



V: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

©Diocesan - The Nativity - Noel Nicolas Coypel, 1715

**"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
7:00 pm (During Advent)
Saturday: 9:00 am

Website: 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
Virginia Osella, Director of Religious Education
Mary Hansen, Religious Education Secretary
Michael Thompson, Plant Manager
Maerose Naduvilekunnel, Business Manager
Elizabeth Frazee, Secretary
Dominique Murray, Office Assistant
Mary Butler, Parish 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
Pastor: fdc@straymonds.org
Rel. Ed.: 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

Sunday Morning

8:30-9:00 am and 10:30-11:00 am

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 to bulletin@straymonds.org 10 days prior to publication date.

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Pastor's Corner

"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near." This verse from Numbers 24:17, from the prophecy of Balaam 13 centuries before the Birth of Jesus reveals the deep and longsuffering desire and hope for the coming of the Messiah. Today, we know the Messiah has come, 20 centuries ago, but during Advent we have remembered that long time of waiting, spiritually joining into it, as we still desire not just the celebration of the Birth, but a continuous re-Birth of Christ in our lives. In these last days before Christmas, the prophecy is even more poignant as we join into the joyful expectation of Mary and Joseph as the Birth of Jesus was finally imminent.

So in these last 3 days of Advent, put yourself in company of Mary and Joseph this week. Join not only in their joy and hope, but also in their deep faith and trust in the promises of the God of Israel, and strive to imitate their love for the Savior Who was born on Christmas Day.

Remember: the focus of our joy and hope should not be on what's under the Christmas tree, or visiting friends and family. Rather our focus must remain on Jesus. Place him at the center of everything you are doing, and looking forward to.

I know most of us have lots of practical things to get done before Christmas, i.e., shopping for gifts, preparing delicious Christmas foods, travelling, etc. All that is good, as long as it doesn't distract you from Jesus and you place it all in the context of truly celebrating His Birth with faith, hope and love.

Remember, keep praying, and if you haven't been to confession yet, go tomorrow at 6pm. And go to Mass tomorrow and Tuesday—the best way to prepare for Christmas.

Giving Tree. I want to thank all of you who gave so generously to the "Giving Tree." Because of your kindness over 31 families and 165 people will have a little merrier Christmas this year. A special thank you to our Giving Tree Committee leads: Sheri Burns, Maggie McKinley, Alex Bustamante and all the volunteers that helped them.

Christmas Schedule: Please take time today to revisit our schedule for this week—found in this bulletin, especially the Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Sunday schedules.

Let me extend a particular invitation to Christmas Midnight Mass. I have talked many times about how such a Midnight Mass 40 years ago was the occasion of an important moment in my own personal spiritual life. There is something very special about that Mass, which begins with the placing of the "Baby Jesus" in the Manger, as we remember that Christ was born in the "Holy Night." The choir sings so beautifully, all the altar servers are so reverent, and we usually get a large (not *too* large, though) and devout crowd. Think about joining us this year. (Just a fatherly word of caution: it can be a little tough on the very little ones, that late; so parents, please be prudent).

Volunteer Dinner. Mark your calendars: January 4 is the day for our annual reception in appreciation for all those who volunteer their time to support the activities of the parish. Keep your eyes on the bulletin for details, or contact your committee chairman.

Chesterton Academy. I have been approached by a group of parents working to start a Chesterton Academy (an independent affordable Catholic high school) that will be located somewhere in the Springfield-Alexandria area. This is something I've been hoping for and talking about for a long time, so I have agreed to be a member of its founding Board.

They are in the beginning stages of applying to **Chesterton Schools Network**, and could use some outside monetary support. Anyone interested in donating to help cover start up expenses can contact me.

From chestertonschoolsnetwork.org: "... *Chesterton Schools Network inspires and supports new Catholic high schools across the nation, empowering parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. We deliver a turn-key academic and operational model that speeds the launch of affordable, classical, joyfully Catholic high schools and helps ensure sustainability and success. Through a partnership between the laity and the clergy, we aim to launch hundreds of schools ...ushering in a new era of growth and vitality in Catholic high school education.*"

"Happy Christmas." I love this story! As reported by Fox News:

"First lady Jill Biden was shouted down by children for wishing 'Happy Holidays' instead of Christmas, sparking laughter and joy from commentators online.

"On Friday, the first lady hosted the annual Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots campaign at the White House. She greeted everyone with 'Happy Holidays,' to which multiple children shouted back with emphasis, 'Happy Christmas!'

'Happy Christmas,' Biden replied. 'Yes! ...'

A Compliment to Kids and Parents. At the 1pm Mass a few weeks ago there was a bat flying around in the church. Here's part of an email complimenting the behavior of the children during this challenging situation. I join in the writer's praise.

"We were in the back of the church surrounded by little kids (around preschool to early elementary school). Every one of them visibly wanted to yell out with excitement at the bat, but held it in. Some of them were visibly shaking with excitement or covering their mouths to keep it in...My friend sitting in the cry room wing said the same thing about the kids in that area...."

"The children were so miraculously well behaved with such an exciting incident above their heads. As a former parent of naughty little boys, and a parishioner who enjoys seeing young families at Mass, I think it would be very encouraging for the kids and the parents to hear a public compliment of the kids' reverence, either at Mass or in the bulletin. The good behavior of the little kids was truly amazing."

Benedict XVI. An excerpt from an Angelus Address in 2010:

"Every one of us...especially in this Season which prepares us for Christmas, can ask himself: What am I waiting for? What, at this moment of my life, does my heart long for? ... In the time before Jesus' birth the expectation of the Messiah was very strong in Israel – that is, the expectation of an Anointed one, a descendent of King David, who would at last set the people free from every form of moral and political slavery and find the Kingdom of God.In [Mary's] heart the expectation of the Savior was so great, her faith and hope were so ardent, that he was able to find in her a worthy mother. Moreover, God himself had prepared her before time. There is a mysterious correspondence between the waiting of God and that of Mary, the creature "full of grace," totally transparent to the loving plan of the Most High. Let us learn from her, the Woman of Advent, how to live our daily actions with a new spirit, with the feeling of profound expectation that only the coming of God can fulfil."

Oremus pro invicem. Fr. De Celles

MASS INTENTIONS

<p>Monday December 23rd 6:30 am Jorge Lievano + 8:30 am Hayden Smith +</p> <p>Tuesday December 24th 6:30 am Celebrant's Intentions 8:30 am Edson Visaya 4:00 pm Celebrant's Intentions 6:00 pm Celebrant's Intentions 8:00 pm Celebrant's Intentions</p> <p>Wednesday December 25th Midnight Celebrant's Intentions 9:00 am Celebrant's Intentions 11:00 am Celebrant's Intentions 1:00 pm Celebrant's Intentions</p> <p>Thursday December 26th 8:30 am Obejera Families +</p> <p>Friday December 27th 6:30 am Bruce Brody + 8:30 am Anita Coombs +</p>	<p>Saturday December 28th 9:00 am Vince Drouillard</p> <p>Vigil Mass 5:00 pm Fr. De Celles Jack Menotti +</p> <p>Sunday, December 29th 7:00 am Fr. De Celles Jacob van Lutsenburg Maas</p> <p>9:00 am Fr. Horkan Parishioners</p> <p>11:00 am Msgr. Rippy Mary Healy +</p> <p>1:00 pm Fr. Bergida Gerard Schratz +</p>
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View livestreaming of the Holy Mass at St. Raymond's!

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)



Remaining Confession Times for Advent—

- Dec 22—8 am – 9 am and 10:30 am—11 am**
- Dec 23—6 pm— 7pm**
- Dec 24—No Confessions**

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 note: December 24th and 25th the Rosary will begin at 7:30 pm.** Please visit our website to sign up to lead during December and January! All are invited to attend.

Family of Jesus Prayer Group: Weekly meetings are in the Church on Mondays at 3:00 pm. We will not meet on December 9th, 23rd or 30th. If you have any prayer requests, please us know by emailing Elaine Perricone at jpebtp@verizon.net or by calling the parish office. You may also write down your prayer requests and drop them in the "Prayer Box" on the table in the narthex of the church.

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.

Brian Groth Peter Pacheco

Please pray for the sick of our parish

<p>Glenn Bliss Tom Dietz Michael O'Neill Cindy Laird Patricia Lewis Mai Pham Jason Saenz Phyllis Zitnik John Florio Carolina Baker</p>	<p>Debra Henkel Gaudencio Dizon Paul Haynes Ted Tolpa Nena Brennan Serrin Foster Donald Trayer Ellen Trayer Arlene Pietraszko Virginia Cummings</p>	<p>Helen Zogaib Margaret Norton Effie Mutumanje Jose Lavina Helen Estabrooks Annette Haynes Beth Fitzgibbons Jean Keegan Daniel Packa Peggy Sundberg</p>
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Upcoming Events at St. Raymond Church

- Dec 23 No RCIA class
- Dec 23 Family of Jesus Prayer Group
- Dec 24 No Adult Bible Study
- Dec 23 Jr. Legion of Mary 4-5pm (Note: Different day of week)
- Dec 23 Legion of Mary 6:30pm (Note: Different day of week)
- Dec 24 Vigil Masses 4 pm, 6 pm 8 pm and Midnight (with Carols beginning at 11:30 pm)
- Dec 24 Daily Family Rosary at 7:30 pm (Note: Different time)
- Dec 25 Nativity of Our Lord Masses 9 am, 11 am and 1 pm
- Dec 25 No Adoration and Parish Offices Closed
- Dec 25 Daily Family Rosary at 7:30 pm (Note: Different time)
- Dec 26 No 6:30 am Mass—One Mass at 8:30 am
- Dec 26 Parish Offices Closed
- Dec 27 Adoration 9 am—3 pm
- Dec 28 Senior Luncheon
- Dec 30 Jr. Legion of Mary 4-5pm (Note: Different day of week)
- Dec 30 Legion of Mary 6:30pm (Note: Different day of week)
- Dec 30 No RCIA
- Dec 31 No Adult Bible Study



Christmas Mass Schedule

- Tuesday, December 24 Christmas Eve**
- 4 pm Children's Mass
- 6 pm Children's Mass
- 8 pm Mass
- Midnight (12 am) Mass with Carols & Christmas Music at 11:30 pm
- Wednesday, December 25th, Christmas Day**
- Holy Day of Obligation**
- Masses at 9 am, 11 am and 1 pm (No 7 am Mass)



Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

- Holy Day of Obligation**
- Tuesday, December 31**
- Masses at 7 pm and Midnight (12am)
- Wednesday, January 1**
- Masses at 9 am, 11 am and 1 pm (No 7 am Mass)



OH HOLY KNIGHT. The seasons of Advent and then of Christmas are possibly the most active period of the year for the Knights of Columbus as a parish-level organization.

This increased activity, a reflection of charity, assists the whole parish to reflect on the mysteries that follow from the Incarnation of God made man in the person of Jesus Christ. We sell trees and wreathes. We keep Christ in Christmas. We collect coats, care for families in need, and we serve breakfast with St. Nicholas, reminding our children that the very first Christmas gift was in fact that of the Son of God. **WHY NOT BECOME A KNIGHT?** *First year is free of dues--Just go to <https://www.kofc.org/joinus> or use the QR code below to experience the Knights free for one year: click "Add" and complete the form. Leave the representative code blank, but enter our council #12846 for local information upon registration. Please contact our Deputy Grand Knight, John Larvie at cell (571) 356-4170 if you have any questions or want to learn more about the many benefits of being a Knight! ANSWER THE CALL TO LIFE. BECOME A KNIGHT!*



UPCOMING EVENTS

12/26 Caroling with St. Nicholas, à la Crèche, at the front door Nativity scene, 7 p.m. [for the whole parish](#) (see below)
1/24 National March for Life

CAROLING AT THE CRECHE: The Knights of St. John Bosco Council invite all families of the parish to participate in our fourth annual Caroling at the Creche on Thursday, December 26th at 7pm following the family rosary. Food and beverages will be provided. We will share hot chocolate and treats as we sign traditional carols to wish Happy Birthday to the baby Jesus in the creche outside the Church. The event will move indoors in case of inclement weather.

The Knights of Columbus recently conducted our Coats for Kids Campaign. We donated 186 coats to local Charities (ECHO, Christ House and Lorton Community Action Center). Each organization was overwhelmed and so excited when we delivered the coats. St. Raymond's parishioners really "stepped up" and put smiles on some very needy kids this winter. The Knights thank all who donated either new coats or cash to purchase new coats.

Mothers' Group: Are you looking for Catholic friendship with fellow mothers? Come to the moms' meet-up on Wednesday mornings! We alternate between meeting at our church and parks. Email Michelle for more information at mlcastry@gmail.com.

St. Raymond's 2024-25 Snow Team: Your Parish needs your HELP! St. Raymond's is seeking industrious, cold weather loving, able-bodied people to join the 2022-23 Snow Removal Team. The Snow Team will work with the Plant Manager to clear the sidewalks and entryways in proximity of the Church during snow and/or ice events. Equipment is provided; sidewalks and aprons must be clear no less than 30 minutes before the first Mass of the day (and as needed thereafter). Snow Team members must have transportation that enables them to get to the church in inclement weather. Earn \$20.00 per hour. For more information or to apply, please contact the Parish Office, at 703-440-0535 during office hours.

Senior Luncheon RSVP. We extended the deadline for signing up for the Senior Luncheon to December 23rd. Please RSVP with the Parish Office at office@straymonds.org or 703-440-0535.

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

We need you in Richmond!

Pro-Abortion Legislators Plan to Pass the Extreme Unlimited Abortion-until-Birth Amendment on Opening Days of the 2025 General Assembly!

Can you show-up in Richmond on January 8th, 9th or 10th to take a Stand for Life? Be present in Richmond at the Virginia General Assembly between 10 am and 1pm to help line the hallways of the Capital and fill the galleries of the House of Delegates & State Senate to make sure our elected representatives know we oppose this extreme Amendment. More details will be available at vaprolifeday.org



Restore Life Affirming Scriptural Language to your Vocabulary.

*Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin will be **WITH CHILD** and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14*

MaRiH Pregnancy Care Center is celebrating their 50th Anniversary! 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.



Join us for the National March for Life. Friday 24 Jan. St Raymond's will send three buses. Watch for sign-ups in the narthex – in January!

The work to build a culture of life in the United States of America is not finished. We work and pray to create a culture where abortion is unthinkable.

Virginia Pro Life Day. Wed Jan 29. Join us in Richmond. It is vitally important that we advocate for life with our State Legislators. Can't go? Write a letter! Samples in the narthex or on the parish website. vaprolifeday.org

Regret often follows when a woman ingests the 'abortion pill'. If you know someone in this situation, contact abortionpillreversal.com 24/7 helpline: 877-558-0333. **It may not be too late.**

Tepeyac Pro Life OB/GYN: Transforming Hearts Through Healthcare. tepeyacobgyn.com 703-273-9440. The center strives to be an instrument of the healing power of God's mercy and love, to nurture a deeper respect for all human life. **Thank you for your referrals and your support.**

Have you had an abortion? The Father of Mercy is waiting to welcome you in reconciliation. For confidential inquiries, **Project Rachel Ministry:** (703) 841-2504 or info@helpafterabortion.org

Please continue to pray for those who are imprisoned for peacefully standing up for the lives of the unborn. May Our Lord console them in their suffering.

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

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>

Jr. High Swing Dance: WOW!! What an incredible group of Junior High students we have! I was so impressed by the number of 7th and 8th graders who showed up for our first ever Junior High Swing Dance last Sunday (20!). It was so edifying to see our young men and women dressed so nicely and having such good, wholesome fun learning this social dance together! We will definitely have another one next semester!! Special thank you to Ruby and the high school team (Michael S., Michael H. Zack T., Claire T., Clare R.) for sharing their time and talent to help teach! And to Mrs. Hansen for providing delicious nachos!



Sun. Dec. 22: 6:30-10pm Decorate Church for Christmas High School, College Age & Compliant Adult Volunteers Needed!! Meet in the Narthex. Come for an hour or stay the whole time if you can! We will take all the help we can get! Please come if you are able to help!

Steubenville Youth Conference : July 11-13, 2025

Registration is now open!! Current 8-12th graders are invited to join us for a weekend away with a few thousand Catholic teens to encounter



God and experience His love through the power of the Sacraments, dynamic Catholic speakers, uplifting music and new friends! In our ever-changing world, Jesus is the answer to the longing of our hearts for meaning, fulfillment, security, and love. Join our group in road tripping to Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH to experience the peace of Jesus Christ. Registration and more information can be found online at <https://bit.ly/steubenville2025> or on YA bulletin boards by the church entrances.



Sun. Dec. 22 & 29: NO Youth Group & CCD

Sunday youth group & CCD will resume on January 5th. Enjoy the Christmas season with your family!

Tues. Jan. 7: Sons of Thunder: 7-8:30pm (Maurer Room)

High School Men: Come hungry (physically and intellectually) and ready to rumble. Sons of Thunder meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 7-8:30 pm in the Maurer Room with Phil, Nate, and Father Bergida.

Sat. Jan. 18: Talitha Koum 9-11am (Mass & Parish Library)

High School Ladies! "Little Girl, arise!" (Mt. 5:41) and come to Talitha Koum! Deepen your faith, and grow in sisterhood! Bring a pen & journal if you have one. We will start with 9am Mass!

NO Youth Apostolate 6:30am Mass & Breakfast until 2025

Youth Apostolate 6:30am Mass & Breakfast resumes January 10.

Jeanne Sause

Director of the Youth Apostolate (Grades 7-12)

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!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There will be **NO CCD classes** 12/22 - 12/30.

Parents of students in preparation for First Holy Communion 2025: the First Holy Communion Registry Form with Certificate of Baptism and Birth Certificate attached was **due Dec. 16th**.

Parents of students preparing for Confirmation in May 2025: Service Hours form and Experience forms are **due** in the Religious Education Office by **January 14, 2025**.

Have a Blessed and Merry Christmas!!!



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 if you are interested in joining us. Please note: No Bridge Club on December 26th.

2024-25 Adult Bible Study: St. Raymond's will study the Gospel of John on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 A.M. and again on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. (except for holidays) in the Parish Hall, from Tuesday, September 10, 2024 through Tuesday, May 13, 2025. The next class will be January 21st, 2025.

ADORERS NEEDED- Both Wednesdays and Fridays. Wednesday adorers are needed for 12pm, 1 pm and 5 pm. Friday Adorers needed at 9am, 11am, 12pm and 1pm. Please consider spending an hour with Our Lord during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. If you are interested to sign up for Wednesdays, please call Leslie Schratz at 703-569-1940. If you would like to sign up for Fridays, please call Elizabeth Frazee in the parish office at 703-440-0535.

St. Martin of Porres is looking for Volunteers! We are looking for volunteers to help collect items from the Narthex and deliver them to the Springfield Resource Center. If you are interested in helping, please contact the parish office at 703-440-0535.

Parking at St. Raymond: During the Christmas Season, the church parking lot has extra traffic and may fill up. Limited street parking is available but can cause concern for our neighbors. One option available to you involves parking in the commuter lot at Gambrell Road and Fairfax County Parkway, where you can take advantage of carpooling. Please consider this as an option during the Advent & Christmas seasons. The Fairfax County Police will be monitoring the yellow striped "No Parking" zones in the parking lot, and tickets will be issued if violations occur. Please be considerate of our neighbors, and do not park where you block their driveways. Infractions will be ticketed and may possibly mean towing as well. Thank you!

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.

CHURCH PERSECUTED

The Christmas season brings out stories of little children truly understanding what Christmas is about. Recently Father Bergida noted in a Saturday homily that one only understands the nativity of Jesus in the context of His crucifixion. In between his birth and death is the institution of the Eucharist.

Here are a few true stories from a Montessori teacher of 3-4 year-olds in a Catechesis of the Good Shepherd atrium.

Upon returning to school after the Christmas holidays, the teacher noticed that baby Jesus was missing from the manger. So she gathered all the students together and asked them if they knew what happened to baby Jesus. One boy sheepishly raised his hand and admitted that he knew where Jesus was. He said that he “put Jesus in His house.” The teacher looked at the manger again and commended that He wasn’t there. The boy then proceeded to the small tabernacle, opened the door, and removed Jesus, asking, “Isn’t this Jesus’ house?” Perhaps so many adults don’t make the connection that the baby Jesus is the same Jesus who is in the tabernacle, but this young child did.

During the presentation on the Good Shepherd, a child moved the Good Shepherd figure and the ten sheep out of the sheepfold for a walk and then returned to the sheepfold and closed the gate. After the teacher read the Scripture account, the child moved the figures and announced in a somewhat dramatic voice, “And now the sheep eat the Shepherd.” At first the teacher was somewhat startled, but then realized that, *yes they do indeed eat the Shepherd.*”



Get In-Formed!

See the Formed bulletin board by the central doors of the vestibule for additional suggestions.

Watch *The Story of the Nativity: The Truth of Christmas*. This film presents a scholarly look at the true story of the Immaculate Conception, the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, and the Star of Bethlehem. Watch and share!

Read *Cradle of Redeeming Love: The Theology of the Christmas Mystery*. John Seward’s book draws readers to meditate on the Nativity of Christ using Church Tradition and writings from the Christian mystics.



FOR KIDS. Watch *Lukas Storyteller: The True Meaning of Christmas*. Join the familiar characters in this series as they discover what Christmas is really about.

Available for FREE! To set up an account, visit Formed.org/signup and select our parish. Questions? Need help? Email us at: formed@straymonds.org



Angelus Academy

Where the truth of Catholic teaching takes flesh in the lives of Pre-K - 8th graders and their families.

There are limited spots available in some grades for the 2024-25 school year, but spaces are going fast!

Apply soon!

AngelusAcademy.org/admissions-overview/applying/

Call or Email Julie Maimone, Director of Admissions, at Admissions@angelusacademy.org for more information or to schedule a tour.

Come visit us and see why our students love coming to school. Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

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



ATTENTION All Adult Volunteers! Our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be Saturday, January 4th. All adult volunteers and their spouses are invited to join Fr. De Celles for dinner. Please RSVP by December 31 with the parish office.

Legion of Mary invitation Do you want to develop a closer relationship with our Mother Mary and her Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ? The Legion of Mary meets weekly on Tuesday evenings at 6:30pm in the Library. Please note: The meetings for Tuesday, December 24th and 31st are moved to Monday, December 23rd and 30th. All auxiliary members and anyone interested in joining the Legion of Mary are welcome! Point of Contact: Judy Mayer, jmayer9014@aol.com, or 703-627-7320.

Collections for 12/15/24

Sunday Offertory	\$ 13,937.00
Family Assistance	\$ 550.00
Maintenance Fund	\$ 2,447.00
OLOR Scholarship	\$ 670.00

The **Second Collection** for Christmas Day will be for the **Our Lady of Ransom Catholic School Scholarship Program**. Please be generous.




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