



*"May the God of Love and Peace Set Your Heart At Rest"  
St. Raymond*



## *Welcome to St. Raymond of Peñafort Roman Catholic Church*

8750 Pohick Road  
Springfield, VA 22153

### **WEEKEND MASSES:**

Saturday Vigil: 5:00 pm  
Sunday: 7:00 am, 9:00 am (Latin-  
English), 11:00 am and 1:00 pm

### **WEEKDAY MASSES:**

Monday - Friday:  
6:30 am & 8:30 am  
Wednesday: 7:00 pm (Sept - May)  
Saturday: 9:00 am

**Website:** [www.straymonds.org](http://www.straymonds.org)

Rev. John C. De Celles, Pastor  
Rev. Joseph D. Bergida, Parochial Vicar  
Rev. Edward R. Horkan, In Residence  
Elisabeth Turco, Director of Liturgical Music  
Jeanne Sause, Director of Youth Apostolate  
Mary Salmon, Director of Religious Education  
Mary Hansen, Religious Education Secretary  
Michael Thompson, Plant Manager  
Maerose Naduvilekunnel, Business Manager  
Virginia Osella, Parish Secretary  
Dominique Murray, Office Assistant  
Mary Butler, Secretary

### **PARISH OFFICE**

Telephone Numbers:

Rectory: 703-440-0535  
Rel. Education: 703-440-0537  
Fax: 703-440-0538

### **Office Hours**

Monday-Friday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm

### **Email**

Church: [Office@straymonds.org](mailto:Office@straymonds.org)  
Pastor: [fdc@straymonds.org](mailto:fdc@straymonds.org)  
Rel. Ed.: [ReligiousEducation@straymonds.org](mailto:ReligiousEducation@straymonds.org)

**TUITION ASSISTANCE:** Please inquire with our office about the availability of partial scholarships for the children of active St. Raymond parishioners attending local Catholic grade schools and high schools.

**Angelus Academy**  
7644 Dynatech Ct, Springfield, VA 22153  
703-924-3996

Angelus Academy is a fully-accredited pre-K through 8th grade Catholic School affiliated with the Diocese of Arlington. Although it has no official connection with St. Raymond's, the parish has a longstanding close relationship with Angelus Academy. Many of our parish children already happily attend school there.

### **SACRAMENT OF PENANCE (Reconciliation/Confession)**

#### **Wednesday Evening**

6:15 - 7:00 pm (during Exposition)

#### **Saturday Morning**

8:00 - 9:00 am

#### **Saturday Afternoon**

3:30 - 5:00 pm

### **EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Wednesday from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

Friday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

First Fridays 9:00 am Friday - 9:00 Saturday (Overnight)

**MARRIAGE:** Couples wishing to marry must contact a parish priest at least 6 months prior to the desired wedding date. Couples who are living together will be expected to live separately at least during the 3 months prior to the wedding.

**RCIA:** The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the process by which adults (and children who have reached the age of reason) are instructed in the Doctrine of the Church and are prepared to receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist. If you or someone you know, would like to inquire about becoming a Catholic, please call the Parish Office.

**BAPTISM:** Parents are requested to make arrangements with the Parish Office ONE MONTH in advance. Parents must participate in a one-session pre-Baptismal program and are encouraged to do so before the birth of their child. You must be REGISTERED in the Parish 3 MONTHS prior to the Baptism.

**BULLETIN DEADLINE:** Please submit announcements in writing 10 days prior to publication.

The Spirit  
drove Jesus  
out into the  
desert, and he  
remained in  
the desert  
for forty days,  
tempted by  
Satan.  
He was among  
wild beasts, and  
the angels  
ministered  
to him.

*Mark 1:12,13*

## Pastor's Corner

**Lent Begins.** Lent is a wonderful season of growing closer to Jesus, turning toward Him, and turning away from sin and temptation. The basic tool we use in this regard is “doing penance.” As I mentioned last week, traditionally there are three types: **almsgiving** (including acts of charity), **sacrifice** (what you “give up” or “endure”), 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.

**Daily Mass.** Attending at least one extra Mass during the week is one of the best penances we can do for Lent. We might not think of Mass as a “penance,” but it is, of course, the greatest prayer of the Church and puts us at the foot of the Cross, uniting our prayers to the great prayer of Jesus on the first Good Friday—what could be a better penance, especially during Lent?

Going to Mass during the week, especially daily, strengthens us with the grace of the Blessed Sacrament so that we can draw closer to Christ. Moreover, it also can change our whole perspective on daily life, reminding us in a dramatic way that our faith isn’t just for Sundays, but for every day and every moment of the week.

This year we’ve added **extra evening Masses, Monday through Thursday at 7pm**. At the Tuesday 7pm Mass I’ll give my **Lenten Series** of Sermons on the topic, “**The Seven Last Words of Jesus**.”

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.** As always, we have Exposition and Adoration on Wednesdays from 9am to 7pm. But during Lent our Friday Exposition and Adoration will be extended through the evening and throughout the night (“Nocturnal”) **until just before the Saturday morning 9am Mass**. (We will pause Adoration as we take time for the **Stations of the Cross** at 7pm).

Doing a holy hour every week is a great penance for Lent: it’s a form of prayer, and it’s a sacrifice (of time—and sleep, if you do it during the late-night hours), and it can be a form of almsgiving if you use it to pray for people.

“**What do I do in Adoration?**” This is a question a lot of folks ask me. There really aren’t many rules for what you do at Adoration. Basically you come, sit or kneel quietly, and pray. You can just sit there and talk to Jesus, and listen to Him. And you can pray your Rosary or other prayers you know, or from a good Catholic prayer book (there will be some prayer books in the church if you want to use those). Or bring your Bible or some other good spiritual book (even an interesting biography of a saint) to read between prayers. But mainly come and be with Jesus.

An hour sounds like a long time, but it’s not really, if you split it up between praying the Rosary, reading, and just talking and listening to Jesus. As St. John Vianney once said, “Him looking at you, and you looking at Him.” It’ll do you a lot of good, and joined with all the prayers of your fellow parishioners adoring over the 24 hours, it will be great for our parish and the whole Church.

**Please Sign Up.** We need at least 2 adorers to commit to be present for each hour of scheduled adoration, so that Our Eucharistic Lord will not be left alone at any time. So please visit our website to sign up and take 1 hour. **But even if you don’t sign up, please come** to adore at any time.

**Confessions Every Day in Lent.** Fundamental to a fruitful observance of Lent is the reception of the Sacrament of Penance (also called “Confession” or “Reconciliation”). I am very happy to say that you can go to confession at St. Raymond’s every day during Lent. **So, please: go to confession!**

**Making a Good Confession.** By now I’m guessing you’re familiar with small pamphlet called “Making a Good Confession: A Brief Examination of Conscience and Guide to Going to Confession.” Copies of this pamphlet can be found by all the doors of the church and near the confessionals. I hope you will find it helpful in preparing for and making a good confession. Below is the introduction to that pamphlet. Maybe it will lead to you grab the pamphlet and read the rest of it....

*How do we make a “good Confession”? We begin by prayerfully, and with honesty and humility, looking at our lives to recognize the sins we’ve committed since our last Confession, i.e., we make “an examination of conscience.” In particular, we need to look for **mortal sins**, i.e., sins that involve all three of the following criteria: 1) grave matter, 2) full knowledge of the sinful character of the act, and 3) complete consent. If any one of these is lacking it is not a “mortal sin,” but may be a “venial sin.”*

*“**Grave matter**” means the act involves some very serious moral evil, found either in 1) the act itself or 2) the intention behind the act. Grave matter can be difficult to identify, but not always.*

*Note that some sinful acts are grave matter when they involve circumstances that are serious or very important, but are not grave matter if they involve only small or trivial things. These acts that can be either grave or not are said to “admit of parvity” (smallness). Many of the sins listed below would “admit of parvity,” unless the word “serious” accurately describes them. For example, a lie is always a sin, but lying under oath is grave matter while lying about whether you like someone’s outfit is not grave matter.*

*Also, in Confession you must distinguish the “kind” of **mortal sin committed**: be clear about what the sin was, but avoid graphic or long explanations. So it is not enough to merely say “I had bad thoughts” or “I acted inappropriately,” rather one should more specific, e.g. “I had lustful thoughts,” etc.*

*You must also give the number of times you committed **particular mortal sins**. Sometimes this is very difficult or even impossible to remember, in which case, try your best give the priest some idea of the frequency or number; e.g., “at least once a month for several years,” etc.*

*Besides mortal sins, we should also consider confessing (but are not required to confess) vices (sinful habits) or other venial sins that are particularly problematic.*

**A BRIEF EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.** *This brief examination of conscience is not all inclusive or exhaustive, but is a useful tool to help you prepare for Confession. Remember, as you go through your examination consider if any of your sins are mortal. Also, remember to confess how many times you committed particular mortal sins.*

*Note, to help you identify mortal sins, sins that always involve grave matter are marked with an “A” and sins that very often or usually involve grave matter (so should be considered very carefully) are marked with an “O/U.” This does not mean that sins not marked never involve grave matter, as discussed above.*

The pamphlet then continues with a detailed review of each of the 10 Commandments, and a detailed “how-to” of what to say and do in the confessional. Happy reading! And have a fruitful, blessed and holy Lent!

*Oremus pro invicem. Fr. De Celles*



**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, February 19th**

**Presidents' Day**

10:00 am Teofilo Tulayba +

**Tuesday, February 20th**

6:30 am Diane Hattler +

8:30 am Caitlin Roche +

7:00 pm Pope Benedict XVI +

**Wednesday, February 21st**

6:30 am Barbara Young Miller +

8:30 am Jerold M. Brown +

7:00 pm Celebrant's Intentions

**Thursday, February 22nd**

6:30 am Denis Pila

8:30 am Clare Valigore +

7:00 pm Pope Francis

**Friday, February 23rd**

6:30 am Eugene Tougas +

8:30 am Louise Ward +

**Saturday, February 24th**

9:00 am Noah Shealy

**Vigil Mass**

5:00 pm **Fr. Bergida**

Peter S. Blair Jr.

**Sunday, February 25th**

7:00 am **Fr. Rippy**

Francisco & Virginia  
Suniega +

9:00 am **Fr. Horkan**

Parishioners

11:00 am **Fr. Bergida**

Wilmer Hoopes III +

1:00 pm **Fr. De Celles**

Jaxon Perricone

**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.

**Please pray for the sick of our parish**

Glenn Bliss

Tom Dietz

Michael O'Neill

Cindy Laird

Patricia Lewis

Mai Pham

Jason Saenz

Phyllis Zitnik

Patricia Del Buono

John Florio

Debra Henkel

Gaudencio Dizon

Paul Haynes

Dwayne Taylor

Ted Tolpa

Nena Brennan

Serrin Foster

Margaret O'Neill

Donald Trayer

Ellen Trayer

Tom Swengros

Virginia

Cummings

Arlene Pietraszko

Jean Seiberling

Fran Zograib

Helen Zograib

Robert Petitti

Margaret Carter

Mark Gatanas

Christina Cautero

**Upcoming Events at St. Raymond Church**

**Feb. 18-20**

**Feb. 19**

**Feb. 19**

**Feb. 20**

**Feb. 20**

**Feb. 21**

**Feb. 23**

**Feb. 23**

**Feb. 22-23**

**March 2**

**March 2**

**March 3**

**No CCD or Youth Group**

**Federal Holiday: One Mass at 10am**

**Parishes Offices Closed**

**Family of Jesus Prayer Group**

**Bible Study**

**Tues. 7pm Mass with Lenten Series Homily**

**Legion of Mary**

**Soup Supper 5:30pm**

**Stations of the Cross 7pm**

**Nocturnal Adoration (Fri. 9am - Sat. 9am)**

**Communal First Saturday Devotions**

**Men's Prayer Group**

**Donut Sunday**

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

[www.straymonds.org](http://www.straymonds.org)

Monday - Friday Daily Mass at 8:30 am

Saturday at 9:00 am

Sunday Mass at 9:00 am & 11:00 am

(See the website for Holy Days)

**There will be a 7pm Mass Monday-Thursday during Lent.**

The Tuesday evening Masses will include a series of extended homilies on the theme, "The Seven Last Words of Christ"

**Lenten Confession Times**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

Feb. 15 – March 15: 6:30 - 7pm

Wednesday: 6 - 8pm

Saturday: 8 - 9am; 3:30 - 5pm

Sunday: 8:30 - 9am, 10:30 - 11am

**Daily Family Rosary leaders needed!** St. Raymond's has a Daily Family Rosary in the church: Mon-Fri at 6:30pm and Saturday and Sunday after the 9am Mass. **Please visit our website to sign up to lead during February!**

**St. Raymond's has Adoration Wednesdays and Fridays!**

Would you like to spend an hour in silent prayer and reflection with our Lord during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament? We are in need of weekly adorers especially at **12:00 pm on Wednesdays** and **1:00 pm on Fridays**. We also need volunteers to be on our substitute list. 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! **During Lent, there will be nocturnal adoration every Friday - Saturday.** Please visit our website to sign up!

**Director of Religious Education Vacancy** - Reporting to the Pastor, the Director of Religious Education (DRE) assists the Pastor in the Faith Formation programs for the parish. For more information, questions about the position or to apply, contact Mary Butler at 703-440-0535 or [mary.butler@straymonds.org](mailto:mary.butler@straymonds.org).

**Lenten Soup Suppers continue on February 23rd!** Please join your fellow parishioners for a delicious but simple meal **each Friday during Lent, 5:30-7pm**. Bring your family or a friend and either a pot of homemade meatless soup, macaroni & cheese, fruit, salad or bread to share. **Stations of the Cross** takes place in the church at 7pm each Friday. Please join us!

**Gift Shop for Lent:** Stop by the Shop's table in the narthex after the Sunday Masses next weekend, Feb 24/25. We are also available by appointment. Email us at [giftshop@straymonds.org](mailto:giftshop@straymonds.org).

**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 law of fasting 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.



## THE EVENT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR! FRATERNAL BENEFITS NIGHT -- OPEN TO ALL!!

All are invited to join us Tuesday evening, February 20, 2024, 7:00 - 8:30 pm in the St. Raymond Parish Hall for an informative live presentation from renowned The Abbate Agency, Knights of Columbus. This is a wonderful opportunity for everyone to learn about not only insurance, but other financial products from a premier organization that is aligned with your Faith. Following the Financial Seminar, there will be a social sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, St. John Bosco Council #12846. Hope to see you there—all are invited! For more information or to RSVP for this amazing opportunity, contact Grand Knight Mark Menotti at [mark.menotti@yahoo.com](mailto:mark.menotti@yahoo.com).

**BASKETBALL FREE THROW CONTEST!** Boys and Girls, ages 9 and under, and 10-14 (12 competitive categories, based on age and gender), are invited to participate in a basketball Free Throw Contest on Sunday, February 18, 2024, in the gym at Holy Spirit School in Annandale. Registration is at 7:30 pm and the contest will begin at 7:45 pm. Basketballs will be provided. For more information, contact Gopal Sharma at [gopal.d.sharma@gmail.com](mailto:gopal.d.sharma@gmail.com).

### Upcoming Events:

2/18 Free Throw Challenge  
2/20 Fraternal Benefits Night (7 pm, Parish Hall)  
2/24-25 Car Raffle Ticket Sales #1 (After Masses)

**CAR RAFFLE TIME!** Car raffle tickets have been mailed to each family registered in the Parish. Each purchaser has a chance to win four cars plus cash prizes! Please note that raffle tickets must be processed at All Saints, as they have in years past. Please mail to All Saints in the envelope provided and make your checks payable to ALL SAINTS. If you have any questions or would like to purchase additional tickets, please contact Mark Lawton at (703) 576-7693. Thank you for your support!

### Christ House Meal – March 29th. Cash Donations Only.

This year our commitment to the Diocesan Christ House Dining Room in Alexandria falls on Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Because of that, this quarter, we are requesting cash donations in lieu of food items. The committee will order 72 hot, prepared meals to be delivered to Christ House that can be easily distributed by Christ House volunteers. Please drop off your cash (or check) donations at the office or place it in the collection basket clearly marked for Christ House!

### First Saturday Devotions to the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

We invite you to join the Luminaries of Holy Mary for communal First Saturday Devotions on **March 2nd**. After the 9am Mass, we meet in the Maurer Room until 10:30am to pray and meditate on the Holy Rosary with the intention of reparation for the sins committed against our Blessed Mother and for the conversion of poor sinners. Please join us!

**JOIN the CHOIR at St. Raymond's:** Do you want to sing with the choir for Lent and Easter? Singers who have a pleasant voice and sing in pitch are welcome. We practice on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 8:30 pm and sing at 11:00 am Mass on Sundays with a warm-up at 10. The repertoire of the choir contains masterpieces of classical liturgical choir music. Enjoy wonderful fellowship, music training and the joy of making uplifting music for the liturgy. Contact Elisabeth Turco at [music@straymonds.org](mailto:music@straymonds.org) or call 703-506-4644.

## SAINT RAYMOND'S RESPECTS LIFE *Learn the TRUTH. Live the TRUTH. Spread the TRUTH... in LOVE*

**MaRiH Pregnancy Care Center:** We proudly partner with MaRiH (Mary Rose in Haste – to help Elizabeth) as they serve local expectant mothers in need. Knowing each child has an unrevealed holy purpose, MaRiH volunteers strive to see the face of God in the mothers and families they help. **Thank you for generously supporting this work of mercy.** Donations welcome in the narthex collection box near the elevator. [marih.org](http://marih.org).

**Please plan to attend the 2024 VA Pro-Life Day/VA March for Life on Wed Feb. 21 in Richmond.** In our post-Roe world, the battle for the sanctity of life in the womb is closer to home. Saint Raymond's will be sending one bus to Richmond. Seats are free but reservations are required. Sign Up sheets are in the narthex. **Voice your prolife support in Virginia!** For more information: [vaprolifeday.org](http://vaprolifeday.org).



The spring Campaign of **40 Days for Life** began on Ash Wednesday. Stay tuned for sign-up sheets in the narthex. Our witness weekend will be 9 – 10 March. Thank you for peacefully and prayerfully standing up for life!

Has the sorrow of miscarriage or still birth touched your life? **A Mom's Peace**, offers discreet support to families with bereavement, burial and remembrance assistance. Visit [amomspeace.org](http://amomspeace.org).

Do you have a real-life bioethical decision to make? **The National Catholic Bioethics Center** offers explanations of Catholic moral teaching to help you form your conscience in fidelity to the magisterium with trustworthy resources and free confidential person to person interaction. Visit [ncbcenter.org/consultation-form](http://ncbcenter.org/consultation-form). An ethicist will respond within 5 business days. For urgent matters, call 215-877-2660.

**The Abortion Pill** now accounts for up to 60% of all abortions. Call the abortion reversal helpline 855-209-4848. **It may not be too late.** [abortionpillreversal.com](http://abortionpillreversal.com).

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

**Help After Abortion: Project Rachel Helpline:** (703) 841-2504 (888-456-HOPE) **For Men:** (703) 841-3833 or [info@helpafterabortion.org](mailto:info@helpafterabortion.org)

**Give a Gift for Life!** No woman should ever feel that she is alone or that abortion is her only choice. **Gabriel Project** helps pregnant moms welcome their babies. For more info, call 866-444-3553 or contact [GabrielProject@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:GabrielProject@arlingtondiocese.org).

## St. Raymond's Youth Apostolate

<https://straymonds.org/ministries-and-groups/youth-apostolate/>

**\*All are welcome to participate in Youth Apostolate events.  
Make sure forms are signed and on file. <http://bit.ly/YAforms>**

### **NO Youth Group or CCD this Sunday, February 18th**

Enjoy the holiday weekend with your family! We look forward to seeing you next week!

### **Youth Group & CCD Sunday, February 25th**

4-5:30pm Junior High Youth Group (snacks served)

5:30-7pm 7-12th Grade CCD

7-8:30pm High School Youth Group (pizza served)

## **DEEPEN YOUR PRAYER LIFE THIS LENT**

Start your Fridays with Mass & discussion afterwards

### **6:30AM MASS & BREAKFAST EVERY FRIDAY**

All 7-12th graders: Join us Friday mornings for Mass followed by breakfast with Fr. Horkan & Fr. Bergida in the parish hall. If you RSVP at <https://bit.ly/FRIDAYRSVP> by Thursday we can coordinate our volunteers to drive you to school by 8am! We may also be able to pick you up for Mass if you give us enough notice. If not, you can show up for Mass and have your parent drive you to school after breakfast Either way, RSVPs help!

**Parents & families are welcome to stay for breakfast & your own discussion afterwards as well! Food contributions appreciated.**

### **Sons of Thunder: High School Guys' Group**

**7-8:30pm Tuesday, February 20th (Maurer Room)**

**High School Men:** Join the brotherhood! We will be making caskets for the miscarried and still born babies to donate to A Mom's Peace in Manassas. Mr. Hildebrand will be leading this project. Please bring your fathers to help. If you have been thinking about checking out the Sons of Thunder, this is a great opportunity to meet the guys and make a difference at the same time!

Are you looking for community? Consider helping out with our summer service week at the parish! Dates TBA soon!

### **WorkCamp/Summer Service Week ADULTS Needed**

**\*Calling volunteers of all ages, 21-100!**

St. Raymond's will not be participating in the diocesan WorkCamp this year as there has been a lot of interest in holding our own "WorkCamp" type week at the parish level again. Plans are in the works for a week of service here at the parish after school is out in June or July. **Please email Jeanne if you are interested in being on the committee to help organize/execute this event for our high school youth.**

### **Scholarship Contests/Opportunities for youth in grades 7-12**

\* \* Scholarship opportunities are available. Check the website for details and deadlines. <https://bit.ly/StRayYANews>

**Jeanne Sause**

Director of the Youth Apostolate (Grades 7-12)

[youth@straymonds.org](mailto:youth@straymonds.org) Call/Text: 571-334-9890

Email Jeanne to be added to the weekly email list for the most updated info on Youth Apostolate news & upcoming events!

**More info on all of the Youth Apostolate activities above can be found online at <https://bit.ly/PERMISSIONSLIPS>**

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**\*NO Class THIS week\*** February 18-20 in observance of the Presidents' Day holiday.

**Parents of 8th Grade Confirmation candidates:** please make note of the following documents due to the Religious Education office by **March 21st:** Sponsor Eligibility Letter and Statement of Sponsor form.

**Parents of 7th Grade Confirmation candidates:** if you have not already done so, please turn in the **Confirmation Registry form with Birth Certificate and Baptism Certificate attached** (unless your child was baptized here at St. Raymond's) to the Religious Education office - it was due February 8th.

**Home School Group:** for more information visit our website [www.homeschool-life.com/va/straymondhsg/](http://www.homeschool-life.com/va/straymondhsg/)  
Or email [straymondhsg@gmail.com](mailto:straymondhsg@gmail.com).

**Bridge Club:** All levels of players are welcome. We play Bridge cards each week in the Church Hall. Contact Lois Kotlowski at 703-455-6567 or [bridgeclub402@gmail.com](mailto:bridgeclub402@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining us.

**Legion of Mary:** Do you want to develop a closer relationship with our Mother Mary and her Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ? The Legion of Mary weekly meeting is held on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm in the Library. All auxiliary members and anyone interested in joining the Legion of Mary are welcome. Point of Contact: Judy Mayer, [jmayer9014@aol.com](mailto:jmayer9014@aol.com), or 703-627-7320.

**10th National Eucharistic Congress.** You are invited to join the Diocese of Arlington for the historic 10th National Eucharistic Congress to be held at the Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 17-21, 2024. Tour packages including accommodations and a ticket to the Congress are available through Corporate Travel Services. For pricing and more information, check out our website at <https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/national-eucharistic-revival/>.

### **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. Ordering instructions can be found at this website, <https://straymonds.org/trail-life/>.

### **SUPPORT THE CLOISTERED NUNS OF ST. DOMINIC'S MONASTERY: Laetare Benefit, Sunday, March 10, 2024.**

Bishop Burbidge and members of the Host Committee cordially invite you to attend the **Laetare Benefit**, our annual fundraising dinner for the nuns of St. Dominic's Monastery in Linden, VA. As cloistered nuns, they depend on the charity of the people of God for their existence. Please show your support and join us for a reception, dinner, raffle, and auction, which will be held on **Sunday, March 10, 2024 from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm** at the **Westwood Country Club, 800 Maple Avenue East, Vienna, Virginia**. Seating is limited. **RSVP by February 23, 2024.** Tickets are \$200 each and table sponsorships are available, starting at \$2,000 for 10. Cocktail attire. For more info, please contact: [friendsofstdominicsmonastery@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofstdominicsmonastery@gmail.com)





## Church Persecuted

This is part 3 of a continuing series on the USCCB's annual report on The State of Religious Liberty in The U.S. See the 1/28/24 and 2/4/24 columns for parts 1 and 2.

Chapter VI reports on National Trends in Politics, Culture, and Law. Some of these items have been previously reported in this column, but it would be good to take a glance and see what the USCCB considers to be important threats to our religious liberty.

(1) Antisemitism and Anti-Muslim Sentiment which dramatically increased with the heinous attack by Hamas against Israel on October 7, 2023. In a Senate hearing, FBI Director Christopher Wray called antisemitism to be near "historic levels." What is particularly troubling is that the protests on college campuses and major cities against our Jewish brethren have basically gone unchecked. Nowadays "a Jew may fear for his safety wearing a yarmulke in public or while attending services at his synagogue...."

(2) Vandalism and attacks on churches and pro-life pregnancy centers have increased at an alarming rate. In an FBI report on hate crimes for 2022, "a higher proportion of anti-Catholic crimes were property crimes – nearly 755 – than for any other bias." Prior to *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, "the bulk of the vandalism was against church and religious icons or images. After that decision, the offenses were also aimed at pregnancy help centers. "If abortion isn't safe, then neither are you," was a popular slogan spray-painted on the walls. Ohio saw an increase in vandalism prior to their vote on a right to abortion in their state constitution. With the exception of two instances, the governments at all levels failed "to apprehend and prosecute the perpetrators of such attacks, in contrast with the numerous charges brought against pro-life protestors outside abortion clinics."

To be continued next week. See <https://www.usccb.org/committees/religious-liberty/2024-annual-report> for the full report.

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