

Pastor's Corner

SIXTY. As I write this today (Wednesday) I celebrate my 60th birthday. Groan. Part of me has never liked birthdays, for obvious reasons. But I know that's not the right attitude, so I generally try to take my birthday as an opportunity to sort of count my blessings and give thanks to God for them. So let me do that today.

First, I thank the Lord Jesus for my Catholic Faith, and through that access to His love and grace, especially through His Word and Doctrine, and sacraments, most particularly confession and the Eucharist. With that I'm thankful for my parents, Dan and Barbara (Bobby), two of the most devout Catholics you can imagine, who taught their children the Faith by actively instructing them but also by their example. Even in their imperfections they taught us of God's mercy and grace.

I also thank God for my two brothers and two sisters, whom I still remain close to after all these years, and who buttress my faith by their own fidelity to the Church. I especially thank God for my sister, Barbetta, who is so strong in her faith, and though barely 5 feet tall insists on calling me her "little brother."

I also thank Him for all the teachers in 12 years at St. Mary Magdalene Grade School and Central Catholic High School, especially the Incarnate Word Sisters and Marianist Brothers and Priests who set such a strong example of self-sacrifice for the Lord.

I'm also thankful for the 10+ year career He gave me as an accountant before I entered the priesthood. It's amazing all the lessons I learned then that still help me today. And the great friends who helped me along the way, especially my mentors and my clients. My old boss, Ed Polansky, in particular comes to mind: a good Catholic man, a good family man, a fine professional and a heck of a good boss.

Also for all my friends I made along the way in San Antonio. Particularly some of the friends I went to grade school and high school with and my other good friends from childhood, many of whom became truly like family.

And perhaps I will surprise you by thanking Jesus for the girls and women I knew and loved before I entered seminary. They helped me in many ways, but in particular to understand how good the gift of marriage is, and the dedication and depth of love and commitment that celibacy would demand.

And I am thankful for the friends and priests who led me to the seminary. I think of the folks in my young adult group at St. Matthew's parish in San Antonio who encouraged me in my prayer life and had confidence I could be a good priest. And I think of Fr. Christopher Phillips, an Anglican convert to the Catholic Faith, who was my spiritual director, and insisted I had a vocation. And Fr. James Gould, the legendary Vocation Director of the Arlington Diocese, without whose support and example I would not be a priest today.

And I'm thankful to God for sending me to Mount St. Mary's Seminary, at the time the best seminary in the country. Not perfect, and so I wasn't always delighted to be there, but a place where I grew in faith, knowledge and love for the Lord and His Church. I'm especially thankful for the good priests who taught and formed me, especially Fr.

Robert Zylla, and for the immeasurable help of the great moral theologian, Prof. Germain Grisez. May they both rest in His peace.

Above all else, I thank the Lord for my ordination to the Priesthood, on May 18, 1996, which has been the font of so many other gifts. I thank Him for bringing me to the Diocese of Arlington to serve with so many great priests and lay people. And for allowing me to be ordained and serve under Bishop John Richard Keating, a courageous and wise servant of the Lord, who was also very kind to me in very difficult times. He left us too soon. May he rest in peace.

And let me thank Him also for bringing me to Virginia, a naturally beautiful state, but also one of such historic and political vibrancy. And for allowing me to be born in the greatest country on earth, to spend the first half of my life in the greatest state (Texas) in that country, and for allowing me to spend the second half in the second greatest state.

And by bringing me to Virginia, also allowing me to be close to and enjoy the support of my sister Barbetta and her family, and my cousin Beth and her family, who live so close by.

I thank the Lord also for all the good priest friends He has given me, so many I can't name them all here (but I guess I have to mention Fr. Ronald Gripshover, or he won't let me stay in his parents timeshare when we go on golf vacations). And for the outstanding pastors he's assigned me to, most especially Fr. Jerry Daly (yes, him), and Fr. Dennis Kleinman. Their examples of dedication, devotion, work ethic and unwavering faith continue to inspire and instruct me.

And I thank the Lord for the gift of so many wonderful parish assignments. A parish isn't just a geographic area on a map or the bricks of a church building; it's the parishioners that make it what it is. So I am thankful for all the parishioners in each of the 6 parishes I have served in (8 if you include my seminarian parishes), and especially at Holy Spirit, St. Andrews and St. Mary's (Alexandria), with whom I have made many lasting and strong friendships.

I thank the Lord also for being formed and serving under two of the greatest Popes in the history of the Church, John Paul II and Benedict XVI, and being intellectually formed by their brilliant scholarly writings. They are truly my intellectual mentors.

And I thank Jesus for saving my life so many times when I was sick or foolish, and for giving me the assistance of His Mother, my patron saints (all the St. John's) and a loving patroness, the Magdalene.

And last but not least, I deeply thank the Lord for the 10 years he's given me as father of this parish of St. Raymond of Peñafort. Of course, we have our beautiful church, but the real joy of being pastor here is the devoted staff and volunteers, and the kind and holy parishioners. Sometimes I look at little children playing, and I feel a pain in my heart at not having children of my own. But then that pain quickly reminds me that I do have children. And so, finally, I thank the Lord for the gift of celibacy, which has been fruitful in giving me all of you.

There are countless other things I'm thankful for, but that will suffice for today. Praised be Jesus Christ.

Oremus pro invicem. Fr. De Celles

MASS INTENTIONS**Monday, Aug 24th**

6:30 am Fr. Charles Smith
8:30 am Fr. Charles Smith

Tuesday, Aug 25th

8:30 am Louis Skrehot +

Wednesday, Aug 26th

6:30 am Poor Souls in Purgatory+
8:30 am Rick & Joan Crum

MODIFIED Mass Schedule**Thursday, Aug. 27th**

8:30 am Aubrey Pridgen +

Friday, Aug. 28th

8:30 am Donna Lou Shickel

Masses to be said Privately

Aug 25 William Chester +
Aug 26 David Quan
Aug 27 Frederico Hontiveros +
Aug 28 Jene Paonessa +
Aug 30 John Christensen

Saturday, Aug. 29th

9:00 am John Pfundstein +

Vigil Mass

5:00 pm Fr. Willard
Walter & Cara Seiberling

Sunday, Aug. 30th

7:00 am Fr. Willard
Geraldine M Robertson +
9:00 am Fr. Rippy
Parishioners
11:00 am Fr. Willard
Simeon & Angela Guerrero +
1:00 pm Fr. TBA
Gillian Stransky +

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

Please pray for the sick of our parish

Glenn Bliss	Phyllis Zitnik	Lauren Hornsby
Tom Dietz	Mary K Randazzo	Gaudencio Dizon
Michael O'Neill	Patricia Del Buono	Antoinette Baptist
Cindy Laird	Joann Alba	Chris Quan
Christine B	Michael	Dennis Taylor
Petitti	Malachowski	Louis Porter
Patricia Lewis	Juanita Boarman	Margot Blair
Barbara McGinn	Angela Colom	Rosa Mendez
Mai Pham	John Florio	Aryel Ochoa
Joan Opiela	Debra Henkel	Kathy Scully
Donald Zacherl	Daniel Moore	Dennis Taylor
Leonora Ramos	Maria Daugherty	
Jason Saenz	Howie DeWolf	

Public Masses**Modified Schedule**

Aug. 27th—Sept. 4th

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)

Wednesday: 6:15 pm - 7:00 pm

Saturday: 8:30 am - 9:00 am; and 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm

(No Sunday Confessions at this time.)

Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Wednesdays: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm

Fridays: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

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.

Volunteer teachers/catechists, assistant teachers and aides

(high school students) are needed for the 2020-2021 Religious Education year. If you would like to help, please fill out a gray Volunteer Registration form which can be found in the Narthex of the church, at the Groveland entrance, in the Parish Office or outside the Religious Education Office. You may also find it on our website at: straymonds.org/religious-education/volunteer-registration-form/. Please complete and return the form to the Religious Education Office.

Celebrating A Silver or Golden Wedding Anniversary This Year?

Were you married in 1970 or 1995? Then join Bishop Michael F. Burbidge for the 2020 Mass for Jubilarians to be celebrated on Sunday, October 4th at 2:30 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More in Arlington, VA. Contact the parish office to **register no later than September 18th**. For more info, visit www.arlingtondiocese.org/MJM.

Weekday Masses will be:

8:30 am Monday thru Friday

6:30 am Monday Aug 24 and Wednesday Aug 26th only

9:00 am Saturday

Sunday Masses will be:

Saturday Vigil at 5:00 pm

Sunday at 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am, & 1:00 pm

(There will not be a 5:00 pm Sunday Mass at this time)

Face masks will be expected at all Masses.

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

Contact the parish office.

Labor Day: Monday, Sept. 7th is a federal holiday. There will be only one Mass at 10:00 am. It will be livestreamed. Parish Offices will be closed.

Altar Rail Project Update: At last word, the ship (and marble) had arrived in the Bahamas! At press time, we don't have the timing of the ship's departure from Freeport or its arrival in Baltimore, but we're getting closer...

Annual Back to School Sock & Underwear Drive: The St. Martin de Porres Committee is again sponsoring a "Back to School" drive for low income families in the Springfield area. We will be accepting donations of NEW Socks & Underwear for school-aged children (7-14) on the weekends of Aug 22-23 and Aug. 29-30. For health code reasons, we can only accept NEW items. A collection box will be in the Narthex. Items requested are:

Boys: Socks, Undershirts, Briefs & Boxers

Girls: Socks, Tights, Undershirts, Camisoles & Briefs

Thank you for your continued support!

GOSPEL MT 16:13-20

Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi and
He asked His disciples,
“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”
They replied, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah,
still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”
He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”
Simon Peter said in reply,
“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
Jesus said to him in reply,
“Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah.
For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My
heavenly Father.
And so I say to you, you are Peter,
and upon this rock I will build My church,
and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against
it.
I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.
Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;
and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in
heaven.”
Then He strictly ordered His disciples
to tell no one that He was the Christ.

Luminaries of Mary are back for the First Saturdays devotions and gathering on September 5 in the church hall after the 9:00 Mass. Everyone is welcome. Come pray the rosary at our Blessed Mother's request at Fatima. 9:45 am- 10:30 am.

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.

HOPE AFTER ABORTION
POST ABORTION HEALING RETREAT FOR WOMEN: An Entering Canaan Day of Prayer & Healing for women who have experienced abortion will be held on **Saturday October 17, 2020**. Come. Begin your healing journey. 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 at 888-456-HOPE(4673) or info@helpafterabortion.org.

Registration for Christendom Graduate School's Fall semester, which runs Sept. 8 through Dec. 19 is open! Courses are offered on campus in Alexandria & are also available online in both live & prerecorded formats. This Fall students will explore topics in Sacred Scripture, Trinitarian Theology, Church History, and more! Courses may be taken for credit toward a Master's degree or certificate. Casual students and auditors are also welcome. There is a special discount audit rate for catechists, seniors and religious. For details, please visit our website <https://graduate.christendom.edu> or contact the office at 703-658-4304 or graduate@christendom.edu. The Notre Dame Graduate School of Christendom College has been forming the faithful for more than 50 years. Join today!

SAINT RAYMOND'S RESPECTS LIFE

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

MaRiH Pregnancy Care Center Thanks YOU!
Again! Our next support weekend is September 12/13. God bless you all for your continued generosity.

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

Vaccines are in the news as one way for scientists to strive to find relief from the COVID19 virus. Many vaccines presently in use for various diseases have been derived from aborted fetal cell lines. Catholics should educate themselves on the pertinent concerns that fact presents. The National Catholic Bioethics Center can answer many questions. <https://www.ncbcenter.org/resources/> Visit cogforlife.org for current information regarding ethical vaccines. Please consult the parish website for more detailed information.



September 23 – November 1.
Stay tuned for details

Our Own Pro Life Ambassador!

Fellow parishioner **Victoria Bliss** spent a phenomenal summer as a missionary with Created Equal working to change hearts and minds in our culture and share the Gospel. She has been trained by national pro-life leaders in apologetics, debate, the history of abortion related laws, sidewalk counseling, public communication, and so much more!



Victoria says, “I have grown tremendously in my faith working alongside passionate believers who are all striving to grow in virtue and display Christ's love and mercy to everyone we meet. Though this work is emotionally draining and incredibly challenging, I am so very grateful for this opportunity. God is working in us and through us, and it is fulfilling despite its hardships. I am learning SO much every day, and being challenged out of my comfort zone - often. My cup is so full! Praise God!

I am seriously considering continuing this work full-time this fall. I would greatly appreciate prayer as I finalize this decision. Knowing that thousands of innocent babies are being brutally murdered every day in our country, and learning more every day about how bad it is and how broken our culture is, I cannot sit back and do anything else. **We must fight against this evil injustice!”**

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

St. Raymond's Youth Apostolate

Gearing up for the new year

Please keep the Youth Apostolate in your prayers as we gear up for a new year, which undoubtedly will have its challenges as we continue to face the unknown in light of Covid-19.

We are in need of more volunteers, particularly young adults, to help out with our high school youth group during the school year, which meets on Sunday nights from 7:45-9:15pm. Please contact Jeanne for more info.

Adults: Do you have a particular gift/talent to share?

Perhaps you are good at painting and could lead a paint night? Are you a talented guitarist? Perhaps you can lead praise and worship around the campfire? Do you have a gift for knitting/crocheting that you could teach our youth? We had a mom recently offer her skills in creating films, using green screens, and video editing and were able to produce the amazing film, "St. Raymond the Surfing Friar" (see below). What we are able to offer our teens largely depends on the skills we have available. Is God calling you? Contact Jeanne if you have an idea of something you may be able to share.

St. Raymond the Surfing Friar!

COVID-19 has allowed for some incredible talent to shine here at St. Raymond's! 14 of our teens have been busy putting together an amazing little film about St. Raymond the Surfing Friar! **Watch the movie at:**

<https://safeYouTube.net/w/svSP>



Jeanne Sause

Director of the Youth Apostolate (Grades 7-12)

youth@straymonds.org Call/Text: 571-334-9890
<https://straymonds.org/ministries-and-groups/youth-apostolate/>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education classes begin September 13th! If you have not registered your child, please do so immediately.

2020-2021 Religious Education volunteers needed: If you love Christ and His Church and want to pass the truths of our awesome Catholic faith to the young people of St. Raymond's, please pick up and complete a gray volunteer registration form. We are in need of the following:

MONDAY (4:45-6:15 p.m.)

Grade 1 Assistant Teacher
 Grade 2 Teacher
 Assistant Teacher
 Grade 6 Assistant Teacher
 Grade 8 Teacher

TUESDAY (6-7:30 p.m.)

Grade 1 Teacher
 Grade 5 Assistant Teacher
 Grade 7 Assistant Teacher
 Grade 8 Teacher
 RCIC Teacher

PLEASE NOTE: If we are unable to fill teacher and/or assistant teacher vacancies, we will cancel the class and move the students to another day.

Please mark your calendars: PARENT MEETINGS are scheduled to take place the week of September 27th while CCD classes are in session. Please make plans to attend one of the three meetings.

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. We can only accept non-perishable food items.**

Chicken Dinner "DRIVE THU" at St. Mary's Historic Church, 5216 Ox Rd. at Fairfax Station Rd. Fairfax Station, Va. Labor Day, Sept. 7th from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. or until all the dinners run out. Dinners are \$8, consisting of BBQ split chicken breast, baked beans, corn on the cob and cookies. Meals can be purchased in advance at <http://www.koc.org/> or on Labor Day. Only credit cards will be accepted. Food Donations for the Parish Food Bank will also be accepted. Please place donated food items in the trunk or back hatch area of your car so volunteers can easily remove the items as you enter the "DRIVE THRU" line. For more information contact gk@koc8600.org

Church Persecuted

Excerpts of letter from Senator John Kennedy of Louisiana (a Methodist) to Attorney General William Barr on August 11th:

“Catholic are under attack in America. ...[It] is a reality we are facing. Since the start of the street protests beginning in May, too many accompanied by riots, there have been at least nineteen attacks on Catholic churches, statues, businesses, cemeteries, parishioners, and personnel.

“...Arson seems to be a popular crime of choice. On July 11, one man set fire to a church in Florida while parishioners were still inside. On the same day in Boston, a fire destroyed a statue of the Virgin Mary put up outside a Catholic church in memory of World War II veterans. St. Mary’s Basilica in Minneapolis – the first basilica in the U.S. – was damaged when a pew was lit on fire.

“...In June, rioters targeted a Chicago bookstore run by nuns who sheltered upstairs during the attack. When asked about the incident, the nuns said their focus was on praying for the vandals. Their response is truly a reflection of the mercy of Jesus Christ....The trend of desecrating Catholic spaces and property must stop.”

(The entire letter and other articles can be found at <https://straymonds.org/religious-liberty-blog/>.)

Links to these and other articles can be found on the St. Raymond’s parish website: <https://straymonds.org/religious-liberty-blog/>. Check it often during the week for updates.



St. John Bosco Council #12846 Knights of Columbus:

Are you a man of 17½ years or more?
Are you a practicing Catholic? Do you want to help

others and preach the Gospel by your life? 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!

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.

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Angelus Academy

Pre K—8th

Offering a liberal arts education in the classical tradition.

2020-21 Admissions are ongoing: Tuition assistance is available for all parishioners. Share the treasures of a solid Catholic education with your child(ren)/grandchild(ren).

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www.AngelusAcademy.org

7644 Dynatech Ct., Springfield, VA 22153
703-924-3996

Wednesday and Friday Adoration at St. Raymond's:

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 immediate need of permanent adorers for Wednesday and Friday Adoration. ON WEDNESDAYS, 1 adorer is needed for the 10-11 am hour. ON FRIDAYS in particular 1 adorer is needed for the 10-11 am, 11 am-12noon and 2-3 pm hours. 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. And we can always use substitute adorers!

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 our 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.

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

Sunday Offertory	\$ 12,002.00
Family Assistance	\$ 682.00
Maintenance Fund	\$ 1,229.00
Assumption of Mary	\$ 1,800.00

The Weekend of Aug 22/23 we will take up a second collection that supports the annual Mission Cooperative Plan Appeal for our diocese. Our Mission this year is the Bánica Mission in the Dominican Republic. The Bánica Mission serves selected parishes and communities in the Dominican Republic, helping to meet their spiritual and temporal needs. Please be generous.