



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
Mary Butler, Parish Secretary
Dominique Murray, Office Assistant

PARISH OFFICE

Telephone Numbers:

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Rel. Education: 703-440-0537
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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 upcoming school year.

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.

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 on Wednesdays
Saturday: 9:00 am

Website: www.straymonds.org

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE (Reconciliation/Confession)

Wednesday Evening

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

3:00-4:00 pm and 6:00-7:00 pm
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.

OCIA: The Order 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.

Pastor's Corner

This Week's column taken from the November 10, 2024 bulletin

NOVEMBER: PRAYING FOR THE DEAD.

November is a month in which Catholics are called to particularly pray for all the souls in Purgatory.

Many Catholics nowadays wrongly think Purgatory is an outdated remnant from the Middle Ages, even though Christian belief in Purgatory is rooted in Jewish doctrine (2 Maccabees 12), and was well established in the early Church. Many other Catholics, in their grief, prefer to think of their departed loved ones as already being in Heaven, and can't bear the thought that they might be in Purgatory.

But the doctrine of Purgatory is not something to fear, because it is a doctrine of God's mercy, and reflects the reality that none of us is perfect. All of us sin or cling to things of this world—however small or seemingly insignificant. But Scripture tells us “nothing imperfect shall enter” into Heaven (Rev. 21:27)—and rightly so, since Heaven is about perfect happiness, perfect love, etc... Given this, and confident in Our Lord's desire for all to be with Him in Heaven, Christians have always believed that between death and Heaven there is a purification, or *purgation*, where we're cleansed from all imperfections, i.e., made perfect. This state, or “place,” we call Purgatory.

Now, we must remember that Purgatory is NOT *anything* like Hell, and all the Souls in Purgatory are good and “worthy” of eternal joy in Heaven—we call them the “Holy Souls.” So thinking of them as in Purgatory is not an insult but praise. Moreover, these Souls are certain they are going to Heaven, so they are filled with joy beyond anything experienced on earth.

But we must also remember that there is suffering in Purgatory. The simplest way for many of us to understand this is to think of the suffering related to change. All change is difficult. Consider the person who is trying to lose weight, or exercising for an athletic competition. The effort involved in change is painful, but as you see progress you are also invigorated and happy, seeing your goal approach.

Even so, since 1) Purgatory involves pain, and 2) we want our beloved dead to swiftly enter the joys of Heaven, we should never neglect praying for them. And if they are already in Heaven, no prayer is wasted, since every prayer is an act of love, and they hear each prayer as telling how much we love them.

So in love, let us pray for our beloved dead this month, and for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, especially the “most abandoned,” the souls who no one else remembers to pray for.

“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls, and all the souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace.”

Offering Masses: “Mass Intentions.” The greatest prayer Christians can offer is the Sacrifice of the Mass. We remember that at each Mass the one and only Sacrifice of

the Cross on Calvary is made present. This Sacrifice of Jesus was and is the greatest prayer ever offered: God the Son's great offering to the Father for the expiation of sins and salvation of the world. Because of this, the graces that flow from the Mass are infinite and that grace produces various “fruits,” or benefits: imprecatory fruits (spiritual and temporal benefits), propitiatory fruits (forgiveness of sins), and satisfactory fruits (remission of temporal punishment).

The Tradition teaches that these fruits flow to: 1) the whole Church (“general fruits”), 2) those participating in the particular Mass (“special fruits”), to the priest himself (“personal fruits”), and to those for whom the priest is offering the Mass (“ministerial fruits”).

This last type of fruit, ministerial, is what we usually mean when we speak the priest “offering a Mass” for a particular intention, or when the Mass Intention” is announced in the bulletin or at Mass. (Note: contrary to what some seem to think, when this “Mass Intention” is for a person(s), this is not meant to publicly honor that person, nor is the congregation required to pray for the person. The Mass honors God; it bears fruit in us, including the person it is offered for.)

These ministerial fruits have infinite power—they flow from the infinite perfect Sacrifice of the Cross. But they are limited by the disposition of the person who receives them. So, for example, when you receive the Sacrament of Penance, you receive all the grace you need to never sin again, but you benefit from that grace only to the extent to cooperate with it, or are “open to it.” Grace isn't magic, that immediately turns a sinner into a saint. Grace is a gift, that if you chose to use will help you become a saint.

So, when a priest offers the Mass for John, John receives infinite graces, but they are only beneficial to him if he is disposed to let them benefit him. So, if John has his heart set on sinning, but has a small opening in his heart to God, then he will benefit from the infinite fruits of the Mass only a small amount.

The same is true for **the Souls in Purgatory**. So, when a Mass is offered for a Jane in Purgatory, the Mass will benefit her only to the extent she is purified and is open to that fruit. Because we understand Purgation as sort of a process of purifying and that some souls need more purification than others, the Soul in Purgatory benefits from ministerial fruits of the Mass in a powerful but limited way: they are not yet *perfectly* open to them, but they are more and more perfectly open to them. So that when multiple Masses are offered for a Soul, he/she will benefit more and more as he/she becomes more and more perfectly disposed to the fruits.

So, “offering Masses” for the dead is absolutely the best way we can help them in their purification/perfection.

Oremus pro invicem, patria, defunctorumque. Fr. De Celles

MASS INTENTIONS	
Monday, November 17th	Saturday, November 22nd
6:30 am Barbara Brady + 8:30 am Cathy Hammerstrom +	9:00 am Maribi Mapa Garcia +
Tuesday, November 18th	Vigil Mass
6:30 am Thomas Gigliotti + 8:30 am Gene Pearce +	5:00 pm Fr. De Celles Joe Guiffre & Family
Wednesday, November 19th	Sunday, November 23rd
6:30 am Eileen Matzinger + 8:30 am Ann Guiffre + 7:00 pm Celebrant's Intentions	7:00 am Msgr. Rippy Anne McAloon +
Thursday, November 20th	9:00 am Fr. Bergida Parishioners
6:30 am Jack Anezin 8:30 am Norma Castillo +	11:00 am Fr. De Celles Chris Shealy
Friday, November 21st	1:00 pm Fr. Horkan Joseph Schweitzer
6:30 am Jeanne Patricia Gedney + 8:30 am Ariel Zapanta Bayot +	

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)

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 November! All are invited to attend.

Junior Legion of Mary. Children between the ages of 7 – 12+ at St. Raymond's who have received their First Holy Communion and parents seeking an extracurricular activity that enriches a young person's spiritual life and engages them in age-appropriate spiritual works of mercy under the spiritual direction of Father Bergida, please consider joining the Junior Legion of Mary. Meetings will be every Tuesday, 4:15-5:15pm, in the rectory Maurer Room. Two adult members of the Legion (Virtus certified) lead the meetings. Parents are welcome to attend / participate. Please email Patty Miller, pamiller35@gmail.com, or call / text her at: C - 703-663-0480.

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. 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.

Advent Lessons and Carols. Please join us on **Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 7:00 pm** for a program of beautiful Advent music and Scripture readings, called "Lessons and Carols." Weaving together prophetic readings from the Old Testament and pre-nativity readings from the Gospels, the readers lay out God's breathtaking plan for the birth of Our Savior. The choir adds to the atmosphere of joyful expectation by leading us in popular hymns and singing a few special choral pieces. Afterwards, everyone gathers downstairs for some seasonal refreshments and Christian fellowship.

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.

Kathleen McGovern **Peter Lawton**
Brian Groth returned home safely!

Please pray for the sick of our parish

Glenn Bliss	Paul Haynes	Annette Haynes
Michael O'Neill	Nena Brennan	Beth Fitzgibbons
Cindy Laird	Serrin Foster	Jean Keegan
Patricia Lewis	Donald Trayer	Bill Roche
Mai Pham	Ellen Trayer	Florence Miller
Jason Saenz	Arlene Pietraszko	Robert Petitti
Phyllis Zitnik	Virginia Cummings	Joann Alba
John Florio	Mary M. Dixon	Alicia Tocconi
Carolina Baker	Edward J. Susank	Jay & Linda Cabacar
Debra Henkel	Helen Estabrooks	Rita Felkel

Upcoming Events at St. Raymond Church

11/16-17	RE Classes
11/17	OCIA Classes
11/17	Bible Study morning class 9:30-11:00 am
11/17	Family of Jesus prayer group 3pm in the Church
11/18	Bible Study evening class 7:00-8:30 pm
11/18	Junior Legion of Mary 4:15-6:15pm Maurer Rm.
11/18	Legion of Mary 6:30pm—Library
11/19	Adoration 9am-7pm
11/20	Bridge Club
11/21	Adoration 9am-3pm
11/21	Giving Trees up in the Narthex
11/22-23	YA Pie Pick up in Narthex
11/27-28	Thanksgiving Holiday-Parish Offices Closed
11/28	K of C Christmas Tree Sales begin-until Dec. 21
12/6	Men's Prayer Group, Parish Hall
12/6	Breakfast with St. Nicholas, Parish Hall
12/7	Lessons and Carols, Church at 7 pm, reception following in the parish hall.
12/8	The Immaculate Conception of the BVM-Holy Day of Obligation-Parish Offices Closed

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. **Our next meeting will be December 6th.** For more information, call Dave Wilson, 703-966-5327 or email maryn-davew7705@gmail.com.

Do you desire a more meaningful prayer life? Perhaps God is inviting you to an intercessory prayer ministry that helps keep a sense of awe and gratitude for His presence through His priests. Please consider joining the Seven Sisters Apostolate who prays an hour specifically for our St. Raymond's priests (at the church during a time you choose). Each priest at St. Raymond's should have at least one sister praying for him each day of the week. Join one of the Seven Sisters teams, or join as a Substitute. Visit www.sevensistersapostolate.org. Please contact Renee LeBoeuf for more information renee.leboeuf@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 if you are interested in joining us.



THE FULLNESS OF KNIGHTHOOD: Join the Knights! Your very own St. John Bosco Council #12846 has just been awarded **STAR COUNCIL** and received the **STATE DEPUTY AWARD** as one of the most outstanding councils in the Commonwealth of Virginia. These noteworthy awards are only earned by strong Catholic men tirelessly working together to serve their parish, community and their nation. Why not become part of the most impactful Catholic fraternity in the world, grow in your faith, and discover mutual support from a true brotherhood built on shared Catholic values? Now is the **perfect time** to take your place with us. Just go to <https://www.kofc.org/joinus> or use the QR code below to experience the Knights **free** for one year. Enter our council #12846 for local information when you register. Knights of Columbus informational materials are in the Narthex, please have a look. Please contact our Deputy Grand Knight, Dave Hayes, at cell (703) 380-4550 if you have any questions or want to learn more about the many benefits of being a Knight! Get in the game, answer the call, **LIVE FULLY; BECOME A KNIGHT!**



Upcoming Events:

NOVEMBER

28 Knight's Christmas Tree Delivery/Commencement of Sales 11/28-12/21

DECEMBER

1-21 Christmas Tree Sales (Church Parking Lot)
 6 Men's Prayer Breakfast (7:30 am, Parish Hall)
 6 Breakfast with St. Nicholas (Parish Hall, 9:30-11:30 am)
 6 Richmond Polar Plunge (Pocahontas State Park)
 8 Monthly Council Meeting (7pm Library- Rosary, 7:30 pm Parish Hall)
 13 Wreaths Across America (Arlington National Cemetery, 4th Degree starts at 6am)
 20 Men's Prayer Breakfast (7:30 am, Parish Hall)
 26 Caroling with St. Nicholas, a la Creche (7pm, Friday)

"Keep Christ in Christmas" Christmas Cards – From Oct 25-26 to Dec. 6-7, the Knights of Columbus will be selling religious Christmas cards in the Narthex after all the Masses.

2025-2026 OCIA (formerly RCIA) - St. Raymond's is offering OCIA classes on Monday evenings from early September to late April. Those seeking information to understand and/or to enter the Catholic Church, and baptized Catholics seeking additional sacraments, are welcomed. For more information please call the religious education office at (703) 440-0537 or email mary.hansen@straymonds.org.

HELP NEEDED-USHERS AND LECTORS: Please consider volunteering to be an Usher or a Lector at Mass. Contact the parish office if interested, call 703-440-0535.

2025-26 Adult Bible Study: St. Raymond's will study the topic of "Hearing the Voice of the Lord in the Major Prophets" on Monday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00 A.M. and again on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 P.M. (except for holidays) in the Parish Hall, from Monday, September 15, 2025 through May, 2026.

Breakfast with Saint Nicholas- SATURDAY December 6th! Saint Nicholas is coming to St. Raymond Church! He will be here on Saturday, December 6th, after the 9:00 am Mass. The Knights of Columbus, St. John Bosco Council, will host Saint Nicholas along with providing a pancake breakfast (until 11:00AM) assisted by the St. Raymond Youth Apostolate. Saint Nicholas will speak with the children and share about his life and the origin of Santa Clause. This event is free and open to all. Please bring a canned good to share with our needy neighbors through the Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC).

ST. RAYMOND'S RESPECTS LIFE

Some may remember but others may not.... that early on Sunday morning, November 14th, 2010, a newborn baby girl was discovered in a gym bag in our church parking lot near the Divine Mercy banner. By the grace of God, Sofi was in good health and adopted into a loving Christian family. Sofi is now a beautiful young lady, a freshman in highschool, celebrating her 15th birthday. Please offer a prayer of thanksgiving for Sofi's life, for the well-being of the birth mom who knew enough to bravely entrust her baby to our parish and for Sofi's forever family. ***Life, what a beautiful gift!***

MaRiH Pregnancy Care Center... is very grateful for our continued support! Donations welcome in the narthex collection box near the elevator. Greatest needs: **winter coats up to 2T, diapers, formula, wipes, winter clothes up to 2T. Please do not leave bouncy seats, walkers, gates or jogging strollers.** Thank you for understanding.

Do you know someone who works in the abortion industry and wants to get out? [And Then There Were None](http://AndThenThereWereNone.com) can help. Visit Abortionworker.com. Call or text 888-570-5501

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

Angel Wall: Have you suffered the loss of a child or grandchild? If you would like to honor the memory of your deceased child, please contact the Parish Office to have your child's name added to the Angel Wall in the narthex.

To those who have suffered an abortion:

"Do not give in to discouragement and do not lose hope. **The Father of Mercies** is ready to give you His Forgiveness and His Peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation." [Project Rachel](http://ProjectRachel.org) helps women and men who are carrying the grief and sorrow of a past abortion. (888)456-HOPE. Men: (703) 841-3833. Confidentiality always respected. www.helpafterabortion.org.

THE ABORTION PILL now accounts for 65% of all abortions. Women often regret the desperate isolated decision to take the abortion pill. Call the abortion reversal helpline **855-209-4848**. It may not be too late. abortionpillreversal.com.

THE POWER OF PRAYER. Abortionists and those who work in the abortion industry trespass against us. Yet how much more they offend Almighty God! Every abortion deforms the abortionist and desensitizes him or her to the humanity of both the mother and child violated through abortion. **Pray fervently for the conversion of abortionists.** Somehow, they have been led astray by greed, ignorance, a misguided sense of compassion or perhaps evil itself.

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. Blankets may be delivered to the parish office or MaRiH collection box in the narthex.

Save the date: **National March for Life Friday 23 January 2026!** Stay tuned for details.

St. Raymond's Youth Apostolate



Actual photos of pies entirely made from scratch by our teens!

Pie Sale Fundraiser for Youth Apostolate Back by popular demand, our youth apostolate will be hand making about 70 apple pies & 70 pumpkin pies **ready for pick-up Nov. 22-23** just in time for Thanksgiving! Forms to pre-order can be found on youth bulletin boards or online at <https://bit.ly/pies4thanksgiving> All proceeds support our Youth Apostolate. Thank you, in advance, for your support! **Pre-Orders due Monday, November 17th!**

Upcoming HIGH SCHOOL Events:

Sunday 11/16: HS Q&A with Fr. DC (5-6:30pm Parish Hall)

Open to ALL high school students! Bring your questions!

Sunday 11/16: HS Youth Group (6:30-8pm Parish Hall)

Fellowship while making pie crusts! Dinner served.

Tuesday 11/18: Sons of Thunder (7-8:30pm Maurer Room)

HS guys, come hungry, physically and intellectually!

Friday 11/21: 6:30am Mass & Breakfast with Fr. B & Fr. H

We can drive you to school by 8am if you RSVP by Wednesday!

<https://bit.ly/FRIDAYRSVPs>

Friday 11/21: HS Pie Making Night (6-10pm Parish Hall)

We need and will use all the help we can get! Please sign up & come even if you can only make it for an hour or two! Bring your friends!

Sat & Sun 11/22-11/23: Pie Distribution (Narthex after Masses)

Please sign up to help distribute pies after a Mass

Sunday 11/23: Dinner & Youth Apostolate Holy Hour (6:30-8pm)

Holy Hour includes brief talk by Fr. B. Confessions available!

Pie Sign-up for 7-12th Grade & Compliant Adults:
<https://bit.ly/helpwithpies>

Please sign up if you can help with our pie making nights and/or distribution after Masses. More details are on signup link as well.

Upcoming JUNIOR HIGH Events:

Thursday 11/20: Jr. High Pie Making Night (6-9pm Parish Hall)

MANY hands are needed,. Please sign up & come, even if you can only make it for an hour or 2. Counts towards church service hours.

Friday 11/21: 6:30am Mass & Breakfast with Fr. B & Fr. H

We can drive you to school by 8am if you RSVP by Wednesday!

<https://bit.ly/FRIDAYRSVPs>

Sat & Sun 11/22-11/23: Pie Distribution (Narthex after Masses)

Please sign up to help distribute pies after a Mass

Sunday 11/23: Dinner & Youth Apostolate Holy Hour (6:30-8pm)

Holy Hour includes brief talk by Fr. B. Confessions available!

MOUNT 2000 Eucharistic Retreat (Feb. 6-8)

Open to all high school students! Mount 2000 is a weekend Eucharistic retreat that includes Mass, Adoration, Confession, exciting speakers and musicians, and breakout sessions led by seminarians. The total cost for the retreat is \$130. For more information, including this year's speakers, visit mount2000.com
We will leave after school, at 4pm on Friday. More details and registration information are on YA bulletin boards and website.

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!

A new **YA Info. Sheet** is REQUIRED to be turned in once **each school year** for every child *prior to* participating in any Youth Apostolate event on or off site. <http://bit.ly/YAforms>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

During our Holy 10 Minutes this month, we are using a beautiful prayer of St. Gertrude the Great, whose feast day is Nov. 16. I will share it here again in case you would like to pray it at home. Praying for the dead is a spiritual work of mercy.

Eternal Father, I offer You the most Precious Blood of Your Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the Universal Church, those in my own home, and within my family. Amen.

Attention, families with students in sacramental preparation: Please remember the requirement for students in grades 2, 7, and 8 to turn in a Mass attendance card each weekend. Please contact the Religious Education office with any questions or concerns.

Important Schedule Reminder: For the Thanksgiving holiday, there will be no class on Mon. Nov. 24 and Sun. Nov. 30. Please check your CCD calendar carefully.

Family of Jesus Prayer Group: Weekly meetings are in the Church on Mondays at 3:00 pm. 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.

Our American Heritage Girls troop will honor our fallen veterans by laying wreaths upon their graves at the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. Please consider sponsoring a wreath today helping them cover the cemetery on December 13th. Wreaths Across America donates back to our troop for each wreath sponsorship the girls obtain helping us run the troop and build women of integrity. <https://tinyurl.com/VA0683WAA>

CHRIST HOUSE-WE NEED A CO-LEADER IN 2026!

Please consider co-leading this most important ministry, so many are in need of a good meal and fellowship. For more information, call the Parish office at 703-440-0535.

New and Improved Giving Tree (arriving Nov. 21) "Some give freely, yet grow all the richer" Prov. 11:24 Once again, we are sponsoring over 30 families from both our parish community and Our Lady of the Blue Ridge in Madison, VA. This year there will be tangible gifts on the trees as well as gift cards to choose from, plus additional gifts on the parish website's Sign-Up Genius. A working QR code will help you access that list. Instructions can be found on signs near the trees in the narthex or on the Giving Tree page on the parish website. Contact the parish office with any questions. All gifts are due on or before December 14. Please share Christ's love this Christmas season by helping a family in need; both receiver and giver will be blessed! Want to purchase a gift for the Giving Tree, but find it difficult to wrap items? Just drop off your gift to the office with the ornament attached to it and we'll do it for you!



Our Lady of Ransom Scholarships to Catholic Schools are Available.

Please send requests for 2025-26 tuition assistance to Fr. De Celles or contact the parish office for more information. We can also help cover homeschooling expenses.

CHURCH PERSECUTED

Last Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to take up a challenge to the 2015 *Obergefell v. Hodges* which legitimized so-called same-sex marriage. The case has been winding through the courts for the past 10+ years involving Kim Davis, a Rowan County, Kentucky, clerk of courts who refused to issue a marriage license to a same-sex couple. She served 10 days in jail and had to pay a \$360,000 fine for damages and lawyer fees for her decision. She finally petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court which opted not to take up the case. The Court offered no comment in its rejection of the matter to include dissenting opinions.

While no one (other than the nine justices) knows the rationale for the Court's action, there have been several theories as to why it was not taken up. This was not a good case to overturn *Obergefell* noted Thomas Jipping, senior legal fellow at the Heritage Foundation. On "EWTN News Nightly" he said, "The First Amendment applies differently with regard to the actions of public officials than private individuals." Davis "was acting in her official capacity as a county clerk, and that's a very different legal question." Tipping went on to say that reversing *Obergefell* would require someone to challenge a state law in conflict with the current precedent.

Mary Hasson from the Ethics and Public Policy Center and past speaker at St. Raymond's parish agreed with Jipping that "it was not the right vehicle to reconsider the *Obergefell* decision."

A 2024 Pew poll indicated that about 70% of Americans identifying themselves as Catholic support same-sex marriage. This actually is "slightly higher than the population as a whole." Hasson noted that "It's a scandal that 70% of self-described Catholics support so-called same sex marriage." This is contrary to our Catholic faith which teaches in the Catechism that "The vocation of marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator."

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/267721/supreme-court-declines-to-hear-challenge-to-same-sex-marriage-decision>



Get In-Formed!

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

What Catholics Believe About Mary: Immaculate Conception, Virginity & the Rosary Join Dr. Edward Sri as he answers some of the internet's most asked questions about Mary. Who is Mary? Why do Catholics pray to Mary? How could she be a virgin if Jesus had brothers and sisters according to the Bible? Find out answers to these and more questions in this episode of What Catholics Believe.

Ode to Saint Cecilia The lives of the saints are epic stories and particular expressions of God's grace in humanity. Celebrate St. Cecilia with this audio drama by the Augustine Institute Radio Theatre.

For Kids St. Martin de Porres—God's Knights With humble faith and love for others, Martin served God wholeheartedly, and through his kindness and prayers, miracles began to happen! The "God's Knights" series tells the true stories of brave men and boys who followed God with courage and faith and are now honored as mighty knights in God's Kingdom.

Available for FREE! To set up an account, visit formed.org/signup and select our parish.

Please consider leading this important ministry, call the Parish office at

703-440-0535



Angelus Academy, Where the Truth of Catholic teaching takes flesh in the lives of 3 year-old to 8th grade children and their families.

There are limited spots available in some grades for the 2025-26 school year, but spaces are going fast!
Apply soon!

[AngelusAcademy.org/admissions-overview/applying/](https://www.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

Qualified Charitable Distributions

QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION (QCD) If you are 70-1/2 or more, please consider making an IRA Charitable gift to the parish before December 31. If you are 73 or older and need to make required minimum distributions (RMD) from your IRA, your QCD counts toward your annual RMD for the year. **QCDs can have a significant tax benefit for you.** Eligible accounts for QCDs can be made from most IRAs, including Traditional IRAs, Rollover IRAs, Inherited IRAs, and Roth IRAs. **Always consult your Tax professional regarding your specific situation.** Use our parish address: St. Raymond of Peñafort Catholic Church, 8750 Pohick Road, Springfield, VA 22153

Chesterton Academy of Christ the King, a small co-ed classical high school that is part of the international Chesterton Schools Network, will be opening at St. Lawrence Catholic Church next fall. Chesterton Academies are known for their strong Catholic identity anchored in daily school Mass, rigorous classical curriculum, screen-free Socratic seminar format, and affordable tuition. Visit [Chesterton-ChristTheKing.org](https://chestertonchristtheking.org) to learn more, to join our mailing list, or to apply. The priority application deadline for rising freshmen is Friday, December 19, 2025.

PARTHSHOFT- FORMERLY FAITH DIRECT: Faith Direct has now changed to ParishSoft. The new login URL is ParishSOFT Giving-Login. To donate or sign up, please visit our website: <https://straymonds.org> and choose the Faith Direct button on the upper right of the front page of the website. eGiving helps you provide regular support to St. Raymond's, even when you are out of town. You can sign up from your computer, smartphone or tablet and set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift. Thank you for your continued support of our parish family. God bless you.

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