

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

This illness is not
to end in death,
but is for the glory of God,
that the Son of God may
be glorified through it.

John 11:4



6400 Nativity Lane,
Burke, Virginia 22015
nativityburke.org

REV. ROBERT C. CILINSKI, PASTOR
REV. CHRISTOPHER H. HAYES, PAROCHIAL VICAR
REV. EDWARD BRESNAHAN, PAROCHIAL VICAR
REV. CEDRIC P. WILSON, ASSISTING PRIEST/
SPANISH MINISTRY
DEACON 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/College Ministry
Rebecca Judge, Director of Youth Ministry
Mary Castellano, Director of Social Media
Jennifer Sturgeon, Director of Marriage Enrichment/
Ecumenical Ministry
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.
Fania Jimenez, Administrative Assistant
Jennifer Sturgeon, Confirmation Coordinator

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 ext. 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./
1:00p.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 deadline can change
due to holiday office closings. 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.



@Nativity Parish Burke



@nativityparishburke_

**A Message from our Pastor
Fr. Bob Cilinski**



“I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will never die.”
- John 11:25a, 26

My dear parishioners,

REFLECTION

The people in exile thought they were as good as dead, yet God breathed life into them. Though they felt as dry as the bones of corpses, they were raised up and marched into freedom. Paul said that the indwelling Spirit raised Jesus from the dead and will give our mortal bodies life.

As the time of Jesus’ death approached, he made the incredible announcement: *“I am the resurrection and the life”* Jesus asks if we believe this. Each of us must summon faith and say: *“Yes, Lord, I believe.”* Jesus shows us that we will not be disappointed by our belief in him.

The raising of Lazarus is a symbol of our own dying and rising in baptism. With the elect we examine those things in our hearts that prevent us from receiving the fullness of life. We ask ourselves whether or not we keep others bound through our anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. We must make a decision to set them free through forgiveness and mercy. Jesus tells us, *“Unbind them and let them go free!”*

For Reflection: What will loosen my bonds and set me free? How can I bring comfort to the dying and grieving?

“We often get tired of asking for God’s forgiveness. But God never tires of forgiving us.” - Pope Francis.

Thursday, March 30 is our Lenten Penance Service. 20 Priests will be available throughout the church for individual confessions from 6:30pm - 8:00pm. We are turning Nativity into a *“Reconciliation Zone.”* Come as a family... a beautiful way to prepare for Easter.

Love and Blessings,
Fr. Bob Cilinski
Fr. Bob Cilinski,
Pastor



**NATIVITY CATHOLIC CHURCH
Holy Week Schedule 2023**

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Morning Prayer 8:30am
Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper 7:30pm *(Bilingual)*

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 7

Morning Prayer 8:30am
Divine Mercy Novena 9:00am
Stations of the Cross 12:00pm *(English)*
The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord 3:00pm *(English)*
Stations of the Cross 6:00pm *(Spanish)*
The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord 6:30pm *(Spanish)*

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Morning Prayer 8:30am
The Blessing of Easter Food 9:00am

THE EASTER VIGIL, APRIL 8 at 8:30PM

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night
Blessing of the new fire, Lighting of the Easter Candle
and the Celebration of the New Sacraments of
Initiation with the Elect and Candidates in RCIA and RCIC

**EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION
OF THE LORD, APRIL 9**

Masses at: 5:30am, 7:00am, 9:00am, 11:00am
and 1:00pm *(Spanish)*
There is NO 5:30pm Evening Mass on Easter Sunday

LENTE PENANCE SERVICE

Thursday, March 30th at 6:30pm
20 Priests will be available for Confessions

**Join us in praying the Divine Mercy Novena leading
up to Divine Mercy Sunday on April 16th**

Join us in praying the Divine Mercy Novena for nine days and celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday Devotion!

The Second Sunday of Easter is the Feast of Divine Mercy, or Divine Mercy Sunday (April 16). There will be a Holy Hour and Devotion on Sunday, April 16th from 2:45pm to 3:45pm. Please join us in Eucharistic Adoration and in praying/singing the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy. Prayer cards, rosaries and information pamphlets will be provided.

The Divine Mercy Novena is prayed nine days prior to Divine Mercy Sunday, beginning on Good Friday, April 7th. This is prayed after daily morning Mass at Nativity, except for the weekend, when the Novena prayers are said at home.

See the Nativity website for more Divine Mercy information at nativityburke.org.



Happy Easter

The Parish Office will close at 12:00pm on Thursday, April 6, and will be closed all day on Friday, April 7, Sunday, April 9 and Monday, April 10. The office will be open from 9:00am - 7:00pm on Saturday, April 8.


MUSIC · MEDITATION · PRAYER

Please join us for a wonderful evening of Music, Meditation and Prayer with Irish Tenor

Mark Forrest

On Wednesday, March 29th
at 7:00 pm at Nativity Catholic Church

For more information visit:
nativityburke.org



MARKFORREST.COM

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!

WOMEN OF NATIVITY ANNUAL EASTER GIFT BAG PROJECT

On the WEEKEND of April 1 and 2, the Women of Nativity will collect items for our annual Easter Gift Bag Drive. In keeping with our tradition, we are again asking the Nativity community to help us in bringing even a small bit of joy to local children served by organizations in our community and congregation at this Easter season.

REQUESTED DONATIONS INCLUDE

- Easter candy - individually wrapped candies, chocolate rabbits, chocolate lambs, etc.
- Individually wrapped healthy snacks
- Small toys - to include small stuffed animals, jump ropes, bubbles, play-doh story books, Matchbox-size vehicles, etc.
- Crayons, markers, coloring books
- Personal care item for pre-teens
- Monetary donations of cash and checks (payable to Nativity Parish with "WON" on the memo line)

THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT WE ASSIST REQUEST THAT WE NOT ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- NO Easter baskets
- NO Easter grass
- NO plastic eggs
- NO candy that is not individually wrapped, i.e., jelly beans

We will collect items in the church vestibule before and after Masses (except for the 5:30pm Sunday Mass) on the weekend of April 1 and 2. Please drop your donations in the boxes located in the church vestibule. Thank you for your continued generosity and support. If you have any questions or would like pick-up donations, please contact Kathleen Powers at or email: powersgang@aol.com

On This Date in Nativity History
22 March 2020

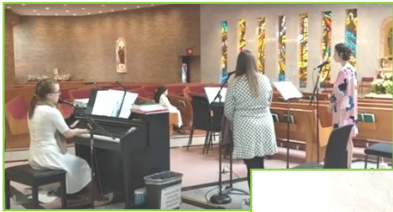


On this date, the Corona Choir sang at their first Mass. The Choir, composed of Alison Fram, Sara Prince, and Kathryn Stinard, (in the photo, l to r) provided music at Masses throughout the pandemic, until their last Mass, 5 September 2021. Here, Alison Fram answers some questions from the Nativity History Project about the Choir.

NHP: How did the three of you get together and formed the choir? Who suggested it?
AF: When it became clear that public Masses would be live-streamed and we had to keep to the 10-person limit. Fr. Bob's idea was to invite Sara, Kathryn, and me to provide music for the liturgies. I had already been asked to be a lector for the Masses, so I was able to join them in singing since I'd already be present for each Mass.

NHP: How often did you practice? Had any of you sung in Mass before?
AF: Sara and Kathryn are both directors of Nativity choirs, so they've been an active part of our parish's music ministry. I sang in Nativity's Youth Choir when I was in high school and had recently assisted with singing for some ministry events. When we began singing together, Sara would send out the music lists ahead of time, and we would meet an hour before Mass to practice.

NHP: Were you concerned about health issues by singing in Mass during those early days of the pandemic?
AF: There were a lot of questions and unknowns in the early days, but thank God we remained safe and healthy. We all did our best to keep each other safe and took precautions as needed.

NHP: Anything else of interest to readers?
AF: That first year, we also led the music for all of the Triduum services and Easter, so we met with the priests to review the music and liturgies. The three of us said that it was so surreal to be in the empty Church during Holy Week and Easter, imagining all the people praying along with us and singing with us from their homes.

This historical note is the 42nd of a weekly Bulletin feature leading up to Nativity's fiftieth anniversary, 11 June 2023.

The 2023 Bishop's Lenten Appeal



Thank you, Nativity parishioners, for the great support of the Bishop's Lenten Appeal. As of March 2, our pledges and donations amount to \$472,812. That's nearly 70% of our \$690,000 dollar goal! We're off to an excellent start, but still need more households to participate. If you haven't yet pledged, please consider a sacrificial offering for Lent at whatever amount is right for you and your family. Your contribution helps the many charities, ministries, and programs throughout the Diocese and here at Nativity. May God bless you for your generosity!



LIVING STATIONS
of the Cross

Friday, March 31
7:00pm in the Church

Presented by Nativity Youth Ministry



You are invited to experience the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord through a living tableau of the Stations of the Cross.

This prayerful meditation—presented in both English and Spanish—includes thoughtful reflections and music.



SPONSORED BY
THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
FR. SIKORA COUNCIL 7992

NATIVITY LENTEN FISH FRY

THE SECOND LENTEN FISH FRY WILL TAKE PLACE
ON FRIDAY, MARCH 31ST, 2023
SERVING FROM 5:30PM – 8:00PM
DINE IN THE PARISH HALL OR TAKE A BOX TO GO

Advance tickets:

Reserve your time slot after Mass on 3/25 or 3/26
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)

Adult menu: fried or baked fish, french fries, hush puppies, coleslaw and dessert

Kid's menu: fish sticks, french fries, hush puppies, coleslaw and dessert



For more information
Contact Barry Basselgia—bbasselgia@gmail.com

"SAINT MARY MAGDALENE - AT THE FEET OF JESUS"

a live one-woman drama about God's mercy, comes to Holy Spirit Catholic Church on Wednesday, April 19 at 7:30 PM in the church. This compelling performance brings familiar Bible stories to life and transports us to the time of Jesus and the Blessed Mother. The story shines a reverent light on this great saint who remained at the foot of the cross and announced the Resurrection. Catholic performing artist Nancy Simone portrays Mary Magdalene. Recommended for ages 10 through adult. No tickets needed. Address: 5121 Woodland Way, Annandale. For more information, email cpoumade@prodigy.net or call 703-425-8769. (MaryMagdaleneDrama.com)

girl scouts

Girl Scout Leaders Needed!

Join Girl Scouts!

PLEASE CONTACT
NATIVITYTROOP@GMAIL.COM
FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Troop volunteers help Girl Scouts become stronger, kinder, and braver than they ever thought possible. Troop leaders—and volunteers in other roles, like troop money manager or cookie chair—engage regularly with their Girl Scouts and guide them through activities, like earning badges, exploring the outdoors, or running their own business through the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Please sign up to volunteer!

donut worry!

THIS WEEKEND IS DONUT SUNDAY

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH



Multi Car Raffle

plus \$40,000 in Cash Drawings

Only 5 weeks remaining to sell your tickets!

Tickets Only \$5

Chance to win 4 cars and \$40,000 in cash prizes



Images are representative of the models and types of cars to be awarded.

All tickets, stubs & monies are **due by Friday, 21 April** to All Saints Catholic Church. The drawings will be held during the All-Saints Catholic Church Fair on Saturday, 29 April. If you need more tickets or have questions, please contact PGK Sam Morthland @ 703-455-2186 or at koec7992carraffle@gmail.com

40 Days for Life: Fall Campaign runs through April 2

We will be peacefully praying the pro-life Rosary in front of the Falls Church abortion facility at 900 S. Washington Street, Falls Church. Join us for Nativity's all-day vigil from 7:00am -7:00pm, THIS Friday, March 31. Please contact Rick Loffredo at rickloffredo@outlook.com for more details.



THE NATIVITY GIFT SHOP HAS LOTS OF NEW ITEMS IN STOCK:

First Communion Veils and Ties, Confirmation Gifts, Cards for every occasion etc. etc. Please stop by, all proceeds benefit Nativity Catholic Church charities!

Marian Symposium



Please join as a diocesan family as we honor the Blessed Virgin in Year Two of our Golden Jubilee, "My Soul Rejoices in the Lord." The Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, Archbishop for the Military Services USA, and President of the United States

Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), will be the guest speaker at a Marian Symposium on Saturday, April 29, at St. Bernadette Catholic Church in Springfield. The day will start with Mass at 9:00 a.m., followed by a coffee break, a talk and Q and A session at 10:30 a.m. and conclude with the recitation of the Rosary. We look forward to seeing you there!



MASS INTENTIONS

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

Monday March 27th

7:30 am † Joseph Charles Wheeler

Tuesday March 28th

7:30 am † Leroy Vaughan
12:00 pm Special Int. for Stephen & Margaret Flynn & Family

Wednesday March 29th

7:30 am † Lyda Miranda

Thursday March 30th

7:30 am Special Int. for Sisters Ernestine, Donatella & Mary Attilia
12:00 pm Special Int. for Muredock & Maureen Flynn & Family

Friday March 31st

7:30 am † John Powrozek & Deceased Family Members
9:00 am † Robert C. O'Keefe

Saturday April 1st

9:00 am † Laura Barchard
5:00 pm † Larry Brindza
7:00 pm † Scarlett Ramirez

Sunday April 2nd

7:00 am † Ernie Weeks
9:00 am † Ronald Wiesen
11:00 am † Bert & Nina Bacani
1:00 pm Spec. Int. for Kathleen Carnahan
5:30 pm Parishioners

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

Annual Multi-Car Raffle

Thank you to those who have already returned all the tickets you have sold. Where else can you get a chance to win all four 2023 vehicles from Ourisman Ford of Manassas (Ford Escape, Mustang, Ranger Truck and Bronco Sport) plus up to \$40,000 in cash prizes for only \$5. Please mail your sold ticket stubs/ payment directly to All Saints in the envelope provided. We have additional tickets if you sell all of yours. Please contact PGK Sam Morthland @ 703-455-2186 if you have any questions.

As a reminder, when mailing your sold ticket stubs, green card, and check directly back to All Saints in the envelope provided, please disregard the note on the green return card, and make your checks out to All Saints. Thank You!





JOIN US FOR A **fiesta!**

NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL SPRING AUCTION

WHEN: SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023
6:30 - 10:00PM

**WHERE: NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL,
FATHER MARTIN CENTER**




DONATIONS STILL NEEDED!
The auction committee is still in need of a few items from our Amazon Wish List.

There's always room for S'more Fun!: **HERSHEY'S** Chocolate Bars, Extra Large Marshmallows Chips... Dips... and Margaritas!

Salt and Sugar Rimmers, Lime & Strawberry Margarita Mix
Nintendo Switch for our Heads or Tails Game!

Scan the QR code to view/purchase any items.
Tickets to attend the Spring Auction are still available!
Be a part of this wonderful fundraising event!
<https://nativityauction.givesmart.com>

Knights of Columbus Frenchy Cyr Memorial Scholarships

Last year, Nativity's Knights of Columbus Council 7992 awarded six Cyr Memorial scholarships for Catholic secondary school tuition (grades 9-12), totaling \$6000. Scholarships were awarded to Emilio Bruneo (Nativity School), Jennifer Dee and Stephanie Dee attending Bishop Ireton High School; and, Sophia Cassidy, Liam Ginty and Noah Ginty attending Saint John Paul the Great for their exemplary academic performance, sustained school and community involvement, and outstanding Church and religious activity participation.

Again, this year six \$1000 scholarships will be awarded. One scholarship will be awarded to the Nativity eighth-grade student scoring the highest; all entrants, including eight-grade students, will compete for the remaining scholarships. Entrants must be registered parishioners at Nativity, or a son or daughter, or grandchild, of an active member of Council 7992.

Application forms are available at the parish office and website at <https://nativityburke.org/frenchy-memorial-scholarship/>.

Submissions due no later than midnight, Friday, April 21, 2023. Scholarship awardees will be announced in late May or Early June. Questions, please call Dave Zivich, 703-598-0698.

FEATURED AUCTION ITEM OF THE WEEK

Do you want to come spend time with some Alpacas? Play and frolic with a cria (baby alpaca)? Have an alpaca eat right out of your hand? Head over to Ever After Alpaca Farm, located in Broad Run VA, where you will learn all about alpacas, hand feed, pet and maybe even take a selfie or two with an alpaca! Winning Bidder will receive four (4) admission tickets to the Alpaca Interaction Encounter.



This item, as well as other family experiences, will be available at the Auction!



ECHO Food Room Most Needed Items February Collection will be next weekend, April 1/2

Choose sizes appropriate for an average family size of four. Include an assortment of food to ensure a variety of items for clients.

Because of the wonderful generosity of the community, ECHO is blessed to already have a more than ample supply of canned pumpkin, cranberry sauce and stuffing. However, we are short on many other items such as personal care products and the items listed below.

ECHO cannot give clients food whose expiration date is long past or any open food or repackaged food (no zip-loc bags).

Condiments	Garlic Powder	Laundry Detergent
Masa Flour	Onion Powder	Shaving Cream/Razors
Lemon Juice	Hot Chocolate	Deodorant
Sugar	Tin Fish	Shampoo
Canned Fruit	Canned/Shelf Stable Milk	Toothbrushes (spec. kids)
Honey	Juice - Large Box/Bottles	Facial Tissues
Basmati Rice	Crackers	Feminine Hygiene Products
Pancake Syrup	Canned Meat (Spam is a favorite)	Paper Towels
Cinnamon	Laundry Detergent	Brown Paper Grocery Bags
Instant Coffee	Band Aids	
Toilet paper		



YOUTH MINISTRY SUMMER CAMPS

TUESDAY, JUNE 27 - FRIDAY, JUNE 30



VACATION BIBLE CAMP

OPEN TO CURRENT K - 4 GRADERS
8:45am - 12pm | \$40 per camper



CAMP ON THE EDGE

OPEN TO CURRENT 5 - 8 GRADERS
1:30pm - 4:30pm | \$40 per camper



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

VBC: 8TH GRADERS - ADULTS
COTE: 10TH GRADERS - ADULTS
\$10 per volunteer to cover t-shirt fee



REGISTRATION

OPENS END OF MARCH



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

SHEPERD'S GATE GRANTS

Shepherd's Gate is a small annual grant program at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Alexandria that supports nonprofit organizations that reflect our parish mission to serve people in need, to do justice where inequity exists, to stand for human dignity, and to promote peace.

Local community-based organizations are invited to apply for grants ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. For more information and to apply visit <https://www.gs-cc.org/grant/>. The deadline to apply is March 31.

**ST. MARY OF SORROWS
BIKE COLLECTION - Saturday, April 22**

Give spring-cleaning extra meaning: donate unused bicycles. St. Mary of Sorrows' annual bike collection is coming soon, on Saturday, April 22, 9:00 am to noon rain or shine behind the left side of the Parish Center at 5222 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. The non-profit Bikes for the World ships our bicycles to impoverished areas around the globe. Your bikes, and monetary donations to help defray shipping costs, are tax-deductible. After being refurbished, these bikes become main sources of transportation to work, school, and health care. See <https://www.bikesfortheworld.org> for the wonderful ways your donations and your time will help. We accept serviceable or nearly complete youth and adult bicycles (including tandems and recumbents); adult tricycles; bicycle spare parts, components, accessories and tools; and even serviceable, quality portable sewing machines. The Bike Collection Committee always welcomes adult volunteers and teenagers with adult partners to help to set up, collect donations, process the bikes for shipment, and assist loading the truck for transport. No experience needed; on-the-job training provided! To volunteer, please email or call Maria Story at ferstory@gmail.com or 703 459 6108 in advance. Helping at this event is a great way for youth to earn service hours and for all to minister to the poor.

Calling Adult Volunteers!
WorkCamp: June 17-23, 2023



This week-long diocesan service program relies on parishes making a community effort. There are many ways you can join us on this experience.

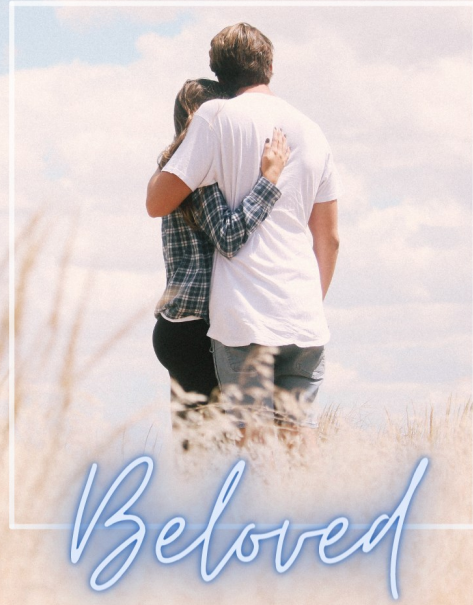
 <https://nativityburke.org/work-camp/>

Email questions to Brigid Williams at wc@nativityburke.org

**Witness the Ordination
to the Diaconate of our Seminarians**

The ordination of men to the diaconate is a beautiful and inspiring event for our entire diocese, and all are welcome to witness them. The Mass of Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate for seminarians James Joseph and Sean Nypaver is Saturday, April 15 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Mary of Sorrows Church in Fairfax. Come and pray for our future priests! The ceremony will also be livestreamed. Learn more at www.ArlingtonDiocese.org/Ordinations.

♥ **MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT
MINISTRY SPRING PROGRAM**



Spring Marriage Program: Beloved

The Marriage Enrichment Ministry spring program will be using the program, Beloved (on Formed). We will be completing the first six sessions together. In 12 stunning sessions, Beloved uncovers the mystery and the meaning of the Sacrament of Marriage. Beloved invites all couples to experience firsthand the wonder, mystery, and joy behind that first "I do" - whether you said it last year or many years ago. We will meet in the Nativity school teacher's lounge from 7:00-8:45 PM on the following dates:

- April 14 - Does Marriage Matter
- April 21 - Entering the Story of Marriage
- April 28 - Love Revealed
- May 5 - Total Gift of Self
- May 12 - A Sacramental Bond
- May 19 - Real Challenges, Real Love

Schedule

- 7:00 PM Opening Prayer and potluck dinner
- 7:20-8:00 PM watch the video for the week
- 8:00 PM Group/couple discussion
- 8:30 PM Wrap Up

*Please bring an appetizer, main dish, or a dessert to share. *Come in through the school & religious education entrance. Turn right and walk down the hallway as if going to the school chapel. The teacher's lounge is the room to the right before the chapel. Miss a session and want to watch it at home? Login to Formed (our parish has a subscription), and go to "Beloved."*

**NATIVITY CATHOLIC CHURCH
MISSION STATEMENT**

"We, the People of Nativity Catholic Church, by our baptism, are joyful disciples of Jesus Christ. We strive to love God, love others, and form new disciples. We celebrate Jesus Christ in Word, Sacrament and Service."



Council Meetings: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. The first meeting is a business meeting, and the second meeting of the month is devoted to faith formation including video/discussion series and guest speakers. Rosary at 7:15 PM; meeting follows at 7:30 PM. Fellowship follows every meeting. Meetings are in the Nativity school cafeteria.

Linktree Universal Sign-up Link: Want to volunteer for an event? https://linktr.ee/fr_sikora_council_7992

Lenten Fish Fry: The next fish fry of the season will be in the Nativity Cafeteria on March 31st. Volunteer to help sell tickets after Mass, volunteer the night of the fish fry, and reserve your seating time on the linktree.

Catholic Financial Planning Seminars: See available sessions and register on the linktree.

Donut Sunday & Spring Delta Drive: 25-26 March volunteer to give out donuts and recruit new members to our order. Invite your friends to stop by the Narthex or Fr. Martin Center after Mass.

40 Days for Life: Bring a friend and pray any time during the Spring Campaign which is underway until April 2. Also, join us for Nativity's all-day vigil from 7:00am -7:00pm, Friday, March 31. We will be peacefully praying the pro-life Rosary in front of the Falls Church abortion facility at 900 S. Washington St. Falls Church, VA. Sign up on the linktree. Please contact Br. Rick at rickloffredo@outlook.com.

Food for Others: We need volunteers drivers for food distributions to the poor. If you have a truck or van and can occasionally help deliver to Springfield on Friday evenings contact Br. Matt Stockburger at mstock_w@yahoo.com.

Yard Sale: This is the council's second biggest charity fundraiser! We need area leads and assistant leads to commit to supporting the collection period as well as the date of the sale June 15-24th. You don't have to be a Knight to help! Sign up on the linktree. Contact Br. Dave Zivich with any questions at davezivich@gmail.com.

Name Tags: Email Warden Michael Bender at michaelbambender@hotmail.com to order.

Sunday Mass Coffee and Cookies: We are providing coffee and cookies following Sunday morning Masses. Volunteer on the linktree.

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." You can reach us at 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 navy8@yahoo.com or 703-250-1492.

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! Simply go to <https://info.kofc.org/us.html> and enter our council #7992 for local information and to register. E-membership for the first year is free using the new code "blessedmcgivney". Please email our Deputy Grand Knight at PMDELATTE@gmail.com or the Grand Knight at tjsgk7992@gmail.com if you have any questions.

THE LIGHTNING THIEF
THE PERCY JACKSON MUSICAL

BOOK BY
Joe Tracz

MUSIC & LYRICS BY
Rob Rokicki

ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK
THE LIGHTNING THIEF BY
Rick Riordan

AUDITIONS: MAY 10-11

PERFORMANCES:
JULY 14 - 15, 2023
JULY 21 - 22, 2023

NATIVITY PLAYERS
THEATER MINISTRY
NATIVITYPLAYERSBURKE.ORG

PRODUCED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT
WITH CONCORD THEATRICALS
(CONCORDTHEATRICALS.COM)



A Message from the Nativity Creation Care Ministry

Posted on our website at <https://nativityburke.org/service/creation-care/> under Resources, is the annual Lenten Creation Care calendar, created by Virginia Interfaith Power & Light (VAIPL). VAIPL collaborates among people of faith and conscience to grow healthy communities by advancing climate and environmental justice. The calendar provides weekly themes and daily actions for the seven weeks of Lent. The theme for Week 6 is "Building Resilience." Living more simple lives helps us to build resilience to many of life's challenges.

When asked what the biggest incentive was for living a simpler lifestyle, respondents to a Salt Magazine survey said, • Live simply so others may simply live • To contribute to the equality of people by not using more than one's fair share of the earth's resources • Because of the poor • Simplifying gives life meaning and value • Simplifying makes one feel less rushed • Simplifying allows one to live as Jesus lived • Becoming less "thing"-centered frees people to focus on relationships • Learning to put others first; learning to prioritize - learning to become less selfish • Helping the environment • Contributing to your own health by gaining a longer and better life." How can you simplify your life during these last weeks of Lent?

Excerpted from: Simple Living Leads to Spiritual Growth. A Catholic Volunteer Network Archives Resource



NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
A Blue Ribbon School of Excellence
nativityschool.org



EXTRA, EXTRA ~ Read All About It!

We began our third annual Read-a-thon on Thursday, March 2 – Read Across America Day – and had great fun throughout the 2-week-period, reading with our friends, siblings, and buddies, dressing as our favorite book characters, and wearing our pajamas to school! And, on top of all of that fun and fiction (AND non-fiction!), we earned nearly \$6,000 to use to fund new Science initiatives. Many thanks to our very engaged PTO for its active involvement in our school and partnership in this effort.

READ-A-THON RESULTS TOP MINUTES PER GRADE (Gift Certificate/Dress Down Day)

- Pre-S - Ryan Ehrlich
- Pre-K - Nora McCullough
- K - Breccan Smith
- 1 - Lilyana Namata
- 2 - Avery Smith
- 3 - Pierce Whitis (also #2 School)
- 4 - Audrey Lord
- 5 - Macy Whitis (also #1 School)
- 6 - Liem Nguyen
- 7 - Will Moorhouse
- 8 - Benny Morris

TOP CLASSES (Dress Down Day)

Downstairs: Colella - 17,706 minutes

Upstairs: Borneo - 12,591 minutes

Below see photos of a few of our Seventh and First graders, reading together on 'Read With Your Buddy Day!'



Upcoming Dates At-A-Glance!

- March 28: 8th Grade Vocations Day
- March 31: 8th Grade to Finance Park
- April 3: Summer Uniform Begins
- April 3: Living Stations, 1:45 p.m.
- April 6: Seder, 9 a.m.
- April 6: 11:30 a.m., Easter Break Begins

YOUTH MINISTRY

cym@nativityburke.org

LIFE TEEN: GRADES 9-12

Sundays | 6:30-8:30pm



Dinner

Fellowship

Prayer & Formation

2023 HIGH SCHOOL SMALL GROUPS

Girls: Wednesdays, 7:00-8:30pm | Weekly

Guys: Thursdays, 7:30-9:00pm | 2x / month

EDGE: GRADES 6-8

Alternating Sundays 3:30-5pm & Fridays 7-8:30pm
See website for schedule



Meet new friends

Play games

Explore your faith

BASH! SATURDAY, APRIL 22

Who: middle schoolers in grades 6-8

What: music, games, inspirational speakers, confessions, Mass, & more!

Where: Bishop O'Connell High School, transportation provided

Estimated Cost: \$25 - registration opening soon



SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS
~ SUMMER CAMPS ~
SpotlightSummerCamps.com
Manassas, VA | Burke, VA

BROADWAY SPOTLIGHT
JULY 10-21, 2023
DRAMA BOOTCAMP
ARTS & CRAFTS FUN
ART EXPLORER

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar Flower Book for 2023 is open with many dates available. This is a thoughtful way to honor a loved one, living or deceased. If you are interested, please stop by the parish office to sign up. You can now also go online and reserve flowers on our website at: <https://nativityburke.org/altar-flowers/>.

NO HANDS BUT YOURS MINISTRY

No Hands But Yours is 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 DC and northern VA every Sunday morning, rain or shine. We also have weekly trips into designated areas bringing Panera bread donations along with help from local food banks. Through the blessings of God, we have grown through our Nativity community and continue to do so. For more details visit the Nativity Parish website at <https://nativityburke.org/service/no-hands-but-yours/>. Families are also welcomed! If you have interest in learning more and would like to participate in daily/Sunday runs, please contact John Rubino at: john.albert.rubino@gmail.com.



The New Mosaic Panels of the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy, below find a description of each panel from left to right:

- Feed the Hungry** - Wheat and grapes, simple foods but also the physical signs of the Eucharist.
- Give Drink to the Thirsty** - A drink of flowing water and the waters of Baptism.
- Shelter the Homeless** - A door Jesus said, “*I AM the door, I stand at the door and knock.*”
- Clothe the Naked** - A robe, a ring, and sandals are physical clothing, but also the symbolic items the father gave the prodigal son.
- Visit the Sick** - A red cross and oil representing physical visiting, keeping vigil, and spiritual anointing.
- Visit the Imprisoned** - Chains and bars are physical restraints that can also represent the prison of sin.
- Bury the Dead** - A funeral pall draped over coffin, the Easter Candle, and prayers for the dead.



Sick / Homebound Visits

Are you or someone you know sick and/or homebound for any reason? We can arrange home visits from the parish and provide prayer and the sacraments. We would love to bring God’s Grace and Peace to anyone in difficult times. Please contact Cat Sands, Pastoral Minister, at csands@nativityburke.org to schedule a visit.

JOIN THE NATIVITY SCHOOL STAFF!

Consider joining our School Staff as part of our Extended Care Team to help us provide After-School Care by contacting our Extended Care Director, Mrs. Jen Behan at (703) 455-2300, or jbehan@nativityschool.org. To assist us as a Lunch/Recess Monitor, or Substitute Teacher, please contact Rich Godwin at (703) 455-2300, or rgodwin@nativityschool.org.



CHILDREN’S ROSARY

Rosaries and prayer books are provided. No prior knowledge of the Rosary is needed. Parents are encouraged to attend in the role of “*guardian angels*” of the prayer movement. Second Saturday of each month in the Training Room from 4:00 - 4:30pm.



You can designate Nativity Church or Nativity School as the beneficiaries of your Amazon Smile! You can choose Nativity by going to: **YOUR ACCOUNT, YOUR AMAZON SMILE and designating Nativity.** Amazon then contributes a small percentage of each purchase to Nativity. For questions, please contact Ann Benson at: 703 455 2400. Thank you!

Sign Up For the Diocesan E-Newsletter!

Receive special video messages from our bishop, learn about unique opportunities to get involved, and be the first to know the news about our Diocese - straight to your inbox. Sign up here: arlingtondiocese.org/email

Victim Assistance Program For Those Sexually Abused as Minors

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington provides comprehensive assistance to anyone who as a minor was sexually abused by a priest, deacon, teacher, employee or representative of the diocese. Parents, guardians, children and survivors of sexual abuse are invited and encouraged to contact the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, who will provide support, consultation, and referrals. The Catholic Diocese of Arlington is committed to assisting victims/survivors throughout the healing process. For further information, see www.arlingtondiocese.org/victim-assistance/ or call (703) 841-2530.



Women’s Cursillo! The next women’s Cursillo weekend will be held at Missionhurst in Arlington from Thursday, April 20 – Sunday, April 23

Cursillo (pronounced Cur-see-yo) is a movement of the 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://arlingtoncursillo.org/weekend-archives/> (The next men’s weekend will also be held at Missionhurst from Thursday, September 21 through Sunday September 24).

BIBLE STUDIES AT NATIVITY PARISH (1/23)



Tuesday morning Bible Study: We meet from 10am to 11:30 am in 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'll encounter Jesus through the Gospels. We read three chapters of Scripture each week and come together to talk about it. You can

register to do this either over Zoom or at a local coffee shop or restaurant, each group meeting at different dates and times. Register for the next Lent session beginning the week of February 26 at <https://nativityburke.org/ya-bible-study/> Contact **Alison Fram** afam@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. Register at <https://nativityburke.org/www/> OR Contact **Erin Barrett** wwpnativity@gmail.com

Thursday evening Bible Study: Meeting in person/virtually. We just finished our study of the Catholic Epistles, James, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude, 1, 2 & 3 John, very short epistles sent out to the universal Church. We will next look at how the books in the bible were selected. Meets each Thursday from 7:30 – 9:00pm in person in the school's Art Room and virtually. Contact **Deacon Dick Kelly** Deaconrk@aol.com

Friday morning Women's Bible Study. Meetings are Friday Mornings from 9:30-11:30 AM. We are currently studying Hebrews through February 10th. Our last two studies will be on Christ's Passion (Feb 24-Mar 31) and the Sermon on the Mount (Apr 14-May 5). We are operating with a hybrid format of in-person and Zoom meetings. 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 que ayudara a aumentar tu fe. 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 Escrituras. **Horario:** Viernes de 7:00-9:00 pm. Desde Septiembre 24, 2021 a Junio 3, 2022. 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 6:50 - 8:00 am in the Fr Ready room. Contact **Tim Yeager** yeagertd@verizon.net or **Bob Sands** bob@sandmark.net.

Saturday morning Men's Prayer and Reflection Group: Meeting virtually/in person. Men of all ages – Join us in reading and reflecting on Sunday scriptures and discussing how it relates to our lives and helps us become better Catholic husbands, dads, family members and friends. We meet Saturdays from 8:00 – 9:00 am virtually and in-person in the Training/Cry Room at the back of church. Drop-ins are always welcome! Contact **Rick Loffredo** rlickloffredo@outlook.com.

*"Come away by yourselves
and rest for a while"*

Mk 6:31



*"Totally love Him, Who gave
Himself totally for your love"*

-St Clare of Assisi



Take a few days and learn to place your burdens at the foot of the Cross so that you can rest in the arms of your abundantly generous Father. Spend time with St. Francis of Assisi, St. Clare, and Our Lady of Fatima meditating on the fruitful surrender to Poverty, Humility, and Charity. Led by Fr. Christensen.



www.ArlingtonDiocese.org/Retreat

Young Adult Retreat

May 12-14, 2023

San Damiano Retreat Center
near Shenandoah Valley



Padayon Pagsayaw

The Filipino/American Community Ministry, in collaboration with the Leyte Dance Theater, proudly Presents 90 Minutes of fun, culture, friendship, pure energy, and love in song, music and dance at, "Padayaw Padayon Pagsayaw" non-stop dancing on Saturday, May 20 at 4 p.m. (doors open at 3:00 p.m) at West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Road, West Springfield, VA 22152! General admission is \$40. Payment may be made in advance or at the door. Online payments are acceptable. Please confirm reservation by mailing checks payable to Filipino/American Community Ministry no later than Monday, May 1 with your name and contact info to: Filipino/American Community Ministry, 1106 Jackson Court, Falls Church, VA 22046. For more information contact the Office of Multicultural Ministries at mcm@arlingtondiocese.org or call 703.841.3881.

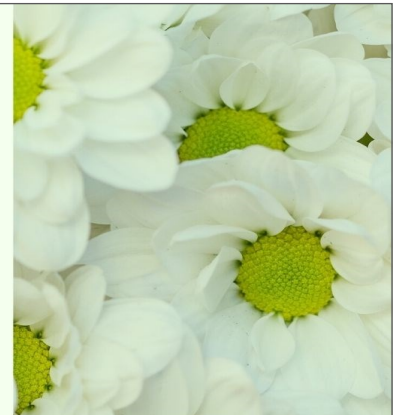


Emmanuel Duperrey in concert

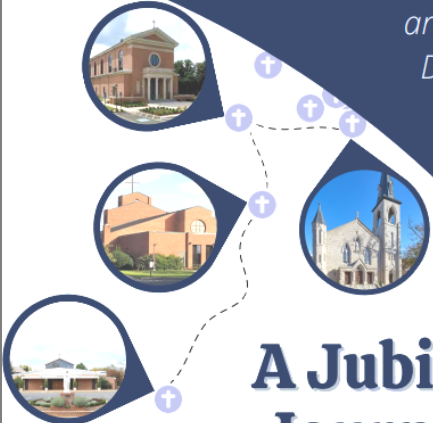
The St. Andrew the Apostle Concert Series presents award-winning French organist Emmanuel Duperrey in concert at 4 p.m Sunday, April 30, at St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church, 6720 Union Mill Road, Clifton, Virginia. A meet-the-artist reception with light refreshments will follow the performance in the Parish Hall. For more information visit www.st-andrew.org/concerts or call 703-817-1770.

Core Principle:
The Marriage
Enrichment Ministry
strengthens marriages
in the Church and
provides support to all
couples called to the
holy vocation of
marriage.

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT
MINISTRY
@NATIVITYPARISHBURKE




Did you know that there are 11 churches in the Diocese of Arlington named after the Blessed Mother?




A Jubilee Journey with Mary

During this second year of preparation for the Diocesan Jubilee, Bishop Burbidge invites you to visit as many of these churches as possible through this Marian journey!



50 DIocese of Arlington
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

#ArlingtonJubilee



To join the journey, scan the QR code or go to:
www.arlingtondiocese.org/jubileejourney



Follow Bishop Burbidge on Twitter!

Bishop Burbidge has over 21,000 followers on Twitter! His daily reflections and posts are popular and insightful. Follow him @BishopBurbidge.



THEY HAVE ANSWERED THE CALL. WILL YOU?

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



Funding Priestly Education for the Future of Our Diocese

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: arlingtondiocese.org/Donate_SEEF

Called by Christ!



**WEEKEND
DISCERNMENT
RETREAT FOR
WOMEN
(AGES 18-40)**

June 16-18

Cost: \$100 includes private room and all meals

Register with the Office of
Vocations by June 5:

vocations@arlingtondiocese.org
(703) 841-2514

Sponsored by the Office of Vocations, with the Trappist-Cistercian Sisters from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Crozet, VA.



Good News

INSPIRATION FOR DAILY LIFE

5th Sunday of Lent

Sunday March 26

Ezra 37:12-14
Ps 130:1-8
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

Monday March 27

Daniel 13:1-9,15-17,19-30,
33-62 or 13:41c-62
Ps 23:1-6
John 8:1-11

Tuesday March 28

Numbers 21:4-9
Ps 102:2-3,16-21
John 8:21-30

Wednesday March 29

Daniel 3:14-20,91-92,95
Daniel 3:52-56
John 8:31-42

Thursday March 30

Genesis 17:3-9
Ps 105:4-9
John 8:51-59

Friday March 31

Jeremiah 20:10-13
Ps 18:2-7
John 10:31-42

Saturday April 1

Ezra 37:21-28
Jeremiah 31:10-13
John 11:45-56

Lent is not about suffering and sacrifice. It's a corridor to new life. Good Friday is not about pain and death. It's the door that Jesus opens to invite us into that new life.

Yes, suffering is part of the Lenten journey (which can be experienced at any time of the year). Yes, Lent includes the sacrifices of fasting and abstinence, almsgiving and extra time in church. But these are just vehicles for the trip.

God uses our sufferings (if we let him) to help us grow in compassion, persistence, and ministry. Our sacrifices teach us discipline (which is discipleship) so that we can purify our will and grow stronger in holiness. But the trip is not the destination.

Lent is all about reaching the resurrection: renewing our faith, entering a new life free of old sins, reconciling damaged relationships, and living in the

Spirit of God more than we ever did before.

Which day is more important to your faith: Good Friday or Easter? That horrid day on Calvary was necessary for Easter, but we are living in the resurrection! Catholics are an Easter people. This means that nothing bad can ever happen to us that will not be transformed into blessings if Jesus is the Lord of our lives.

He proved himself to be the Resurrection and the Life by displaying his power over life and death. Now he wants to prove it again – to you and to all those who are watching.



Reflect & Discuss:

- † We can personalize the first reading by understanding that God will open our graves (whatever is dead inside of us) and will place his Spirit of Life within us. How does the Holy Spirit help us discover healing and hope amidst daily sufferings?
- † In the scripture from Romans, we are reminded again of the Holy Spirit within us. Since the Spirit is alive in you, what affect does this have on your Lenten journey? What is being purified, strengthened, and renewed?
- † In the Gospel, Jesus proves his power over death just before he enters Jerusalem and heads toward Calvary. How does this prove to you that your own sufferings and sacrifices will not lead to permanent disaster?

Lenten Activity:

What needs to be resurrected in your life? What will you do this week to accept the death of what has ended so that you can prepare for the new life that Jesus is preparing for you?



SEMANA SANTA
Se Celebra en la Parroquia
DE LA NATIVIDAD 2023



JUEVES SANTO, 6 DE ABRIL

Oraciones de la Mañana a las 8:30am
Misa de la Cena del Señor: 7:30pm (Bilingüe)

VIERNES SANTO, 7 DE ABRIL

Oraciones de la Mañana a las 8:30am
Novena de la Divina Misericordia a las 9:00am
Vía Crucis: 6:00pm (español)
Celebración de la Pasión del Señor: 6:30pm (español)

SABADO SANTO, 8 DE ABRIL

Oraciones de la Mañana a las 8:30am
Bendición de los Alimentos de Pascua: 9:00am

VIGILIA DE PASCUA, 8 DE ABRIL A LAS 8:30PM

La Vigilia Pascual en la Noche Santa
Bendición del fuego nuevo, Iluminación de la Vela de Pascua y la
Celebración de los Sacramentos de Iniciación con los Elegidos y
Candidatos de RICA Y RCIC

DOMINGO DE PASCUA DE LA RESURRECCION DEL SENOR,
9 DE ABRIL

Misas a las: 5:30am, 7:00am, 11:00am y 1:00pm (español)
NO habrá misa vespertina el Domingo de Pascua

*La oficina parroquial cerrará a las 12pm el jueves, 6 de abril, y estará cerrada todo el día el viernes, 7 de abril, el domingo, 9 de abril y el lunes, 10 de abril.
La oficina estará abierta el sábado 8 de abril de 9:00 am a 5:00pm.*

¿SÁCANOS FUERA, SEÑOR!

V Domingo de Cuaresma
Javier Leoz



NOS encontramos en la recta final de la Cuaresma. Tres sugerentes catequesis bautismales, impresionantes todas ellas, han querido incentivar nuestra fe en estos últimos domingos: **la samaritana, el ciego de nacimiento y hoy la resurrección de Lázaro.**

Y, en las tres instrucciones, un denominador común: JESUS como agua, luz y vida para el creyente.

-¿Por qué, si Jesús es vida, nos cuesta tanto transmitir precisamente esa idea sobre la fe?

-¿Por qué, cuando muchas personas se acercan a nuestras celebraciones, tienen la sensación de que –en vez de savia- ahí se respira rutina, excesiva mecanicidad en los gestos o que no estamos en aquello que celebramos?

Hoy, la resurrección de Lázaro, pone las cartas sobre la mesa: ¡Cristo es la resurrección! El motor que nos empuja a un cambio de mentalidad y de actitudes. Sólo por este gran regalo que nos trae Jesús, una resurrección para nunca morir, merece la pena intentar una renovación en el aquí y en el ahora. Situar a Dios justo en el lugar que le corresponde y saber que, el Señor, está por encima de la misma muerte. Existen muchos agoreros que, desde distintos vértices –creyentes o no- presagian un final desencantador y de difícil solución para el mundo. Pero, Dios, que puede todo como Dios y que tiene un corazón de Padre, nos hace comprender que, con Jesús, la salvación es posible.

De muchos temores nos libra Jesús. A Marta y María, les recuperó del dramatismo y del colapso que les supuso la muerte de su hermano querido. A Lázaro le desembarazó de una muerte injusta y venida por sorpresa. Y, ¿a sus amigos y vecinos? Pues, tal vez, les sacudió de aquel mar de dudas que, tal vez en aquel momento, se hallaban inmersos sobre Jesús.

¡Pero ojo! El relato de Lázaro tiene un trasfondo que nos debe hacer más reflexivos y llevar a una interiorización: *¡Lázaro! ¡Sal fuera! Y ¿qué hizo Lázaro? Obedecer.* El creyente, por si lo hemos olvidado, es alguien que confía en Dios, que se fía de Dios y que obedece al Pastor.

¡Cuántas personas muertas en vida que viven de espaldas a la novedad del Evangelio! Prefieren quedarse en sus sepulcros fletados por el poder, el bienestar o el dinero.

¡Cuántas personas asfixiadas por las vendas de la seducción, de la apariencia o de la incredulidad! Han optado por lo efímero y, cualquier invitación a dejar todo su “modus vivendi” es poco menos que una injerencia o una falta de respeto a su libertad

¡Cuántas personas rodeadas, no por “Martas ni Marías” (que alertan a despertar a la fe y a la vida) sino por ambientes hostiles a la fe cuando no indiferentes, apáticos o descaradamente contrarios.

El evangelio de hoy nos interpela a todos: ¿Somos vida como creyentes? ¿La anunciamos? ¿Somos portadores de la Buena Noticia de Jesús? ¿Recurrimos a Jesús para hacerle sabedor de aquellos que, tal vez, han muerto un poco o un todo para la fe? ¿Llamamos a Jesús para que nos socorra y nos reanime –aunque sea eventualmente como lo fue en Lázaro- y luego, a continuación, buscarle, creer en El y seguir sus caminos?

Hoy, con el Evangelio de Lázaro, tenemos que reafirmar nuestra fe en Cristo surtidor de vida eterna. Hoy, con el Evangelio en mano, hemos de procurar ser más intrépidos para gritar donde haga falta y a quien más veamos que lo necesite: ¡Sal fuera! De tus miserias, de tu cerrazón, de tu tristeza, de tus angustias, de tus pruebas o de tus cruces! ¡Sal fuera! Sólo así, aventurándonos en esa línea valiente y convencida ¡Sal fuera! Podremos llevar a Jesús a tantos hombres y mujeres que, en vida, ha muerto porque nadie les llevo a tiempo a Jesús fuente de vida. ¿Lo intentamos? De todas maneras, en este quinto domingo de cuaresma, pidamos al Señor: ¡sácanos de la muerte a la vida!

¡QUE SALGA FUERA, SEÑOR!

De la oscuridad que no me deja verte
a la luz que me da la vida

De las dudas que ciegan mis ojos
a la certeza que me invita a seguirte
De la tristeza que sacude mi existencia
a la alegría que infunde tu persona.

¡QUE SALGA FUERA, SEÑOR!

De los miedos que me paralizan,
a la fortaleza que me regala tu Palabra
De la inseguridad de mis pasos
a la firmeza de tus caminos

¡QUE SALGA FUERA, SEÑOR!

De la muerte, cuando yo vivo como Tú quieres,
a la vida que siento cuando Tú estás presente
Del mi afán de suficiencia que fracasa
al reconocimiento de tu poder que todo lo puede

¡QUE SALGA FUERA, SEÑOR!

De lo efímero que pasa y caduca
a lo eterno que Tú me dices me espera

De mi manera peculiar de vivir la vida
a esa otra que, Tú, me dices es rica y diferente

¡QUE SALGA FUERA, SEÑOR!

Que me libre de esas largas vendas
que me impiden ser libre y seguirte

Que me sacuda de los aromas
con que la sociedad quiere perfumarme y ma-
quillarme

Que sea fuerte para desprenderme
de tantas losas que pretenden silenciarme

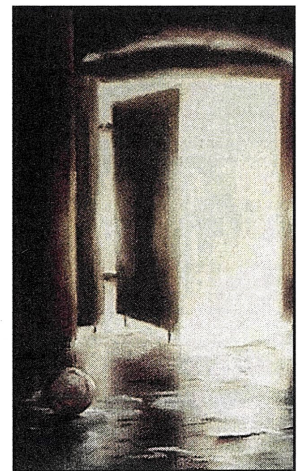
¡QUE SALGA FUERA, SEÑOR!

¡SACÚDEME CO TU FUERZA DIVINA!
¡HÁBLAME CON PALABRAS DE ETERNI-
DAD!

¡HAZME MORIR EN AQUELLO
QUE ME SEPARA DE TI!

Amén.

Javier Leoz



Cada uno de nosotros es un grano de trigo
Meditaciones para toda la Cuaresma
Quinto domingo de Cuaresma. Los que quieren echarse a perder, se guardan para sí mismos en el egoísmo; y los que se entregan, acaban por dar fruto.



Por: P. Cipriano Sánchez LC | Fuente: Catholic.net
 Podemos hacer muchas cosas o tener grandes posesiones, pero nunca debemos perder de vista que lo importante es el bien que hacemos a los demás. Ésa tiene que acabar siendo nuestra más importante y auténtica riqueza.

Dios ama al que da con alegría, y en el Evangelio escuchábamos una parábola de nuestro Señor sobre este darse. Darse significa que, como el grano de trigo, uno tiene que caer en la tierra y pudrirse para dar fruto. Es imposible darse con comodidad, es imposible darse sin que nos cueste nada. Al contrario, el entregarse verdaderamente a los demás y el ayudar a los demás siempre nos va a costar.

Vivimos en un mundo de muchas comodidades, y no sé si nosotros seríamos capaces de resistir el sufrimiento, cuando cosas tan pequeñas, tan insignificantes, a veces nos resultan tan dolorosas. La fe nos pide ser testigos de Cristo en la vida diaria, en la caridad diaria, en el esfuerzo diario, en la comprensión diaria, en la lucha diaria por ayudar a los demás, por hacer que los demás se sientan más a gusto, más tranquilos, más felices. Ahí es donde está, para todos nosotros, el modo de ser testigos de Cristo.

Tenemos que entregarnos auténticamente, entregarnos con más fidelidad, entregarnos con un corazón muy disponible a los demás. Cada uno tiene que saber cuál es el modo concreto de entregarse a los demás. ¿Cómo puedo yo entregarme a los demás? ¿Qué significa darme los demás?

Ciertamente, para todos nosotros, lo que va a significar es renunciar a nuestro egoísmo, renunciar a nuestras flojeras, renunciar a todas esas situaciones en las que podemos estar buscándonos a nosotros mismos.

Jesucristo nos dice en el Evangelio que todo aquél que se busca a sí mismo, acabará perdiéndose, porque acaba quedándose nada más con el propio egoísmo. La riqueza de la Iglesia es su capacidad de entrega, su capacidad de amor, su capacidad de vivir en caridad. Una Iglesia que viviese nada más para sí misma, para sus intereses, para sus conveniencias sería una Iglesia que estaría viviendo en el egoísmo y que no estaría dando un testimonio de fe. Y un cristiano que nada más viva para sí mismo, para lo que a uno le interesa, para lo que uno busca, sería un cristiano que no está dando fruto.

Dios da la semilla, a nosotros nos toca sembrar. Dios nos ha dado nuestras cualidades, a nosotros nos toca desarrollarlas; Dios nos ha dado el corazón, el interés, la inteligencia, la voluntad, la libertad, la capacidad de amar; pero el amar o el no amar, el entregarnos o no entregarnos, el ser egoístas o ser generosos depende sola y únicamente de nosotros.

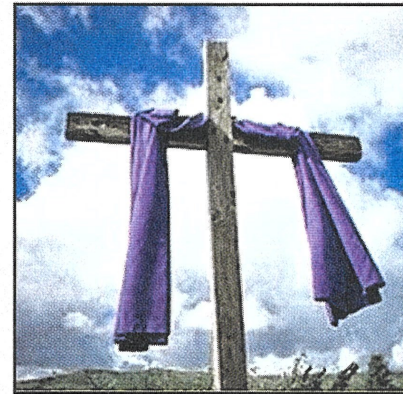
Es en la generosidad donde el hombre es feliz, y es en el egoísmo en donde el hombre es auténticamente desgraciado. Aunque a veces la generosidad nos cueste y nos sea difícil; aunque a veces el ser generosos signifique el sacrificarnos, es ahí donde vamos a ser felices, porque sólo da una espiga el grano de trigo que cae en la tierra y se pudre, se sacrifica, mientras que el grano de trigo que se guarda en un arcón acaba estropeándose, se lo acaban comiendo los animales o echándose a perder.

Cada uno de nosotros es un grano de trigo. Reflexionemos y preguntémonos: ¿Quiero echarme a perder o dar frutos? Y recordemos que sólo hay dos tipos de personas en esta vida: los que quieren echarse a perder y se guardan para sí mismos en el egoísmo; o los que entregándose, acaban por dar fruto.

Una Cuaresma desde Dios Cuaresma

Si vivimos la Cuaresma desde Dios, se convertirá en la mejor preparación para la gran fiesta de la Pascua.

Por: P. Fernando Pascual L.C. | Fuente: Catholic.net



Podemos recorrer los 40 días de la Cuaresma desde una perspectiva errónea, sin darles su auténtico sentido.

¿Cuándo ocurre eso? Cuando vemos la Cuaresma como una tradición de la Iglesia más o menos comprensible pero sin mucho sentido en el ajetreado tiempo que nos ha tocado vivir; cuando buscamos maneras de hacer (nosotros, según los propios deseos) algunos sacrificios para tranquilizar la conciencia y "cumplir"; cuando soportamos con paciencia 40 días en los que nos esforzamos por ser más austeros para llegar luego a momentos de mayor fiesta y alegría... Entonces es que no hemos comprendido el verdadero sentido de la Cuaresma.

Pero también podemos recorrer los 40 días que nos preparan a la Pascua desde una perspectiva justa. Si los pensamos como un momento para orar, ayunar, servir, dar; si los vivimos como una invitación de Dios a la conversión, al arrepentimiento, al cambio de conducta; si los aprovechamos para dedicar más tiempo a la lectura de la Biblia... Entonces habremos hecho un buen uso de esos días tan particulares en el calendario cristiano.

La Cuaresma es un tiempo en el que Dios nos invita, nos llama, nos ofrece ocasiones maravillosas para redescubrir nuestra identidad cristiana. Es verdad que Dios actúa siempre, que no hay tiempos sin que nos busque y nos ofrezca su gracia. Pero también es verdad que, como seres humanos, necesitamos estímulos y ayudas concretas para afrontar con más intensidad y esfuerzo lo que deberían ser compromisos constantes de quienes hemos sido tocados por Cristo en el Bautismo.

Ya estamos en Cuaresma. Si la vivimos desde Dios, si la sentimos como un momento de gracia, de mayor compromiso, de lucha contra el mundo, el demonio y la carne, se convertirá en la mejor preparación para la gran fiesta de la Pascua. Entonces la noticia de la Muerte y de la Resurrección de Cristo llegará más dentro y más fuerte a nuestras vidas: nos permitirá vivir los días de Pascua y todo el resto del año como hombres y mujeres redimidos por la Sangre de Cristo, el Cordero inmolado porque amaba al Padre y a los hombres.

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