AHG troop at the same time! tinysaints.com.

Post-Abortion Healing Retreats for Women in English and Spanish: An Entering Canaan Day of Prayer & Healing for women who have experienced abortion will be held on Saturday, March 20, 2021. Come begin your healing journey and experience God's hope and mercy. You are not alone. There is hope. There is healing. For more information and confidential registration, please contact Project Rachel Ministry 703-841-2504 or info@helpafterabortion.org.

Church Persecuted

(Continued from last week)

Dr. Ryan Anderson, the new president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, spoke at St. Raymond's several years ago about making the case for protecting religious freedom. In a recent oped in the Wall Street Journal ("Religious Liberty Isn't Enough," 2/1/2021, pg. A17), he reminds us that, "The left would love to frame these issues as if they pitted reason and science against superstition. But on all of these issues [Mexico City policy, repeal of the Hyde Amendment, gender ideology, abortion, etc.], social conservatives are on the side of the biological facts....The scientific point of view confirms the biblical teaching that humans are created male and female. It requires no faith to know that a boy who 'identifies' as a girl isn't one and shouldn't be allowed into private female spaces."

It doesn't take a Christian to believe that "all people are made in God's image, it requires no faith to see that an unborn child is a child. Even atheists post ultrasound images of their kids. When they shoot off pink confetti for the gender reveal, they reveal that they know the biological sex isn't 'assigned at birth." Anderson argues that we should not frame these issues as "sectarian religious issues," but biological facts. He suggests that we leave the "legal arguments, rooted in the First Amendment, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the separation of powers" to the lawyers.

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.

Legion of Mary: The Legion of Mary weekly meeting is held Virtually on Monday evenings at 7:30 pm. All auxiliary members and anyone interested in joining the Legion of Mary are welcome. For more information, please contact Tom Delaney at 703-690-1930 or by e-mail at tdelaney51@verizon.net.

FORMED°

Get In-Formed!

The Search Episode 1 - What Do You Seek? In Episode 1, we open hearts with a look at the question "what do you seek?" What is that deep longing in our hearts all about? We're all living for something, and we all strive for that something out there that is ultimately going to make us happy. But what is it? For some, this question is on their minds every day. For others, life goes by in a flash without even asking the question.

Be Led by the Spirit this Lent and

Watch now at www.straymonds.formed.org

The best Catholic content in one place - movies, programs, talks, dramas, & ebooks—just one click away!

Questions? Need help? Email us at: formed@straymonds.org



Angelus Academy Pre K—8th

Offering a liberal arts education in the classical tradition.

We are thrilled to be offering in-person instruction, 5 days a week!

Looking for a gentle introduction to school for your 3-5 year old? Our Little Messengers program (MWF mornings) includes Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (Atrium).

Thank you for your prayers and support. With God, nothing will be impossible!

www.Angelus Academy.org 7644 Dynatech Ct., Springfield, VA 22153 703-924-3996

The BLA provides an opportunity to unite as a Catholic family and support programs, ministries, and services that no single individual or parish could offer by itself. After reflecting upon the many blessing that God has given you, please prayerfully consider making a BLA pledge. Every donation is vital to the success of the BLA. You may go online to www.arlingtondiocese.org, or text "BLA" to 703-260-9800 tp make a donation. Please help our parish reach our BLA goal!

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, Feb. 20th. For more information, call Dave Wilson, 703-966-5327.

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.

FAITH DIRECT JANUARY 2021

Sunday Offertory	\$ 54,810.50	
Family Assistance	\$	2,179.00
Maintenance Fund	\$	5,731.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$	1,562.00
Church in Latin America	\$	1,104.00

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

Sunday Offertory	\$ 17,090.00
Family Assistance	\$ 5,091.00
Maintenance Fund	\$ 4,576.00
Diocesan Newspaper	\$ 1,087.00

The Collection on Ash Wednesday is for the Church in Eastern & Central Europe.

The Second Collection next week is for Black & Indian Missions here in the U.S.