- *"With older children having gone through public high school, we became aware of FCPS policies that are in direct conflict with our Catholic beliefs even promising disciplinary action for students who don't conform to these lies. Feeling the need to intervene so our youngest would not come to accept these as "the norm", we enrolled him in Catholic high school. We are most grateful that the OLORS fund has been available to help defray the cost of high school tuition... Our son's thrived academically and we're relieved to know he won't be barraged with curricula and activist staff agendas contrary to our values." -B.C. (Mom)*

- *"We are immensely grateful for the opportunity to send our children to Catholic schools and the support of …the parish community through the OLOR Scholarship. We value the faith education and Catholic environment that these schools provide for our children and can attest to the deeper faith and spiritual development that we regularly witness from them which exceeds where we were in our faith at their ages. We …express our sincere appreciation to the parishioners who have contributed to the scholarship fund to assist families like ours." - J.H. (Mom)*

- *"I'm very happy to have a scholarship to Angelus Academy because I don't have to learn about LGBTQ. Instead, I am learning things like my faith, Latin, history and science…At my other schools, I didn't feel like I belonged because I was Catholic. At Angelus, I feel accepted and I have friends that have the same beliefs as I do. I don't have to worry about people getting angry at me for having my beliefs." T.M. (rising 6th grader)*

- *"After attending many secular schools…I have come to better appreciate my faith as a young Catholic woman. I am grateful for my scholarship because this school has educated me about the world in the context of my Catholic faith. I can translate that into my daily life. I enjoy the community of my fellow students and the emphasis on understanding WHY we believe what we believe as Catholics. I'm prepared to go to college with a firmer foundation. Thank you for supporting my Catholic education!" (S.M. rising Senior)*

- *"Last school year was truly wonderful, as our boys' daily education was actually supporting our values at home, and the quality of their education was also very strong. Thank you for helping to make this happen!" N.S. and M.S (Dad and Mom)*

- *"Raising a large family in Northern Virginia is no small feat. Doing so on a single income and with $20,000 (or more!) in Catholic school tuition is nearly impossible. The assistance our family has received through the OLOR scholarship fund has been a tremendous blessing, allowing us to provide our children with a solid grounding in the faith… The ever-increasing tuition is something we can afford only through the help we receive through the fund. Many thanks." -J.R and T.R. (Mom and Dad)*

- *"Learning and making friends has always been a struggle for our son. During the pandemic, the struggle became even more difficult. …[T]he "OLOR scholarship …offered for entering private schools… was such an amazing gift! It not only helped us financially, but also helped our son academically and spiritually in ways we never imagined. When he first entered, he was three years behind the other children in his grade academically. Angelus Academy staff provided special help to bring him up to grade-level with his peers. He soon had lots of new and genuine friends. He is now entering Saint John Paul the Great [High School] …[T]he OLOR Scholarship …is something we will always appreciate!" S.R. and S.R. (Mom and Dad)*

- *"During the Covid lockdowns we saw firsthand what was happening in the FCPS classrooms, and desperately wanted to get our oldest child out and into Catholic school. But because we also have a child with special needs, we just don't have the means to cover private school tuition. We are truly grateful for the OLOR Scholarship, without which my child would not have the opportunity to attend Catholic School. God bless …all the donors to the OLOR Scholarship Fund." -H.R. (Mom)*

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Our Lady of Ransom Scholarship Fund

St. Raymond of Peñafort Catholic Church

Springfield, VA

Rev. John C. De Celles, Pastor

A Note From the Pastor.

It is obvious to faithful Catholics that our public government run schools are a mess, as they increase their efforts to indoctrinate and recruit our children into bizarre ideological, moral and political belief and lifestyles which are in direct opposition to the Christian Faith. Often we find teachers and curricula, overtly or covertly, but often directly attempting to turn children against the values and priorities of their parents, country and Church. We have to protect our children from this corruption and child abuse.

But what choice do parents have? They need to provide an education to their kids, but they find themselves faced with few practical alternatives.

Many parents, recognizing the problem, dedicate themselves to trying to offset the nonsense of the schools by aggressively countering these errors at home and in the parish. While this can work for some parents, I don't think it works for most: it takes a lot of effort, knowledge and hard work to offset the indoctrination forced on them by their teachers and peers.

Something must be done. The best alternatives are to put your kids in Catholic schools or to homeschool. We need to be creative—we need to think outside the box. For the love of Christ, and the love of our kids.

Scholarships. For me, as Pastor of St. Raymond's, I've concluded that the most concrete thing I and my parishioners can do is to **offer scholarships to Catholic schools** to our parish families, as well as aid to homeschooling families.

So in June of 2021 I began what we call the **"Our Lady of Ransom Scholarship Fund,"** remembering the story depicted in the mural in our church of Our Lady appearing to St. Raymond, asking him to help found a religious order (The "Mercedarians"). This new order would organize the ransom of Christians who had been kidnapped (usually onboard ships) by Moorish raiders and either held for ransom or forced into slavery or to renounce their Catholic faith. The Mercedarians were to do this either by raising funds, negotiating or by offering themselves in exchange for their captured Christian brothers and sisters.

How similar this is to our situation today. We need to do everything we can to free our children from those who seek to enslave and convert them to the strange ideology of the radical left, call it Wokism, Marxism, or Secularism.

Scholarships Awards. The OLOR Scholarship Fund awards assistance to all qualified parishioners of St. Raymond's who attend Catholic schools: $1,000 for grade school and $2000 for high school, renewable every year, and subject only to minimal qualification terms.

We also offer to double those amounts ($2,000 grade school, $4000 high school) for each child (a parishioner) who switches from public school (k-12) to Catholic school (this is a one-time first-year amount, reverting to the regular amounts in the following years).

Also, additional financial aid is available if a family truly can't afford Catholic school, even with the above scholarships. These decisions are made on a case by case basis.

Finally, **similar financial assistance** to cover direct educational costs is also available **to folks who homeschool.**

The OLORS Fund. Since its establishment in June 2021 through June 2023 the OLOR Scholarship Fund has provided $536,564 in scholarships to the children of our parish families, making it possible for them to attend Catholic schools or homeschool. Last year we assisted 121 students, and have helped move at least 24 children out of government schools and into Catholic schools or home school.

We've been able to do all this due to the generous donations of over 280 donors and several special collections in the parish, totaling, to date, $500,364.

Donations. The OLORS Fund is a ministry of St. Raymond's Parish. Donations to the Fund are dedicated (guaranteed) to go to these scholarships. I am willing to use parish's regular operating funds if necessary to protect our children, but, thanks be to God, 93% of the money for scholarships has come from the donations given to the OLORS Fund. So, please consider making a donation to support this ongoing effort.

Testimonials. Here are what some of our scholarship families have to say:

- *"We are a military family who moved to the area in 2021 after living overseas for four years. To say we were unprepared for the culture of the Fairfax County public schools is an understatement. Thanks to the generosity of those who contributed to the Our Lady of Ransom Scholarship, we were able to move all three of our school-age children to Catholic schools where their minds and souls are nourished. This has been an incredible blessing for our family, and we are eternally grateful for the support we have received from the parish in this regard." -M.B. (Mom)*

- *"My wife was homeschooling some of our children during Covid to help bring costs down but a serious medical event made that very difficult for us moving forward. With 5 kids in Catholic schools these scholarships have been essential to our family's ability to afford the cost. Our two oldest are starting to plan their next steps and both are considering strong Catholic universities on the Newman list. We are thankful for the strong catechesis we have been able to provide them due in large part to these scholarships." -J.C. (Dad)*

How to Donate. You can make a check out to "St. Raymond's" and write "OLOR Scholarship Fund" or "Scholarships" on it. Checks can be mailed in or dropped in the collection basket at Sunday Mass. You may also give a donation online through Faith Direct, which you can access on our website. Or call or email the parish office for assistance.

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