



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  
Erin Burns, Receptionist

#### **PARISH OFFICE**

Telephone Numbers:

Rectory: 703-440-0535  
Rel. Education: 703-440-0537  
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#### **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 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](http://www.straymonds.org)

#### **SACRAMENT OF PENTANCE (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](mailto:bulletin@straymonds.org) 10 days prior to publication date.

## Pastor's Corner

**March for Life.** This Friday, January 23, please consider joining other parishioners and hundreds of thousands of other pro-life Americans gathering from all over the country to march in the 53<sup>rd</sup> annual "March for Life" on the Mall in Washington. We will have three buses [no charge] ready to take St. Raymond parishioners down to the Mall. Please sign-up on the sheets in the narthex of the Church.

For those of you who cannot go down to the Mall, we will have **Exposition and Adoration** of the Blessed Sacrament all day until the Buses return. When the buses return, all are invited to join the Marchers for a **Chili Dinner** in the Parish Hall.

On a personal note, as I mentioned last year, breathing the cold air during the March plays havoc with my sinuses, so to keep myself healthy for my other parish work I've concluded that my "Marching" days are over, and I will not be joining in the fun on the Mall.

**Extraordinary Consistory of Cardinals.** As I mentioned last week, Pope Leo met with all the Cardinals of the Church (the College of Cardinals) on January 7-8 in what is called a "consistory" to consult with them on the topics of Liturgy, Governance and Synodality. They wound up focusing on the latter two topics, leaving those of us very concerned about liturgy greatly disappointed.

One very interesting thing that did happen at the consistory was a brief speech ("intervention") made to the College by Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-Kiun. **Cardinal Zen** is the 94-year-old Bishop Emeritus of Hong Kong, China, and has been a prominent advocate for human rights and religious freedom in China and a leading opponent of the Vatican's 2018 secret agreement with Beijing on the appointment of bishops in China. In May 2022, at the age of 90, Cardinal Zen was arrested in Hong Kong for his support for pro-democracy protesters. Pope Leo met privately with Cardinal Zen before the consistory, something Pope Francis repeated refused to do.

Here is the report on his intervention provided by the online "College of Cardinals Report":

*"Cardinal Joseph Zen delivered a searing critique of the Synod on Synodality, denouncing its process as an 'ironclad manipulation' and warning that its continual invocation of the Holy Spirit is 'ridiculous' and verges on 'blasphemy.'*

*"Delivered behind closed doors in the presence of Pope Leo XIV and the 170 cardinals assembled, the 93-year-old Bishop emeritus of Hong Kong used the three minutes allotted to him to address Pope Francis' accompanying note to the final document of the Synod on Synodality, a process that spanned three years, from 2021–2024.*

*"Although Pope Leo XIV had initially informed the Cardinals that four topics would be taken up, upon their arrival at the consistory the members of the Sacred College were told that, owing to time constraints, they would be asked to select only two. They chose 'the Synod and Synodality' and the mission of the Church in light of Pope Francis's 2013 apostolic exhortation on the proclamation of the Gospel, *Evangelii Gaudium*.*

*"At its core, the intervention argues that the synodal process was not merely flawed but tightly managed in a way that deprived bishops of genuine deliberative freedom and of their rightful authority as successors of the apostles. Cardinal Zen also sharply denounced what he sees as the instrumental use of spiritual language, warning that constant appeals to the Holy Spirit are being deployed to sanctify predetermined outcomes, as if the Spirit could be expected to contradict the Church's two-thousand-year Tradition.*

*"The intervention then broadens its warning to the wider Church. By assigning the Final Document a paradoxical status—magisterial yet 'not strictly normative,' authoritative yet open to divergent local interpretations—the process risks doctrinal*

View this bulletin online at [www.DiscoverMass.com](http://www.DiscoverMass.com)

*incoherence and ecclesial fragmentation. The cardinal cautions that this approach mirrors the path that led to division within Anglicanism and undermines Catholic credibility in ecumenical dialogue, particularly with the Orthodox Churches, for whom synodality has always meant the real authority of bishops acting together and walking together with Jesus Christ.*

*"Pope Bergoglio has exploited the word Synod but has made the Synod of Bishops, an institution established by Paul VI, disappear,' concludes the cardinal.*

*"Prior to the opening of the Extraordinary Consistory, Cardinal Zen was received in private audience by Pope Leo XIV.*

*"Here below is the full text of Cardinal Joseph Zen's intervention at the Extraordinary Consistory of Cardinals, published with the kind permission of His Eminence....:*

*"On the Accompanying Note by the Holy Father Francis*

*"The Pope says that, with the Final Document, he gives back to the Church what has developed over these years (2021–2024) through 'listening' (to the People of God) and 'discernment' (by the Episcopate?).*

*"I ask:*

*"Has the Pope been able to listen to the entire People of God?*

*"Do the lay people present represent the People of God?*

*"Have the Bishops elected by the Episcopate been able to carry out a work of discernment, which must surely consist in 'disputation' and 'judgment'?*

*"The ironclad manipulation of the process is an insult to the dignity of the Bishops, and the continual reference to the Holy Spirit is ridiculous and almost blasphemous (they expect surprises from the Holy Spirit; what surprises? That He should repudiate what He inspired in the Church's two-thousand-year Tradition?).*

*"The Pope, 'bypassing the Episcopal College, listens directly to the People of God,' and he calls this 'the appropriate interpretative framework for understanding hierarchical ministry'?*

*"The Pope says that the Document is magisterium, 'it commits the Churches to make choices consistent with what is stated in it.' But he also says 'it is not strictly normative .... Its application will need various mediations'; 'the Churches are called upon to implement in their different contexts, the authoritative proposals contained in the document'; 'unity of teaching and practice is certainly necessary in the Church, but this does not preclude various ways of interpreting some aspects of that teaching'; 'each country or region can seek solutions better suited to its culture and sensitive to its tradition and needs.'*

*"I ask:*

*"Does the Holy Spirit guarantee that contradictory interpretations will not arise (especially given the many ambiguous and tendentious expressions in the document)?*

*"Are the results of this 'experimenting and testing,' e.g. (of the 'creative activation of new forms of ministeriality'), to be submitted to the judgment of the Secretariat of the Synod and of the Roman Curia? Will these be more competent than the Bishops to judge the different contexts of their Churches?*

*"If the Bishops believe themselves to be more competent, do the differing interpretations and choices not lead our Church to the same division (fracture) found in the Anglican Communion?*

*"Perspectives on Ecumenism*

*"Given the dramatic rupture of Anglican communion, will we unite ourselves with the Archbishop of Canterbury (who remains with only about 10% of the global Anglican community), or with the Global Anglican Future Conference (which retains about 80%)?*

*"And with the Orthodox? Their Bishops will never accept Bergoglian synodality; for them, synodality is 'the importance of the Synod of Bishops.' Pope Bergoglio has exploited the word Synod, but has made the Synod of Bishops—an institution established by Paul VI—disappear."*

**Oremus pro invicem. Fr. De Celles**

**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, January 19th**

10:00 am James Maschoff +

**Tuesday, January 20th**

6:30 am Jerold M. Brown +

8:30 am Arsenio & Felipa Bacani +

**Wednesday, January 21st**

6:30 am Ted Tolpa +

8:30 am Tom Crean +

7:00 pm Celebrant's Intentions

**Thursday, January 22nd**

6:30 am Jan Paul Fruiterman

8:30 am Ted Tolpa +

**Friday, January 23rd**

6:30 am Poor Souls in Purgatory +

8:30 am Millicent Werbickas

**Saturday, January 24th**

9:00 am Derek & Stephanie Shickel

**Vigil Mass**

5:00 pm

Eugene & Rose Marie Tougas +

**Sunday, January 25th**

7:00 am

Daniel Noonan

9:00 am

Parishioners

11:00 am

Tom Crean +

1:00 pm

Maria Louisa Asuncion -Ng +

**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**

**Ryan Higgins**

**Peter Lawton**

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

Glenn Bliss  
Michael O'Neill  
Cindy Laird  
Patricia Lewis  
Mai Pham  
Jason Saenz  
Phyllis Zitnik  
John Florio  
Carolina Baker  
Debra Henkel  
Gaudencio Dizon

Paul Haynes  
Nena Brennan  
Serrin Foster  
Donald Trayer  
Ellen Trayer  
Arlene Pietraszko  
Virginia Cummings  
Mary M. Dixon  
Helen Estabrooks  
Michael Snavely

Annette Haynes  
Beth Fitzgibbons  
Jean Keegan  
Florence Miller  
Robert Petitti  
Joann Alba  
Alicia Tocconi  
Jay & Linda Cabacar  
Rita Felkel  
Mary Wilson

**Upcoming Events at St. Raymond Church**

1/18	NO RE Classes
1/19	NO RE Classes
1/19	NO Bible Study
1/19	Martin Luther Jr. Holiday— Parish Offices Closed, One Mass at 10am
1/19	Family of Jesus prayer group
1/20	NO Bible Study
1/20	Junior Legion of Mary 4:15-6:15pm Maurer Rm
1/20	Legion of Mary 6:30pm—Library
1/21	Adoration 9am-7pm
1/22	Bridge Club
1/23	Adoration 9am-3pm
1/23	National March for Life, Buses leave at 10am—Chili supper following
1/31	Talk by Robert Royal— The Heart of St. John Newman, 9:30am in Parish Hall

**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 February 7.** For more information, call Dave Wilson, 703-966-5327 or email [maryn-davew7705@gmail.com](mailto:maryn-davew7705@gmail.com).

Once again, a tremendous **THANK YOU** to everyone in the parish for all your prayers and generous donations that supported **PROJECT MANGER** this Fall. In the one weekend in November (02/03) and via envelope donations throughout the month of November, the Parish, **YOU** raised over **\$12,400.00!** That is awesome as each year your donations continue to grow. 100% of all money received will go directly for the purchase of approximately 75 new cribs and mattresses for the many local area (e.g., Springfield, Annandale, Fairfax) families in need of cribs for their new babies.

**Mothers' Group:** Do your young children need a bit more excitement? 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](mailto:mlcastry@gmail.com).

**PURPLE PRAYER CARDS IN THE PEWS THIS WEEK-** Please take a prayer card located on the ends of each pew to pray during of the Virginia General Assembly session from Jan 14-March 14. Thank you!



**January 31, 2026— after the 9am Mass-** Please join fellow parishioners for a presentation by The Distinguished Speaker Series on **The Heart of St. John Henry Newman by Robert Royal.** St. John Henry Newman, the newest Doctor of the Church, took as his motto *Cor ad cor loquitur*- "Heart speaks to heart". What he meant by that helps us better understand many things, among them: the true nature of conscience, the proper place of feelings in our lives, the primacy of truth, and the mission of the Church. Robert Royal is the founder and president of the Faith & Reason Institute in Washington, D.C., and is editor -in-chief of the Catholic Thing. He is a parishioner at St. Raymond's. The event is in the parish hall after the 9am Mass, light refreshments will be served. Open to the public.

**CALLING ALL COOKS – March for Life Chili Dinner Support (1/23).** We need a combination of 20+ crockpots of chili, soup, and mac & cheese to feed the 3 busloads/165 parishioners attending the March for Life. Rolls, cookies, fruit and veggies, as well as kitchen helpers are needed too. Please sign up to contribute your crockpot specialty. Then drop it off **before the 10:30 Mass or after 3:00 pm** on the date of the March to help welcome the hungry marchers home. You are welcome to enjoy the dinner too as **you don't have to march to be a part of the March for Life team!** If you cannot stay, please pick up your crockpot by 7:00 pm. Sign up via the parish website, or <https://tinyurl.com/2026M4LChili>



**THE FULLNESS OF KNIGHTHOOD:** Join the Knights! Your very own St. John Bosco Council #12846 has just been awarded the prestigious **STAR COUNCIL** and received the distinguished **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? Our Knights do everything from supporting life to staying informed on important topics, organizing parish dinners, sponsoring seminarians, recognizing outstanding youth, and supporting Special Olympics—you name it! Magnify your impact by joining us! Grab a Knight after Mass and ask him the benefits of becoming a Knight! Knights today stand intractably for their **FAITH**, their **FAMILIES**, and their **COUNTRY**. Don't compromise; **join the Knights!** 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. 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:

#### JANUARY

23 MARCH FOR LIFE @ Washington DC (10:00am Mass at St. Raymond's, busses depart immediately afterwards)  
 24-25 Polar Plunge (Fairfax VA - Mosaic)  
 24 Car Raffle Envelope Stuffing, Parish Hall 9am to 1 pm.  
 31 Knights' Mass and Fellowship/Family Night Reception (5pm Mass and Dinner Parish Hall)

**St. Raymond's 2026 Snow Team:** Your Parish needs your HELP! St. Raymond's is seeking industrious, cold weather loving, able-bodied people to join the 2026 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.

The Secular Carmelite Community of Thérèse of the Child Jesus offers a **Day of Recollection at Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Annandale VA, February 28, 2026** from 8:30am - 1pm. Br. Nathanael of Jesus, OCD will speak on "**Your strength will lie in silence and hope**"- **Marian asceticism with St John of the Cross**. \$20 per person (cash or check) will be collected at the door. Registration begins at 8:30am, 9am Mass followed by light refreshments, 10am first talk, 11am Holy Hour with Confession, 12pm second talk with Q&A. For more information contact Suzanne at [skoucheravy56@gmail.com](mailto:skoucheravy56@gmail.com) or Veronica at [veronicaroyal@icloud.com](mailto:veronicaroyal@icloud.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.

**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 January!** All are invited to attend.

#### SAINT RAYMOND RESPECT LIFE



**Life is a Gift!** Join us for the **National March for Life**. Friday 23 January. St Raymond's will send three buses. Sign-ups and the schedule are in the narthex. There is no charge for parishioners to ride the bus, but you must reserve your seat! Come back to the parish for the best Chili Dinner and fellowship ever!

**The Virginia General Assembly will be in session from 14 Jan – 14 March. Please pray in reparation for anti-life legislation. Refer to the purple cards in the pews.** "Pray ... for our leaders, and for all those in power, even for those who persecute you and hate you, and for those who are enemies of the cross." *St Polycarp, bishop and martyr*

Whether in person, by phone, email or regular mail, we are all urged to contact our representatives in Richmond to politely voice our opposition to any support of the proposed abortion amendment in Virginia. Otherwise, '**Silence implies consent!**' [whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov](http://whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov).

**Wrapped In Love** is up and stitching. Would you like to participate but need yarn? **We have yarn to share!** Contact Liz at [hildebrandseven@gmail.com](mailto:hildebrandseven@gmail.com). Pray 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 MaRH collection box in the narthex. Thank you!

**MaRH 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.**

Do you need counsel for a real life (not theoretical) beginning or end of life ethical issue? Contact the **National Catholic Bioethics Center** for a free consultation. [www.ncbcenter.org/ask-a-question](http://www.ncbcenter.org/ask-a-question)

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).

#### 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** 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](http://www.helpafterabortion.org).

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](http://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.

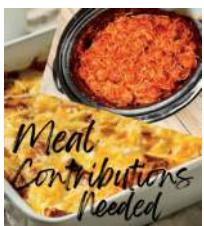
## St. Raymond's Youth Apostolate



### Steubenville Youth Conference : July 16-19, 2026

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/STEUBENVILLE> or on YA bulletin boards by the church entrances.



#### Meal Contributions Needed:

Are you able to contribute some snacks or heavy hors d'oeuvres one Sunday evening for our high school youth group to enjoy? Details online at <https://bit.ly/feedthehungryteens>

We are also looking for folks who would be willing to contribute a breakfast casserole or other meatless dish one Friday this semester. More details at <https://bit.ly/breakfastfriday>

### 1/18/25 NO Youth Group or Religious Ed. due to MLK Holiday

### 1/25: High School Youth Group (Parish Hall)

5:6:30pm Religious Ed

6:30-8pm High School Youth Group (*Talent show!*)

### Tues. January 20: Sons of Thunder HS Guys' Group

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

**Fri. Jan 23: March for Life** St. Raymond's Youth Apostolate will be joining the parish for the annual March for Life on Friday, January 23. **Parents are encouraged to join us**, however, if any **7-12th graders** would like to go but do not have parents going, please come with the youth apostolate! We will march with the parish, helping to carry our banner. **Permission slips** found at <http://bit.ly/YAforms> are due 1/20!

### Friday, January 30: 6:30am Mass & Breakfast

**Calling all 7-12th Graders:** Add Mass before class as a part of your Friday sacrifice, then come downstairs for breakfast with Fr. Bergida & Fr. Horkan before school! Please RSVP at <https://bit.ly/FRIDAYRSVPs> if possible.

**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!

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

There are **NO CCD CLASSES THIS WEEK** January 18 and 19 in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. Our Second Semester begins on January 25 and 26!

**2026 Confirmation candidates (8th grade)** Service Hours Record form and Service Experience forms were **due January 8th**. Please email forms or drop off a hard copy ASAP.

**Parents of Students who are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Penance** for the first time on **Saturday, February 7th**: be sure you have turned in the **First Holy Communion Registry form and Certificates of Birth and Baptism to the RE Office** - they were due in December! Watch email for more information.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:jmayer9014@aol.com), or 703-627-7320.

**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.

**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](mailto: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.

**St. Martin de Porres Committee** - collects food on an ongoing basis for the Springfield Resource Center, which serves over 250 families in the Springfield area. A collection box is in the Narthex and donations are collected and distributed weekly. Suggested food items are listed, but all donations are welcome (no clothing). For equitable distribution, smaller packaging is requested ( i.e. 1 lb bags of rice vs. 5 lb. bags, 1 qt. oil vs. 1 gal oil).

**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!

**St. Raymond's Pre-Lenten Retreat** led by the Women's Apostolate to Youth (WAY) will be on February 14, 2026 from 8:30 am- 1:30pm. **No cost to attend but you must register by Monday, Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>**. See our website for more information and to register. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

**CHURCH PERSECUTED**

This past Tuesday may be the beginning of the end of the foolishness which has corrupted women's sports for the past decade. The U.S. Supreme Court entertained oral arguments in two of the most important cases of this term, *West Virginia v. B.P.J.* and *Hecox v. Little*. The details are simple. West Virginia and Idaho have passed laws which keep males who claim to be female from taking part in women's sports.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand there is a biological and physiological difference between men and women. In December, the top women's tennis player in the world lost to the 671<sup>st</sup> ranked men's tennis player in the world 6-3 and 6-3. The woman served and volleyed onto a double court (about 10 percent wider than a singles court). The male had only been allowed one serve, instead of the customary two; and he still won in straight sets. In 2017, in a study of men who ran the 440-meter dash, thousands ran that distance faster than the personal best times of the reigning woman's gold medal winner. There is a biological difference between men and women.

It is also interesting to see who has lined up to support women athletes and who has lined up to oppose them by allowing biological males to participate in women's sports.

This is more than just playing in athletic competitions. It is about sharing locker rooms, sharing hotel rooms when traveling as a team, and sharing bath and shower facilities. It is also taking away well-deserved medals from women who are displaced because of a biological male. We all have heard of the biological male from the University of Pennsylvania, who won a Women's swimming gold medal at the NCAA Championships. A male athlete took first place in the women's mile at the 2020 NCAA Big Sky Conference championships. In both of these cases, the biological male kept a biological female from claiming all conference or all-American recognition.

The moral landscape is changing. There are now 27 states who have laws which keep males who claim to be female from taking part in women's sports. The International Olympic and Paralympic Committee has now banned the practice. We hope and pray that the Court will clear up this illogical nonsense with a clear ruling on the case most likely to be made public in June.



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Email Julie Maimone, Director of Admissions, at [Admissions@angelusacademy.org](mailto:Admissions@angelusacademy.org) for more information.

We are now accepting applications for 2026-27. Visit [angelusacademy.org/admissions-overview/applying/](http://angelusacademy.org/admissions-overview/applying/).

**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](mailto:office@straymonds.org) to verify your email address.**

**Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School – Gala & Auction "A Legacy of Life."** Join us on Saturday, February 7, 2026, for an engaging evening with a delicious buffet dinner, dancing, and presentation by Andrea Picciotti-Bayer, a nationally renowned speaker, highlighting the profound impact John Paul is having in our local community and beyond. The night will also include both live and silent auctions—all in support of Catholic education. For information on how to support John Paul, visit: <https://onecau.se/johnpaulgala>. We look forward to celebrating with you!

**John Paul the Great Clinics & Workshops - 4th-8th grades!** Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School has a few exciting opportunities for younger students to hone their skills and explore their interests! **Drama Workshop** (Sat, Feb 7th), **Super Science Saturday** (Sat, Feb 28th), **Girls Volleyball Clinic** (Sat, Mar 28th), **Boys Wrestling Camp** is back (ongoing - end of January), and more on the way! Click here to start your registration: <https://saintjohnpaul.mypaysimple.com/s/middle-school-event-registration>

**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

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