



## 6400 Nativity Lane, Burke, Virginia 22015 nativityburke.org

REV. ROBERT C. CILINSKI, PASTOR

REV. EDWARD BRESNAHAN, PAROCHIAL VICAR

REV. JONATHAN BENNETT, PAROCHIAL VICAR

REV. CEDRIC P. WILSON, ASSISTING PRIEST/

SPANISH MINISTRY DEC. RICHARD F. KELLY

### SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES OF THE PARISH:

Adrienne Swidal, Parish Secretary Ann Benson, Business Manager Carlos Gutierrez, Facility Manager Cat Sands, Pastoral Minister Maureen Andersen, Liturgical Minister Johana Brown, Parish Receptionist Anna Marty, Receptionist/Baptism Coordinator Caroline Chase, Receptionist/Bulletin Editor Ayse Kenner, Mass Intentions Alison Fram, Director of Young Adult & Family Ministries/College Ministry Rebecca Judge, Director of Youth Ministry Mary Castellano, Director of Social Media Anna Lisa Licud, Coordinator Marriage Enrichment Carole Fischl, Co-director of Music Debbie Doyle, Co-director of Music Mai Tran, Traditional Choir Director Sara Prince, Youth Choir Director/Cornerstone Choir Natacha Hines, Gift Shop

#### MINISTERS OF OUR SCHOOL:

Maria Kelly, Principal
Richard Godwin, Assistant Principal
Jen Behan, Preschool Director/Extended Care Director
Shannon Murphy, Administrative Assistant/Registrar
Kim Vu, Business Manager
Mary Helen Chapman, School Secretary

#### MINISTERS OF OUR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:

Sister Donatella Merulla, A.R., M.R.E. Sister Mary Attilia Todaro, A.R., M.R.E. Maria Ammirati, Religious Education Coordinator Fania Jimenez, Administrative Assistant

### CATHOLIC CHARITIES COUNSELOR

Marguerite Turner, MS, LPC (703) 454-2415



PARISH OFFICE: (703) 455-2400
PARISH FAX: (703) 455-6832
NATIVITY SCHOOL: (703) 455-2300
NATIVITY FAX: (703) 569-8109
PRE-SCHOOL: (703) 455-2300 est. 136
CCD OFFICE: (703) 455-0372
CCD OFFICE FAX: (703) 455-6832

SUNDAY MASSES: 5:00 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass

7:00 p.m. Vigil Mass in Spanish 7:00 a.m./9:00 a.m./11:00 a.m./

1:00 p.m./5:30 p.m.

WEEKDAY MASSES: 7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday

12:00 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday

9:00 a.m. on Saturday

HOLY DAY MASSES: As Announced

RECONCILIATION: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Saturday

or, if necessary, by appointment

BAPTISM: For more information and how to schedule a baptism, please visit our website: https://nativityburke.org/baptism/

MARRIAGE POLICY: Please contact the Church as soon as you are engaged, and at least six months prior to your wedding date.

BULLETIN DEADLINE: Announcements for the bulletin must be submitted in writing by 9:00 AM on Tuesday (5 days prior to publication). Please note: this

You may email submissions to bulletin@nativityburke.org.

#### WEBMASTER:

Emilia Hartline, webmaster@nativityburke.org

#### SOCIAL MEDIA:

Mary Castellano, socialmedia@nativityburke.org

Assisted hearing devices are available from the Sacristy staff at all services

## A Message from our Pastor Fr. Bob Cilinski



"Brothers and sisters, whatever you do, do for the glory of God" - 1 Cor. 10:31

My dear parishioners,

This Wednesday we begin the season of Lent. Together we will mark a new beginning of growing in selfless love of God and neighbor. Our actions of prayer, fasting and good works will make our hearts more loving.

There is a tradition at Nativity of placing a large basket in the vestibule of the church during Lent for, as Fr. Martin used to say, "our spare change." We will once again do this and any coins or currency placed in the basket will be shared with Operation Starfish and Catholic Relief Services. Both of these organizations work closely together on many projects.

The major Operation Starfish collection will take place this year on the Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 5, 2024. There will be a second collection on that Sunday at all the Masses. May 3rd marks the tenth anniversary of Fr. Martin's return to God. The parish leadership and the coordinators of Operation Starfish agreed that there is no better way to honor and celebrate Fr. Martin's priesthood and ministry among us than to support Operation Starfish which was so dear to his heart. This annual Starfish collection to build homes in Haiti with Food For the Poor now takes place in the Easter season on the Sunday closest to Fr. Martin's anniversary of his death.

As we begin the season of Lent, let us be reminded that the smallest gesture of kindness can make a big difference in someone's life. Below you will find a letter that Fr. Ready, our founding pastor, took the time to write to a child when he was pastor at Nativity. The child's name has been changed to keep it anonymous, but you might know who the child was if she was in your family. It is a beautiful letter and response.

Father Frank Ready died in 2015. Among his personal mementos that he kept was an envelope with a letter in it, along with his response. The envelope and letter were written in the handwriting of a child. I share with you his story, with the name changed. Fr. Ready was Pastor of Nativity Parish in Burke, at the time. The envelope was addressed and had a 13 cent First Class stamp: God In Heaven, 0000 Heaven Ave., Heaven Hn. 00000

The letter from "Susie" is as follows: Saturday 1-31-76. Please Circle.

Dear God,

Can you please make me be magic? Yes or No. When do you think we can get a dog? This Year or Next year. Do think my teachers won't give me so much work and be so picky? Yes or No. Do you think my mother will have another baby? Yes or No. Don't I have the nicest family in the universe? Yes or No. Is this letter really going to God? Yes or no. Love, "Susie"

P.S. Send this letter back by circling.

On parish letterhead from Nativity Parish, Fr. Ready wrote a response.

25 March 1976

Dear Susie,

Thank you for your letter to God, written the last day of January. I am sure that you will not mind if I help God answer this letter, since I am right here in your parish and have the paper, envelopes, and stamps right at hand.

You asked if you could be made magic. You might not think so but God has given you something that is more special than magic when he made you just the way you are. To Him you have all the magic just being yourself and loving Him and those about you.

When you asked about getting a dog this year or next, I believe you asked the wrong question. The question should be: Am I ready to be able to take care of a dog so that he will grow strong and happy. And, is the house I live in the right place for a dog. The best judge of this will be your parents.

Homework is usually meant to do two things. First, it is meant to help us learn how to practice something we have just learned. Second, it is something to help us grow confident that we can use this new skill. I believe our teachers would be unfair if they didn't make homework somewhat difficult and care enough about us to be sure that it was done the best way we know how.

God keeps many secrets strictly to Himself. One of those is whether He will bless a family with a new baby. We must let God have secrets, just as you and I have secrets. I am sure that God would agree that you do have one of the nicest families in the universe and He will be pleased if you thank Him for giving you such a special gift.

It is time for me to close this letter. I hope you will continue to grow in your love for God and for those about you. Sincerely in Christ.

Father Ready, Your Pastor

Happy Lent!

K. Buh Cilinshi: Fr. Bob Cilinski, Pastor

## PEACE AND JUSTICE CONFERENCE

## NATIVITY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Entrepreneurship at the Service of the Human Person: Celebrating the Dignity of Work

> When: Saturday, March 9 Where: Nativity Catholic Church

#### Schedule

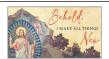
5:00 pm — Mass with Bishop Michael F. Burbidge 6:00 pm - Dinner 7:00 pm - Keynote address 8:00-8:30pm — Questions and answers



JOIN BISHOP MICHAEL BURBIDGE AND LEARN FROM FORMER SWISS GUARD, MENTOR, AUTHOR. AND BUSINESS ENTREPRENEUR ANDREAS WIDMER, FROM THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA, HOW EMBRACING CREATIVITY AND THE SPIRIT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP CELEBRATES THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND HELPS US - AND OUR NEIGHBORS - THRIVE.

#### TO REGISTER VISIT:

https://nativityburke.org/peace-justice-conference/



2024 Bishop's Lenten Appeal "Behold, I make all things new"

This weekend each household is asked to make a BLA pledge or gift. This appeal provides an opportunity to unite as a Catholic family to support programs, ministries and services helping



SCAN ME

tens of thousands of people. After reflecting upon God's blessings to you, please consider a pledge to the BLA. Each donation is vital to the success of the appeal and the important work that it funds. You may complete a pledge card at Mass, mail in your pledge, go online to www.arlingtondiocese.org/BLA or scan the QR code to make a gift.

## APPALACHIA HOME BUILDING UPDATE

We want to thank the Nativity Family for the tremendous outpouring of support to build Nativity's 26th home in the heart of Appalachia. After our collection weekend, we are now at \$117,136.05 towards our goal of \$110,000!

Donations can still be made either through electronic giving or mailing directly to the office at 6400 Nativity Lane, Burke, VA, 22015. Please make checks out to Nativity Parish and annotate on your check that it is for the Appalachia Home Building project and include your envelope number for ease of posting to your account. Any questions, contact Bob Corsi at bobcorsi@cox.net. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



in English and in Spanish



Ash Wednesday is February 14th. It is a day of fast and abstinence. Catholics 14 years of age and older are obliged to abstain from meat and those 18-59 are obliged to fast (1 full meal and 2 smaller ones to maintain strength) unless medical or serious reasons exist.

> All Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence, Good Friday is a day of fast and abstinence.



**Celebrate National** Marriage Week: "Love Beyond Words" February 7-14, 2024

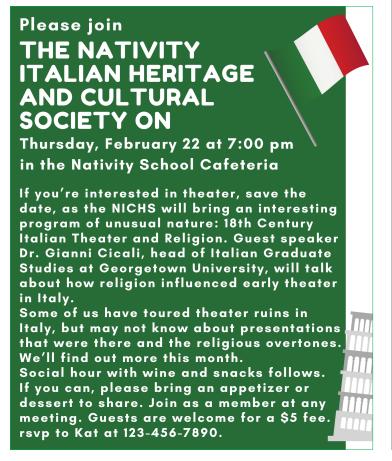
Marriages will be blessed at Mass on Saturday, February 10th at 5:00pm & 7:00pm and the Sunday, February 11th Masses



### Rosary Ministry - help wanted: Can you count to 10???

Please join us for our monthly meeting Sunday, February 18th from 2:00pm-3:30pm in the Father Ready room. This will be our "Bead Party." Please bring all your extra beads and we will make colorful rosaries with everyone's extra beads.

Hope to see you there! Keep praying the rosary!!





## A Message from the Nativity Creation Care Ministry

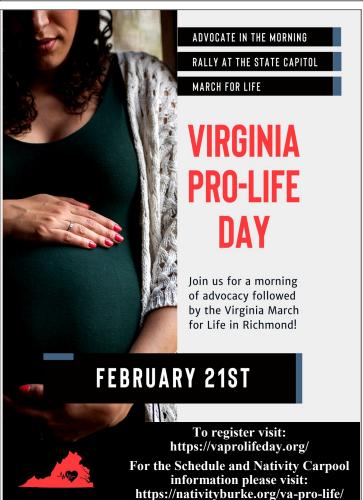
Lent is a time of preparation for Easter and the celebration of the Paschal Mystery. During this time of fasting and renewal, we are reminded of who we are, creatures completely dependent on God called to live in love and compassion with all God's creation.

Soil under our feet goes unnoticed, though this first foot of soil is where most living organisms dwell. The health of the fragile skin of our earth is of utmost importance. Soil is rich and fertile but also prone to erosion and pollution.

Humility comes from the Latin word for soil, "humus." From and unto dust is the humbling message to each of us touched by the dust of Ash Wednesday.

This Lent, we invite you to join us as we continue our journey of ecological conversion in a Creation Care Fast. Could you fast from energy waste, fast from meat (eat more plant-based meals), fast from plastics, fast from food waste, fast from water waste, or fast from buying or over-consumption? Each week, we will focus on one of these fasts.

"Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it." (Laudato S I #19)





Dancing Through the Decades (50s-80s) | April 27, 2024

#### SPONSORSHIP & DONATION REQUESTS!

Sponsorship & advertising are an essential part of our annual event! It is a great way to build exposure for a business throughout our school community. We recognize all sponsors on our event website, gala program, and social media platforms. We'd love to showcase an auction item donated by YOU! Please consider making an item donation to the auction. Some ideas include:

- Restaurant gift cards
- Performing arts/Sporting tickets
- Personal services
- Collectibles
- Spa gift cards
- Vacation home rental (week or weekend), etc.





### Catholic Charities Education and Workforce Development Health Care Career Launchpad - 18-week class in Manassas

Explore clinical and non-clinical healthcare. Gain insight on different career pathways, learn basic computer skills, learn medical terminology, and obtain assistance with job skills such as resume writing and job searching. To learn more:

(571) 208-1572 or ewd@ccda.net.



## National Eucharistic Congress Indianapolis, Indiana from July 17-21, 2024

It can be hard to live our Catholic faith out in the world. Being a disciple is counter-cultural. But that doesn't mean you have to do it alone!

From July 17th to the 21st, our parish will join thousands of our brothers and sisters from all across the country in Indianapolis for the Catholic experience of the decade. This unique gathering is called the 10th National Eucharistic Congress, and this is a historic moment because the Church in America has not gathered in this way in 83 years.

Participants at the Congress will experience Christ in a powerful way and return home to Nativity refreshed, healed, and filled with so much grace that it will overflow into our community. The Congress will launch us into an exciting Year of Mission as a Church, and we are hopeful many of you will make the trip and bring back some of that holy fire.

Don't miss this incredible opportunity to be part of a historic moment in the life of the Church. Register online at Eucharistic-Congress.org, or contact our parish office for more information about registering with your fellow parishioners.



## MASS INTENTIONS "We are God's People" 1 Peter 2:10

Monday, February 12th

7:30 am Special Int. for Danilo Dizon

Tuesday, February 13th

7:30 am † Mike Malachowski 12:00 pm † Peter Kornylo

Wednesday, February 14th

6:00 am Parishioners

7:30 am † Rose and George Merulla

9:00 am (school) † Alfonso P. Rivera 12:00 pm † Ramon Vega

4:00 pm † Raymond C. Lemanski

6:00 pm † Anna Slyman

8:00pm (bilingual)† Cosme Manuel Rosal Jr.

Thursday, February 15th

7:30 am Special Int. for Ayden Flowers

12:00 pm † Victor A. Calder

Friday, February 16th

7:30 am † Eddie Summers

Saturday, February 17th

9:00 am Special Int. for Theresa Bresnahan

5:00 pm † Richard Dorwaldt

7:00 pm Special Int. for Carlos Gutierrez & Family

Sunday, February 18th

7:00 am † Denetta Marie McCarthy

9:00 am † Michael Oates

11:00 am Special Int. for Ava Bresnahan

1:00 pm † Jon Robles 5:30 pm Parishioners

> In prayer, let us remember the sick and deceased of the parish visit nativityburke.org for the Priest Mass Schedule

Holy Spirit Catholic Church is pleased to announce a new ministry that will bring hope and healing to those who have experienced the pain and loneliness of a broken marriage. The 12-week Surviving Divorce program begins on Tuesday, April 16 at 7:30 pm. This program is for the newly separated and divorced and those still struggling with issues many years later. It will help them find answers to their questions, restore their hope, and begin authentic healing. For additional information or to enroll in the program, please

contact divorcedministry@holyspiritchurch.us.

## Healing Mass and Prayer Service at Nativity Tuesday, February 27th at 7:30pm

"Cast all your cares upon Him for He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7)



Join us for the Healing Mass on February 27 at Nativity Catholic Church. Our priests and prayer ministers look forward to seeing you there! "For I am the Lord who heals you." (Exodus 15:26)

#### 33 Days to Greater Glory



Save the Date – February 27th! Come and see! Join us on a spiritual journey to more deeply experience God the Father's Love, as Jesus experienced it. 33 Days to Greater Glory is a Fr. Gaitley, MIC, retreat focused on St. John's Gospel that prepares us for consecration to God the Father.

The program features six Zoom meetings on Tuesday evenings 7:45 to 9:00 PM beginning February 27th. The program concludes with a total consecration to God the Father on April 7. For more information and to register, visit the Nativity website: https://nativityburke.org/33-day-retreat/ or contact: Marcelo Michel at 33DayConsecration@nativityburke.org.

## In Mary's Footsteps - A Group for Widows

Our next meeting will be on Monday, February 12th at 11:00am in the training room in back of the church. We join together in fellowship as we strive to follow our Blessed Mother's footsteps of strong faith and peace as she did after St. Joseph passed. Our meetings are typically held on the second Monday of the month. We have participated in widows' retreats, dinners out and other field trips. For this meeting which is close to Valentine's Day, please feel free to bring a photo of you and your husband taken on your wedding day. For additional information, contact Cat Sands at csands@nativity burke.org. God bless you!



Advance tickets: Reserve your time slot after Mass THIS weekend. Adults \$11.00 and Children under 12 \$5.00 (Kids Menu)

Tickets at the door: Limited Space will be available (best to reserve a slot!). Adults \$12.00 and Children under 12 \$5.00 (Kids Menu)

For more information:

contact Barry Basselgia bbasselgia@gmail.com

### **Annual Multi-Car Raffle**

HAPPY MARDI GRAS! What better way to celebrate than selling the 20 raffle tickets you received in the mail. Each \$5.00 ticket offers the purchaser a chance to win all four 2024 vehicles from Ourisman Ford of Manassas (Ford Escape, Mustang, Ranger Truck and Bronco Sport) plus \$40,000 in cash prizes. Please ensure to read the entire packet and note that all raffle tickets must be processed by All Saints.

Thank you for your continued, generous support. Please contact PGK Sam Morthland @ 703-455-2186 if you have any questions.



## Statement and Call to Action by Bishop Burbidge and Bishop Knestout on Assisted Suicide Legislation

February 5, 2024

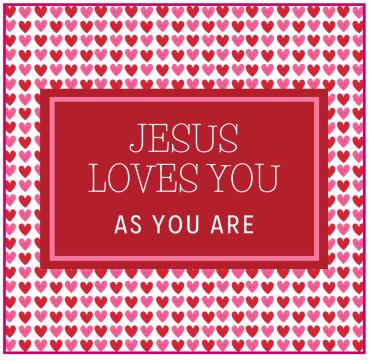
Legislation to legalize physician assisted suicide is moving rapidly in this year's Virginia General Assembly session. The Senate and House have both taken steps to advance this lethal measure. Within the next week, floor debates in one or both chambers are likely to occur.

We are alarmed and deeply saddened by this development. Human life is sacred and must never be abandoned or discarded. At this critical moment, we implore the faithful across our two dioceses: Please contact your state Senator and Delegate. Urge them to reject assisted suicide legislation, using the alert provided by the Virginia Catholic Conference. To access the alert, visit: https://vacatholic.org/action-center/?vvsrc=/Campaigns/110256/Respond

Every suicide is a tragedy. Assisted suicide facilitates tragedies and makes the most vulnerable even more vulnerable. Legalizing it would place the lives of people with disabilities, people with mental illnesses, the elderly, and those unable to afford healthcare - among others - at heightened risk of deadly harm. In the few states where assisted suicide is legal, this troubling reality has already taken root. For example, insurance companies have denied coverage for cancer treatment and other life-saving procedures but offered to pay for cheaper suicide drugs instead. And in Oregon, only 3.3% of the patients who died by assisted suicide since its legalization in 1998 were referred for psychiatric evaluation.

People facing the end of life are in great need, and must be accompanied with great care and attentiveness. To address each of their needs and alleviate their suffering, patients deserve high quality medical, palliative, and hospice care - not suicide drugs. Please tell the members of the Virginia General Assembly who represent you not to bring assisted suicide to our Commonwealth.





Interested in advertising in the bulletin? Call Mike Jurosky at 717-648-5996 or email: mjurosky@diocesan.com



#### OKDER OF MALIA

Federal Association U.S.A. Northern Virginia Region

Cordially invites Individuals (and Companions) with illness or physical / mental challenges to attend

## Mass and Anointing of the $oldsymbol{S}$ ick

Principal Celebrant
The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Arlington

SAINT AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH 3901 Woodburn Road & Annandale, Virginia 22003 Saturday, March 16, 2024

Please arrive NLT 10:30 am to allow adequate time for parking and seating

Please RSVP to Brian Newsome, KM nova.malta.mass@gmail.com [Telephone: 323-505-8846]

PLEASE PROVIDE:

NAME(s) of those attending the Mass
DIETARY RESTRICTIONS for the Luncheon following the Mass
CONTACT EMAIL ADDRESS OF TELEPHONE NUMBER

Immediately following the Mass, the Order will host a Light Luncheon in Saint Ambrose Parish Hall Candidates, Dames, and Knights of the Order of Malta will provide and collect prayer petitions to be taken to Lourdes in May





#### Women's Cursillo!

The next women's Cursillo weekend will be held at Missionhurst in Arlington from Thursday, March 14 – Sunday, March 17.

Cursillo (pronounced Cur-see-yo) is a movement of the Catholic Church that provides an opportunity to experience God's love within a community of joyful fun and supportive prayer. The weekend is designed to promote Catholic ideals, fellowship, and spiritual growth in daily living. We'd love to have you join us!! For more information, please contact Laura Laverdiere at lauralaverdiere@msn.com. There are also Cursillo information cards in the information rack in the narthex.

Applications, and more information are available online at: https://www.arlingtoncursillo.org/.



## THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS



## Heartfelt Thanks for Your Support!

The Handmaids of Reparation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus extend their sincere gratitude to all our generous supporters for contributing towards the Advent Project. Thank you to our Session 5 - 7th-grade class and teachers for organizing and creating the bake sale fundraiser! Your support, no matter the amount, is making a significant impact on the lives of our children and Sisters worldwide.

Together, we spread love, hope, and compassion to those in need.

Your kindness empowers us to continue our mission,
and for that, we are truly grateful.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for being a part of our community.

Your support inspires us and others to make a positive difference.

With sincere appreciation,

Sister Donatella Merulla, Sister Mary Attilia and all the Sisters of the:

#### Handmaids of Reparation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ORDER AND OUR MISSIONS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE:



HANDMAIDSOFREPARATION.ORG



## Join the Knights!

Do you want to make a difference as a Catholic Gentleman? Then join the Knights of Columbus! Visit https://info.kofc.org/us.html and enter our council #7992 for local information and to register.



## Support Our Seminarians Help Build the Future of Our Diocese Make Your Gift Today!



Mail your check made out to: Foundation for CDA-SEEF 200 N. Glebe Rd., Suite 811 Arlington, VA 22203

CONTACT: John French . john.french@arlingtondiocese.org

To make a gift online: https://arlingtondiocese.org/Donate\_SEEF

## Love working with children? Want flexibility? Consider subbing at Nativity School... Please Join Us!

We are in need of substitute teachers with the following minimum qualifications:

- 2-plus years of college
- Ability to follow a lesson plan and give effective instructions in the absence of the teacher
- Proficiency in maintaining effective classroom management skills
- Diocesan-compliant and Successful background check Contact Mrs. Shannon Murphy, our Registrar, for more information, at (703)455-2300 and/or smurph@nativityschool.org.

#### NEED TO TALK?

Catholic Charities provides quality mental health services & counselors grounded in a Catholic understanding of the human person. "Nativity's Counselor" Ms. Marguerite Turner, MS, LPC visits Nativity to counsel clients in-person on Thursdays from 10:00am-6:00pm. She is available to talk with any parishioners who may be struggling.

To set up an appointment, please contact Marguerite at 703-454-2415 or mmturner@ccda.net.

## NO HANDS BUT YOURS MINISTRY

AN ORIGINAL NATIVITY MINISTRY DOING GOD'S WORK
BY SERVING THOSE LESS FORTUNATE MEMBERS OF HIS FLOCK.
WE WORK DISTRIBUTING FOOD, CLOTHING, AND PERSONAL ITEMS
TO THE POOR AND HOMELESS IN D.C. AND NORTHERN VIRGINIA
EVERY SUNDAY MORNING, RAIN OR SHINE.
FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT THE NATIVITY PARISH WEBSITE
OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN DAILY/SUNDAY

OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN DAILY/SUNDA'
RUNS, PLEASE CONTACT JOHN RUBINO AT:

JOHN.ALBERT.RUBINO@GMAIL.COM.

## In search of

## **VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

## **FOR LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS**

Looking for Volunteer Coordinator to staff Lenten Soup Suppers

#### **Details**

- Suppers from 4:30pm - 7:30pm
- teen and adult volunteers during dinner service and clean up (checklist will be provided)
- Skills: hospitable, able to work with young people, comfort with running events



FEB. 21 | FEB. 28 | MAR. 6 | MAR. 13

Contact Rebecca rjudge@nativityburke.org

The next Prayer Shawl meeting will take place on Monday, February 12th at 9:30 am in the Fr. Ready Room. We would also like to invite anyone who might like to help in our ministry by knitting or crocheting shawls.

If you are a new knitter or crocheter, we have ladies who will be happy to help you get started! Please come join us, contact Bonnie Carpenter at Jim-bonnie@cox.net with any questions.



## YOUTH MINISTR

## LIFE TEEN: GRADES 9-12

DINNER - FELLOWSHIP - PRAYER & FORMATION

Sundays | 6:30-8:30pm

## <u>HIGH SCHOOL SMALL GROUPS</u>

<u>GIRLS:</u> Tuesdays, 7:30-9:00pm, weekly

<u>GUYS:</u> Mondays, 7:00-8:30pm, 2x/month





## **EDGE: GRADES 6-8**

Alternating Sundays | 3:30-5:00pm & Fridays | 7:00-8:30 pm

## WORKCAMP DONATION WEEKEND

### FEBRUARY 24 & 25 - AFTER ALL MASSES

Our high schoolers will be sharing the mission of WorkCamp and collecting donations at all Masses the weekend of February 24 and 25. Thank you for your generosity! Please pray for our teens as we prepare for this week of intentional service & Christian community.

### See website for full schedule

Before attending, please register for the 2023-2024 year of ministry using our free, online forms.





## ALTAR FLOWERS - Donated by



The Bustamante Family In Loving Memory of Our Father Francisco Bustamante

#### 2024 AOH Gaelic Mass

The 45th Annual Gaelic Mass in Honor of St. Patrick will be held on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 7:00pm at St. James Catholic Church, 905 Park Avenue, Falls Church. The Mass is organized and hosted by the Col. John Fitzgerald Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH). Sean O'Riada Mass in its original Gaelic will be celebrated with organ, harp, and chorus accompaniment. The celebrant will be Rev. M. Valentine Keveny from County Mayo, Ireland. A reception will follow. Contact Alex Wilson (ajwilzn@gmail.com) with any questions.



### NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

A Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

nativityschool.org



## Join Us for Our Fun and Faith-Filled Week

It was a week filled with celebration, fun, and faith – welcoming interested families to the school and preparing Mass on Sunday; Monday's Crazy Socks Day, Senior Bingo, and Spelling Bee; Tuesday's Crazy Hat Day and Parent Breakfast/Classroom Visits; Wednesday's Mix n' Match Day, Teacher Lunch, and Middle School Vocations Talks; Thursday's Military & Emergency Personnel Assembly, and Friday's Mass, FREE Student Lunch, and afternoon Fun & Games! I don't think we could have packed any more into our special week!











## Is Your Child Turning 3 By the End of September? We've Got Just The Spot— In Our Classroom!

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Email Jen Behan to schedule a tour of our class-rooms, playground, and lunchroom – and to meet our teachers at jbehan@nativityschool.org. Please bring your child, too – we can't wait to meet you!

## At Nativity, faith fills us. Love lives here. Nativity Stars are filled with the Holy Spirit!

## **Upcoming Dates At-A-Glance!**

February 12 - No School

February 13 - Mardi Gras/Valentine Class Parties

February 14 - Ash Wednesday

February 16 - No School

February 19 - No School - President's Day

February 20 - Spartan's Fundraiser

February 21 - Spartan's Fundraiser

February 23 - 6th Grade Field Trip

February 23 - 2nd Grade Hall of Presidents

February 24 - Confirmation Retreat

Join us at Nativity to see how your child would spend his/her days here - learning, praying, sharing, loving, and laughing. We may be just the school for which you've been searching!

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**Council Meetings** - 1st and 3rd Tuesday. First meeting is a business meeting, the second meeting of the month is devoted to faith formation. Rosary 7:15 PM; meeting at 7:30 PM. Fellowship follows. Meet in the Nativity school cafeteria.

Linktree Universal Sign-up Link - Volunteer for an event! Scroll down to view all events.

https://linktr.ee/fr sikora council 7992.

Nativity Ushers assist at collections - Volunteer for your Mass! Volunteer on Link Tree!

16 February (ticket sales 10 & 11 Feb) Annual Fish Fry - This annual event needs a lot of support to be success-

ful. Volunteer on Link Tree.

21 February Virginia Pro-Life Day - Register at https://vaprolifeday.org/ and contact

RickLoffredo@outlook.com for further details.

**15/16 March St. Patrick's Dinner Dance -** This is a heavy lift, this annual event needs a lot of support to be successful.

22 March (ticket sales 9, 10, 16 & 17 March) Fish Fry - Volunteer on Link Tree.

Food for Others - Volunteer drivers for food distribution to the poor. If you have a truck, SUV or van and can occasionally help deliver to 7 Corners on Thursday evenings or to Springfield on Friday evenings please consider helping. For Thursdays, please contact Br. Mark Sawyer at sawyerkoc7992@verizon.net. For Fridays, please contact Br. Matt Stockburger at mstock w@yahoo.com.

Name Tags - Email Vince Augelli at VaKC23@gmail.com. Sunday Mass Coffee and Cookies - We are providing coffee and cookies following Sunday morning Masses.

Handy Knights Ministry - If you are unable to perform basic maintenance tasks or small repairs in your home due to health or other factors, call the "Handy Knights." Email handyknightsofnativity@gmail.com.

The Fraternal Committee: Brothers helping brothers in need of assistance - Brothers and the families of living and deceased brothers in need of a helping hand, contact Br. John Landy at navyy8@yahoo.com.

**3rd Degree Knights, Grow with 4th Degree** - participate in patriotic activities that promote Catholic citizenship. 4th Degree Assembly meets the second Tuesday of the month in the Nativity school cafeteria: 7:30 pm rosary, 7:45 pm business meeting followed by fellowship. If you are interested, please contact our Faithful Navigator Vince Augelli at fn2996@vakofc.org.

**Join the Knights!** The Knights of Columbus is an international Order of Catholic men who are called to lead with faith, protect our families, serve others, and defend values in a busy changing world. Join today! https://www.kofc.org/joinus.

and experience the Knights free for one year: Enter the Agent Code "CPEREZ", click "Add" and complete the form. Be sure to enter our council #7992 for local information when you register. Please email our Deputy Grand Knight at cokofc7992@gmail.com for more info.

Nativity is a tithing community Giving back a portion of God's blessings in gratitude



Fight Hunger in Our Neighborhoods!

## Cardinal Forest Giant

8320 Old Keene Mill Springfield, VA 22152

Your donation to Stuff the Bus at this location will benefit ECHO.

## Saturday, February 17

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## **Most Requested Items**

If you plan to donate to the Stuff the Bus food drive, please consider giving items from this list. Because the average size of a family seeking food assistance is four people, the sizes indicated are preferred to reduce food spoilage. Additionally, donating items that are high fiber, low sugar and low sodium not only feed hungry people but also contribute to their overall health and wellness.

- Cooking oil
- Corn Flour Maseca
- Bag (dry) beans, peas or lentils (16 oz.)
- Rice brown or white (5 lbs. or smaller)
- Canned fruit in light syrup or juice (20 oz. or smaller)
- Healthy hot and cold cereal (42 oz. or smaller)
- Healthy snacks (e.g. raisins, granola bars)
- Canned tuna, salmon or chicken (15 oz. or smaller)
- Canned tomatoes low sodium, no salt added (29 oz. or smaller)

- Soup lower sodium (19 oz. or smaller)
- Canned pasta (16 oz. or smaller)
- Macaroni and cheese
- Peanut butter (40 oz. or smaller)
- Fruit jam (32 oz. or smaller)
- Instant potatoes (16 oz. or smaller)
- Pancake mix (32 oz. or smaller) and syrup
- Canned vegetables low sodium, no salt added (29 oz. or smaller)
- Canned beans or peas (29 oz. or smaller)

## For more information, visit: http://bit.ly/FfxStufftheBus









For more information on Stuff the Bus, inclement weather arrangements or to request this information in an alternate format, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov, and search "Stuff the Bus," or call 703-222-9764, TTY 711. A Fairfax County, VA, publication. 2/2024







#### **BIBLE STUDIES AT NATIVITY PARISH**

**Tuesday morning Bible Study:** We meet from 10:00am-11:30am in the Fr. Ready room. This year we are looking at the Gospel and readings for Sunday, seeking to find within something which touches our lives and/or the world around us. Contact Miya Johnson miyajohnson@verizon.net.

Tuesday evening Young Adult Bible Studies: 6 weeks in small groups. At different times throughout the year, we offer 6-week long Bible studies where we encounter Jesus through the Gospels. We read three chapters of Scripture each week and come together to talk about it. We put you into a group and each group chooses where to meet, usually at a local restaurant or coffee shop. Register at https://nativityburke.org/ya-bible-study/ Contact Alison Fram: afram@nativityburke.org.

Wednesday morning and evening, Walking With Purpose: Meeting in person. Walking with Purpose is a study program that aims to help bring women closer to Christ through Scripture. Meets weekly in person on Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. Registration for Fall 2024 will be available in July 2024. Visit https://nativityburke.org/wwp/ for details about the ministry or contact wwpnativity@gmail.com with questions.

Thursday evening Bible Study: Meeting in person virtually. Currently studying the Old Testament Book of Tobit, featuring the Angel Raphael, written a few hundred years before the birth of Jesus. Meets each Thursday from 7:30 – 9:00pm in person in the school's Art Room and virtually. Contact Deacon Dick Kelly at Deaconrfk@aol.com.

Friday morning Women's Bible Study: Meetings are Friday Mornings from 10:00am -12:00 noon in the Father Ready room. We are studying Galatians (Jan/Feb 2024) and the Gospel of Mark (Mar/Apr 2024). Spring sessions will be in person. Winter session will be on Zoom. Join us for prayer, study, and fellowship! Register for the next session at https://nativityburke.org/womens-bible-study-registration/. Contact Camille Pryor at wbs@nativityburke.org.

Viernes por la noche Estudio Bíblico: El estudio bíblico en español "Little Rock" es un programa conducido por el Hno. Pedro Del Aguila y tres asistentes. Este ministerio está en nuestra parroquia de Natividad desde 2014, alentando a los fieles a tener una mejor visión de la Iglesia Católica y crear en ellos un interés mas profundo en las sagradas Escritu-

ras. Horario: Viernes de 7:00–9:00 pm | De Septiembre 8, 2023 a Junio 7, 2024. Lugar: Salón Fr. Ready Este ciclo estaremos estudiando: El evangelio según San Juan y las Cartas. Contactarse: Elba Pfeifer, elbitabonita@aol.com.

Saturday morning That Man Is You: Meeting in person. A men's program that combines Scripture with the best research from science in an engaging interactive program that addresses the pressures and temptations facing Catholic men in our modern culture. Meets each Saturday 6:50am - 8:00am in the Fr. Ready room. Contact Tim Yeager at yeagertd@verizon.net or Bob Sands at bob@sandmark.net.

Saturday morning Men's Prayer and Reflection Group: Meeting in-person/virtually. Men of all ages! We hear the scriptures every Sunday, but to what extent do we understand what God is telling us and how He is enriching our very lives today? Join us in reading, researching, and reflecting on Sunday scriptures and discussing how it relates to our lives and helps us become better Catholic men, husbands, dads, family members, friends, parishioners, citizens, and above all, intentional disciples of Christ. Enjoy the fellowship! Meet Saturdays from 8:00am - 9:00am in the Training/Cry Room or Virtually. Drop-ins are always welcome! Contact Rick Loffredo rickloffredo@outlook.com.

"Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ!" St. Jerome





Struggling with addiction in the family?

Both the afflicted and affected don't need to be alone. There are many resources available including AA, NA, Alanon, Calix and a diocesan chaplain. Call the HELPLINE (970) 989-2670) for support. This is NOT LIMITED to addicts, anybody that would like to speak with a priest or a friend in Christ May call!





## We walk with mothers in need, women in crisis pregnancies, their children, and families

Consider our resources for free or low-cost prenatal and other medical care, financial assistance, baby items, mental health counseling, spiritual, and other confidential support



## We offer healing to women who have experienced abortion

Learn about Project Rachel After Abortion Care Ministry or visit a Catholic parish near you



## We pray, fast, and advocate for laws that protect every human life, from conception until natural death

Join the Virginia Catholic Conference advocacy network at vacatholic.org to protect all life

Find it





# National Eucharistic Congress

INDIANAPOLIS JULY 17 - 21, 2024

Diocese of Arlington



Participate in this pivotal moment in the Church and draw into a deeper intimacy with our Lord. Join our diocese by registering today! Scan the QR code or click Book Now to attend this historic event.



BOOK NOW!







Adult Pricing\*

\$949

Triple/Quad

\$1,149

Double

\$1,649

Single

\*Price per person for the next 50 people to register



Family Pricing

-\$300

off prices above for children ages 3-12

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## A CATHOLIC EXPERIENCE UNLIKE ANY OTHER

This historic 5-day gathering of missionary disciples will be a new Pentecost, a powerful anointing and personal commission to invite others to know Christ.

## **Tour Inclusions**

- NEC Congress Pass (5 Days)
- · Four (4) nights' accommodations in Indianapolis
- Continental breakfast daily (pending hotel allocation)

## Optional Air Package (selection to be made during registration)

Roundtrip flights from Arlington to Indianapolis

## **Tour Does Not Include**

- Meals and beverages not specifically identified
- Items not specifically mentioned above



## **3 Step Registration Process**

- Scan the QR Code on the cover of the flyer or click <u>HERE</u> to access our online registration site.
- Follow the prompts to enter your personal information, select your rooming configuration, enter payment information, and acknowledge our terms and conditions.
- Upon completion, you will receive a confirmation email with your diocesan code and a video tutorial providing instructions for finalizing your registration on the official National Eucharistic Congress' website.



## Payment Schedule:

\$750 per person deposit due upon registration Remaining balance due April 17th, 2024

All payments are non-refundable. By registering for this tour, you understand and agree to CTS Terms and Conditions and accept our CTS Liability Release. All cancellations must be received in writing.

Travel Insurance: Cancel for any reason("CFAR") travel protection is highly recommended See Travel Insured link: <a href="https://www.travelinsured.com/agency?agency=47907&p=CTS21">www.travelinsured.com/agency?agency=47907&p=CTS21</a>





## Guadalupe Radio Network

**Annual WMET** 

## Fishers of Men Dinner

Saturday, April 27, 2024 Reception at 6 p.m. Dinner at 7 p.m.

Catholic University of America
620 Michigan Ave., NE • Washington, DC 20064

Keynote Speaker

Debbie Georgianni

Catholic Radio Host



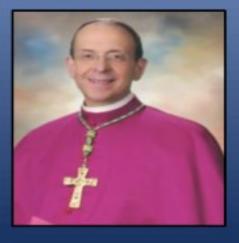
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FOR A

## Day of Recollection



February 24, 2023 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Holy Spirit Catholic Church

5121 Woodland Way Annandale, VA 22003 CONFERENCE LEADER:

Brother John-Mary Winter, OCD

Light breakfast will be provided

FEE: \$20

Please contact Michaele for reservations:

703-300-1643 • michaelefa@aol.com

Other questions? Contact Alicia Steger: 703-591-1407 + saaht@yahoo.com



## 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Sunday, February 11 Lv 13:1-2,44-46 Ps 32:1-2,5,7,11 1 Cor 10:31 – 11:1 Mk 1:40-45

Monday, February 12 Jas 1:1-11 Ps 119:67-68,71-72,75-76 Mk 8:11-13

Tuesday, February 13 Jas 1:12-18 Ps 94:12-13a,14-15,18-19 Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday, February 14
Ash Wednesday
JI 2:12-18
Ps 51:3-6b,12-14,17
2 Cor 5:20 - 6:2
Mt 6:1-6,16-18

Thursday, February 15 Dt 30:15-20 Ps 1:1-4,6 Lk 9:22-25

> Friday, February 16 Is 58:1-9a Ps 51:3-6b,18-19 Mt 9:14-15

Saturday, February 17 Is 58:9b-14 Ps 86:1-6 Lk 5:27-32 This Sunday's second reading gives us a great motto that we should post on our bedroom mirrors so that it's the first thing we see as our sleepy eyes awaken each morning: "Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God."

Everything! Brush your teeth for the glory of God. Kiss your family "Good morning!" for the glory of God. Go to Mass for the glory of God (in other words, we don't go to church just for what we can get out of it). Do your work for the glory of God. Drive politely for the glory of God. Shop and eat and greet others for the glory of God. Say yes to the needs of the Church for the glory of God.

And receive all that he wants to give you (the compliments, the money you earn, the unanswered prayers, the good times and rewards) all for the glory of God.

This should be part of our daily prayers every morning: "Holy Spirit, help me to do everything today for the glory of God. Amen!"

By making it a daily habit to start the day this way, the glory of God

becomes integrated into our character. When we remember to see our activities through the lens of "whatever you do, do it for the glory of God", we become stronger in avoiding all kinds of sins. It sanctifies each moment of every day.

Often, we see religious activities as separate from our normal activities. We take "time out" from our schedules to go to church. We stop what we're doing when we want to pray. We



think that only Clergy and Religious can be religious all of the time and that a layperson who is like that is a "fanatic". But why?

Why should we limit "for the glory of God" to only what is "holy" – Mass attendance, religious rituals, prayers, the works of ministry, etc.? We can sanctify every moment by remembering that whatever we do, we want to please God with it.

#### Reflect & Discuss:

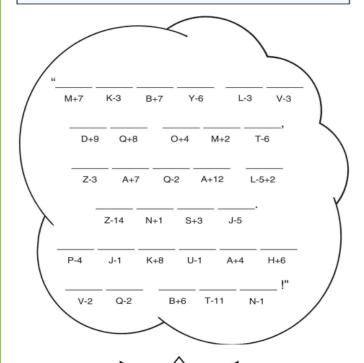
- † What have you done already today that glorifies God? What is planned for later today and how can that be offered to God?
- † What will you do to remind yourself daily to do everything for the glory of God?
- Describe ways that we can glorify God in normal, everyday activities. How do you turn mundane tasks into a gift for God?
- † When is it most difficult to glorify him? How can even our lapses into sin become blessings that glorify God?



Then a cloud appeared and covered them. A voice came from the cloud. What did it say?

Add and subtract letters to find out.

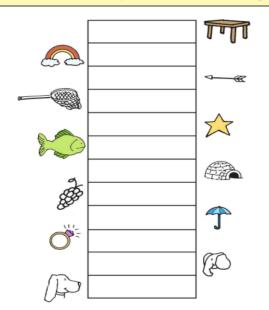
## ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ



Something happened to Jesus on the mountain! His clothes became dazzling white. He was

before them.

Write the 1st letter of each picture to find out the missing word.





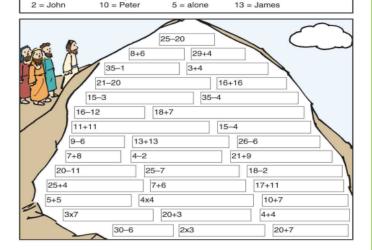
Ages 7+

February 11, 2024 • Mark 9:2-9

## The Transfiguration

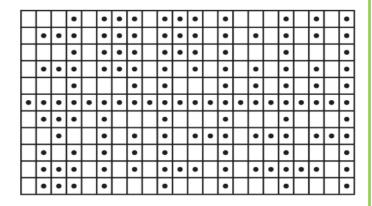
Jesus took some of the disciples on a special trip. What happened?

Figure out the answer to each problem. Find the words below that fit some of the answers. Write those words in the boxes. Read from bottom to top. 9 = and 3 = up 10 = Peter 4 = high12 = mountain 8 = led 11 = a 6 = Jesus 14 = all



2 persons appeared before them. They talked with Jesus.

Make their names appear below. Color the boxes that have a ..









## LA PETICIÓN CUARESMAL DEL OBISPO DE 2024 He aquí que yo haré nuevas todas las cosas

Este fin de semana se pide a cada familia que haga una promesa de contribución o una donación a la Petición Cuaresmal del Obispo. Esta Petición nos ofrece la oportunidad de unirnos como familia católica para apoyar las programas, ministerios y servicios de ayuda a decenas de miles de personas. Después de reflexionar sobre las bendiciones que Dios les ha dado, piensen en la posibilidad de hacer una promesa de contribución a la Petición Cuaresmal del Obispo.

Para hacer una ofrenda pueden llenar la tarjeta correspondiente durante la Misa, enviarla por correo postal, hacer la ofrenda en línea en www.arlingtondiocese.org/BLA o es-

canear el código QR que aparece a continuación:





### POR SER DIFERENTES 6° T.O. Javier Leoz

Uno cuando se asoma al Evangelio de este 6º domingo del tiempo ordinario, llega a pensar que la lepra representa a toda esa humanidad tocada por la debilidad o por la enfermedad.

¡Cuántos rechazados por su forma de entender la vida! ¡Cuántos cristianos apartados de sus profesiones por sus convicciones!

¡Cuántas personas que, son señaladas con el dedo modernista, porque no comulgan con ruedas de molino, porque se revelan ante una técnica que legitima todo pero que degrada en algunos casos, u olvida en otros, la dignidad del hombre!

1.Sí; la lepra, personifica en los tiempos que vivimos a toda persona que se duele y llora por las situaciones de contradicción que se dan en el mundo. Por tanta exclusión e injusticia fruto de la intolerancia o de los intereses que convierten automáticamente, a unos en buenos y a otros en malos: unos son colocados en el escaparate, como referencia y encarnación de los valores que emergen en una sociedad caprichosa, y otros son desterrados porque —sus exigencias o su modo de vida- pueden resultar chocantes o calificadas incluso de "peligrosas".

Hay muchos descartes en nuestra sociedad y muchos intentos de silenciar a los que no hacen orfeón o secundan iniciativas amparadas por leyes de turno.

Existen muchos intentos de apartar a los "nuevos leprosos" porque no dicen lo que la sociedad quiere oír ni actúan como la sociedad dicta.

2.Una vez más, como en tiempos de Jesús, la perseverancia y la mano de Dios salen al paso de aquellos que saben que, sólo Dios, es capaz de responder con generosidad cuando el mundo rechaza o abandona.

Miremos un poco a nuestro alrededor. ¿Qué se enaltece? ¿Qué se valora? ¿Qué se desprecia? ¿Qué se margina? ¿Qué se recompensa?

La eucaristía de cada domingo, el encuentro con la Palabra y con el Resucitado, nos inyecta a los cristianos la fuerza necesaria para insertarnos de nuevo, con impulso renovado y claro, en una sociedad donde no siempre predomina el bien común.

La oración, personal o comunitaria, nos brinda esa oportunidad para recuperarnos de otros tantos rechazos cuando presentamos, con respeto pero con valentía, nuestra forma de entender el mundo, la sociedad, el hombre, etc., desde la fe.

El testimonio, de lo que llevamos dentro, de nuestra experiencia de Dios, nos exige pregonar que con Jesús nos sentimos bien. Que haber encontrado a Dios, lejos de ser una preocupación, nos ayuda a llenar huecos peligrosos en nuestra vida. Nos invita a quemarnos, no hacia dentro, y sí hacia fuera, para que otros hermanos nuestros —con

abundancia de lepra materialista, hedonista, individualista, pobreza, malos tratos, etc- puedan salir de ese estadio y reincorporarse de nuevo a la vida o dejar que otros compartan su misma buena suerte.

¿Acaso no merece la pena? Pongamos algo de nuestra parte.



## Parece que Dios no escucha mi plegaria Será que no somos perseverantes en la plegaria o no pedimos como debemos. Por: P. Sergio Córdova LC | Fuente: Catholic.net

Se cuenta que el emperador romano Alejandro Severo, pagano, pero naturalmente honesto, tuvo un día entre sus manos un pergamino en donde se hallaba escrito el Padrenuestro. Lo leyó lleno de curiosidad y tanto le gustó que ordenó a los orfebres de su corte fundir una estatua de Jesucristo, de oro purísimo, para colocarla en su propio oratorio doméstico, entre las demás estatuas de sus dioses, ordenando pregonar en la vía pública las palabras de aquella oración. Una oración tan bella sólo podía venir del mismo Dios.

Se han escrito muchísimos comentarios sobre el Padrenuestro, y creo que nunca terminaríamos de agotar su contenido. No en vano fue la oración que Jesucristo mismo nos enseñó y que, con toda razón, se ha llamado la "oración del Señor". Es la plegaria de los cristianos por antonomasia y la que, desde nuestra más tierna infancia, aprendemos a recitar de memoria, de los labios de nuestra propia madre.

En una iglesia de Palencia, España, se escribió hace unos años esta exigente admonición:

No digas "Padre", si cada día no te portas como hijo.

No digas "nuestro", si vives aislado en tu egoísmo.

No digas "que estás en los cielos", si sólo piensas en cosas terrenas.

No digas "santificado sea tu nombre", si no lo honras.

No digas "venga a nosotros tu Reino", si lo confundes con el éxito material.

No digas "hágase tu voluntad", si no la aceptas cuando es dolorosa.

No digas "el pan nuestro dánosle hoy", si no te preocupas por la gente con hambre.

No digas "perdona nuestras ofensas", si guardas rencor a tu hermano.

No digas "no nos dejes caer en la tentación", si tienes intención de seguir pecando.

No digas "líbranos del mal", si no tomas partido contra el mal.

No digas "amén", si no has tomado en serio las palabras de esta oración.

La parábola del amigo inoportuno, tan breve como tan bella, nos revela la necesidad de orar con insistencia y perseverancia a nuestro Padre Dios. Es sumamente elocuente: "Yo os digo que si aquel hombre no se levanta de la cama y le da los panes por ser su amigo – nos dice Jesús — os aseguro que, al menos por su inoportunidad, se levantará y le dará cuanto necesite". Son impresionantes estas consideraciones. Nuestro Señor nos hacen entender que, si nosotros atendemos las peticiones de los demás al menos para que nos dejen en paz, sin tener en cuenta las exigencias de la amistad hacia nuestros amigos, ¡con cuánta mayor razón escuchará Dios nuestras plegarias, siendo Él nuestro Padre amantísimo e infinitamente bueno y cariñoso!

Por eso, Cristo nos dice: "Pedid y se os dará; buscad y hallaréis; llamad y se os abrirá". Si oramos con fe y confianza a Dios nuestro Señor, tenemos la plena seguridad de que Él escuchará nuestras súplicas. Y si muchas veces no obtenemos lo que pedimos en la oración es porque no oramos con la suficiente fe, no somos perseverantes en la plegaria o no pedimos como debemos; es decir, que se cumpla, por encima de todo, la voluntad santísima de Dios en nuestra vida. Orar no es exigir a Dios nuestros propios gustos o caprichos, sino que se haga su voluntad y que sepamos acogerla con amor y genrosidad. Y, aun cuando no siempre nos conceda exactamente lo que le pedimos, Él siempre nos dará lo que más nos conviene.

Es obvio que una mamá no dará un cuchillo o una pistola a su niñito de cinco años, aunque llore y patalee, porque ella sabe que eso no le conviene.

¿No será que también nosotros a veces le pedimos a Dios algo que nos puede llevar a nuestra ruina espiritual? Y Él, que es infinitamente sabio y misericordioso, sabe muchísimo mejor que nosotros lo que es más provechoso para nuestra salvación eterna y la de nuestros seres queridos. Pero estemos seguros de que Dios siempre obra milagros cuando le pedimos con total fe, confianza filial, perseverancia y pureza de intención. ¡La oración es omnipotente!

Y, para demostrarnos lo que nos acaba de enseñar, añade: "¿Qué padre entre vosotros, si el hijo le pide un pan, le dará una piedra? ¿O, si le pide un pez, le dará una serpiente? ¿O, si le pide un huevo, le dará un escorpión? Pues si vosotros, siendo malos, sabéis dar cosas buenas a vuestros hijos, ¿cuánto más vuestro Padre del cielo dará el Espíritu Santo a los que se lo piden?"

Efectivamente, con un Dios tan bueno y que, además, es todopoderoso, ¡no hay nada imposible!

Termino con esta breve historia. En una ocasión, un niño muy pequeño hacía grandes esfuerzos por levantar un objeto muy pesado. Su papá, al ver la lucha tan desigual que sostenía su hijito, le preguntó:

- "¿Estás usando todas tus fuerzas?"

- "¡Claro que sí!" -contestó malhumorado el pequeño.

- "No es cierto - le respondió su padre - no me has pedido que te ayude".

Pidamos ayuda a nuestro Padre Dios...; y todo será infinitamente más sencillo en nuestra vida!!

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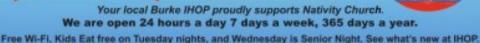
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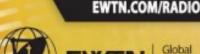




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