

Pastor's Corner

Merry Christmas! As the Octave and Season of Christmas continues, I want to wish all of you a Blessed and Holy and Merry Christmas. I hope that your Christmas Day was wonderful and filled with holiness and good cheer, and that you were all able to spend time with your family and friends.

Thanks. I'd like to say "thanks" all those who worked so hard to make Advent and Christmas so special during this very difficult year. In particular, I want to thank the cantors, musicians (especially Denise Anezin) and Elisabeth Turco for all the beautiful music. The Knights of Columbus for all they did in so many ways. Nena Brennan and her family, and Christophe Sanchez-O'Brien and the other sacristans, for all their work in preparing the sanctuary. Julie Mullen and her family and the rest of the flower committee, for decorating the church so beautifully. To the ushers, especially Patrick O'Brien, and the porters and counters and video folks who answered my call to help out on Christmas. To all those who contributed so much in time and treasure to the Giving Tree. To all those who assisted in special ways at the Mass, especially the altar boys, lectors, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. Also thanks to our custodial workers from Spring Cleaning, Luis Tapia and Dania Ochoa, and all the extra "hired-hands" for working so hard to keep the church clean and sanitized. A special thanks to the rest of our dedicated parish staff, Kirsti Tyson, Mary Butler, Virginia Osella, Mary Salmon, Vince Drouillard, Jeanne Sause, and Joe Marquart who all worked very hard during Advent. And finally, to my brother priests who helped me out with confessions and Masses, especially Fr Rippy. I know I've left out lots of groups and names, my apologies. Thank you all, and God bless you all.

New Year's. I look forward seeing all of you on New Year's Eve or Day, to celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Of course this year, because of the Bishops dispensation, it is not a holy day of obligation. Even so it is a great way to begin the new year.

Unfortunately, I've decided to cancel our usual Midnight Mass this year. I hope you understand, all things considered. It will be back next year.

Oremus pro invicem.

Homily by St. John Paul II, then Cardinal-Archbishop (Wojtyla) of Krakow, December 28, 1969, Feast of the Holy Family.

"...Today we are celebrating the feast of the Holy Family, when the Church asks Jesus to bless the family. May he, who was the blessing of his own family because he grew to manhood within it, preparing himself in its shelter for his messianic vocation, bless every human family. Today, the hope and fervent desire of the Church is that every human family may be permeated with the mystery of the Holy Family, in which God became man.

"The mystery offers many points for reflection: Christ spent his childhood and youth with his family, thus showing us that God's greatest work is carried out within the family; he wrought our redemption and salvation in the context of his family life; and it is thanks to it that all of us are saved. That is why today's feast is of such universal significance. The light of

the Holy Family shines out to anywhere where there is a human family — which in fact means everywhere.

"The meaning of this feast is also very individual and personal. Today the mystery of the Holy family concerns each individual family in a specific way — both husband and wife but also that special community which begins with their marriage, in other words, the community of parents and children. Whether this is a community of mature people or of those still in formation, it is a wonderful and fundamental community, and without it the human race would not exist.

"In a special way today, through the mystery of the Holy Family, all humanity and the Church reflect on God's greatest work — that of creation. God started the human race when he created the first human couple of man and woman, husband and wife. The great human family begins with them; when he gave them the power to transmit life, he invested them with the divine power of creation. Thus the work of creation continues through the family in every age and generation of human history. As parents, you are partners with God and share in his work in a way in keeping with the dignity of the human person. The Creator wants the work of creation to be manifested in every human family and, through the family, in every people and society and in humanity as a whole.

"If the Son of God became man and carried out the major part of his mission within the family, this means that his work must be carried out within and through the family. This work of redemption and sanctification raises man up out of the evil to which he has inclined as a result of original sin and draws him toward the good of which he is capable, even at the price of effort and sacrifice. Jesus showed us this, and he urges us toward it, constantly giving us new strength for our task.

"The work of redemption shows us the full value of everything human and especially of marriage and family. It is as if God himself — symbolized in the family by the newborn child — said to every couple: "See how beautiful it is, and how it is both human and divine!" This is the meaning of today's feast.

"The divine and human beauty that exists in the family can only be gained through constant effort. It is not ready-made, but must be worked for by every couple. We are quite right in saying that marriage is based on love; we find this truth in the gospel. However, we must immediately add that true love makes us capable of taking on the tasks and problems of married and family life and that it does not give us this capacity it cannot be called love. We should therefore be careful not to debase this wonderful word that was spoken by the Son of God as the greatest commandment.

"Through marriage and family Christ carries out his work of redemption, which he won for us on the cross. However, just as Christ came to resurrection through the cross, so too, difficulties and hardship bring us to the true value of marital and family love and real formation and development — first and foremost the mutual formation of husband and wife and then the education of their children....

"We pray for our country, in the knowledge that ...its strength lies in the family. Too little is done to develop and harness this strength, while, on the contrary, a great deal is done to weaken the marriage bond and the stability of the family. . . . While we can change the parts of an engine, the fundamental human community of the family cannot be substituted. It must be served and helped to develop. It is not licit to destroy it, since it is a work of God."

MASS INTENTIONS**Monday, Dec. 28th**
8:30 am Vince Drouillard**Tuesday, Dec. 29th**
8:30 am Richard Crosby +**Wednesday, Dec. 30th**
8:30 am Arthur Burrows +**Thursday, Dec. 31st**
8:30 am William Bihner +**Vigil Masses**
7:00 pm Wilmer W.
Hoopes III+
(No Midnight Mass this year)**Friday, Jan. 1st**
Solemnity of Mary
9:00 am Mary Ellen Browne+
11:00 am Wilmer W
Hoopes III +
1:00 pm Richard Crum +**Masses to be said Privately**
Dec 28 Morris Earl Carlton Jr +
Dec. 29 Mary Healy +
Dec. 30 Barnett Klehman +
Dec. 30 Kathryn Quan
Dec. 31 Martha Ospina
Dec 31 Mary Ellen Brown +
Jan. 3 Peter Holt +**Saturday, Jan. 2nd**
9:00 am Ruth Delaney +**Vigil Mass**
5:00 pm
Gertrude Seiberling +**Sunday, Jan. 3rd**
7:00 am
Louis J. Skrehot
9:00 am
Parishioners
11:00 am
Kirsti Tyson & Staff
1:00 pm
Kirsti Tyson**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**Glenn Bliss
Tom Dietz
Michael O'Neill
Cindy Laird
Patricia Lewis
Barbara McGinn
Mai Pham
Joan Opiela
Donald Zacherl
Leonora Ramos
Jason SaenzPhyllis Zitnik
Mary K. Randazzo
Patricia Del Buono
Michael
Malachowski
Juanita Boarman
Angela Colom
John Florio
Debra Henkel
Daniel Moore
Maria DaughertyLauren Hornsby
Gaudencio Dizon
Antoinette Baptist
Margaret O'Neill
Ada Prabhavat
Julia Oaks
Christine Gloninger
Joan Snavelly
Paul Haynes
John Sause
Donald Letzkus**Friday, January 1st is the Solemnity of Mary and a Holy Day (the obligation is dispensed this year). Our Mass Schedule will be: Dec. 31 Vigil Mass at 7:00 pm, and Friday, Jan. 1st at 9:00 am, 11:00 am & 1:00 pm****There will not be Adoration on Friday, Jan. 1st. Parish Offices will be closed January 1st for the Holy Day.****Luminaries of Holy Mary:** Come join us on Jan. 2nd 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.**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: 8:15 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.**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. 2nd. 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*"By faith Abraham obeyed." If you should be called to serve the Lord as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life, pray for a deep faith and obey Him in love. Contact Fr. Michael Isenberg, michael.isenberg@arlingtondiocese.org or (703) 841-2514.*

GOSPEL LK 2:22-40

When the days were completed for their purification
according to the law of Moses,
They took him up to Jerusalem
to present him to the Lord,
just as it is written in the law of the Lord,
Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,
and to offer the sacrifice of
a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,
in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.
Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.
This man was righteous and devout,
awaiting the consolation of Israel,
and the Holy Spirit was upon him.
It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit
that he should not see death
before he had seen the Christ of the Lord.
He came in the Spirit into the temple;
and when the parents brought in the child Jesus
to perform the custom of the law in regard to him,
He took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:
“Now, Master, you may let your servant go
in peace, according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in sight of all the peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for your people Israel.”
The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said
about him;
and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,
“Behold, this child is destined
for the fall and rise of many in Israel,
and to be a sign that will be contradicted
—and you yourself a sword will pierce—
so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”
There was also a prophetess, Anna,
the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.
She was advanced in years,
having lived seven years with her husband after her
marriage,
and then as a widow until she was eighty-four.
She never left the temple,
but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer.
And coming forward at that very time,
she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child
to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.
When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions
of the law of the Lord,
they returned to Galilee,
to their own town of Nazareth.
The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom;
and the favor of God was upon him.

SAINT RAYMOND’S RESPECTS LIFE

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

**Mary, Mother of the Church,
lovingly help us build a culture of LIFE
and a civilization of
LOVE
together with all people of good will
to the Praise and glory of God,
the Creator and lover of life. Amen**



Thank you for your continued support of the MaRiH Pregnancy Care Center. Your generosity - accompanied by your prayers - is so very much appreciated. **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. 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



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 Next Mtg. 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. Please RSVP by emailing Jeanne if possible to give an idea of how much pizza we will need.

High School Youth Group Next Mtg: 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.

Thank you to all who keep our youth in your prayers. Special thanks to all of our volunteers for their dedication and commitment to our teens. You will never know the impact you have on their lives. Thank you-Patty Miller, Michele O'Kane, Alex Kayser, Scott LeMay, Kirt Wlaschin, Briar-Rose Jones, Becky Boak, Amanda Fields, Megan Golinowski, Anthony Pomilla, Phil Bettwy, Nate Smith, Rose Jarvis, Erin Burns, Joe Burns and Virginia Jarvis.

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

We pray everyone is having a joyous and blessed Christmas Season!

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Religious Education classes resume next Sunday January 3rd with exam reviews for grades 1-8!!

Midterm Exams for grades 1-8 will take place the week of January 10th. Parents are encouraged to work with their children in learning the First Semester material presented in the Basic Study Questions booklet for your child's grade level.

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.

Interested in a great, Catholic education for your child's high school years? Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School invites you to sign your child up for the High School Placement Test, required for all 8th graders applying to a Diocese of Arlington high school. The HSPT will be offered on Saturday, January 9. While your child tests, stay and discover what John Paul has to offer! Visit jpthegreat.org for test registration details and more information.

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. 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 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!

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>.)

In a recent statement, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam could not understand why individuals needed to go to a physical church building to be with God since "God is everywhere." There are at least two problems with such a statement.

The first is that the government does not define the conditions of a religion. The right to define a religion is embedded in the First Amendment of the Constitution. Some churches are perfectly content with conducting video services because the content of the service is usually centered around singing, praying, and preaching – all of which can be achieved remotely. The Catholic Church is centered around the Mass and the Eucharist which requires our physical presence if possible.

Secondly, the Governor has no concept of the Mass, the Eucharist, and the real presence of Jesus Christ (one of the three persons in the Blessed Trinity) at each and every Mass. He has no concept of Jesus' presence in the tabernacle, the importance of the Sacrament of Penance, and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. These normally take place in a Catholic church. Those who are unable to participate in these sacraments and sacramentals due to the virus crave them since this is part of what it means to be Catholic. While it may be nice to watch the Mass on television or on a computer, it is not the same thing as being physically present and also receiving Jesus in the Eucharist. The Governor doesn't seem to understand the difference.



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!

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

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.

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.

SUNDAY, DEC. 13TH COLLECTION

Sunday Offertory	\$14,714.00
Family Assistance	\$ 2,154.00
Maintenance Fund	\$ 1,788.00
Catholic Charities	\$ 3,133.00

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

Due to an early Bulletin Deadline, Last Week's Collection will be in Next week's Bulletin.