

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST



Nativity

1973 2023

Celebrating 50 Years!

"We are God's people" - 1 Peter 2:10

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
Allison 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

SATURDAY MASSES: 9:00 a.m. Morning Mass
5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass
7:00 p.m. Vigil Mass in Spanish

SUNDAY MASSES: 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

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**



“Take it, this is my body. This is my blood which will be shed for many.”

My dear parishioners,

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is food for our journey to heaven. Christ gives us the gift of himself as a promise to be with us always. How wonderful a sacrament! How precious is the outpouring of Christ’s unselfish love for us.

We who are fed and nourished by the Body of Christ are transformed and become the Body of Christ. Those who receive the Eucharist are united more closely to Christ. We who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

“Quote from St. Augustine”

If you are the body and members of Christ, then it is your sacrament that is placed on the table of the Lord; it is your sacrament that you receive. To that which you are you respond “Amen” (yes, it is true!) and by responding to it you assent to it. For you hear the words, “the Body of Christ” and respond “Amen.” Be then a member of the Body of Christ that your Amen may be true.

The Eucharist commits us to the Poor

To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest, his brethren.

“You have tasted the Blood of the Lord, yet you do not recognize your brother.... You dishonor this table when you do not judge worthy of sharing your food with someone judged worthy to take part in this meal... God freed you from all your sins and invited you here, but you have not become more merciful” (St. John Chrysostom).

The people of Nativity parish have faithfully celebrated the Eucharist for 50 years and strived to live the gospel. Jesus said *“Do this in memory of me.”* We remember all God has done in the lives of our parishioners. The Eucharist has been the *“food for our journey.”* We have passed the threshold of our church doors with joy and hope celebrating the wonderful works of God in our lives. Sometimes we have gathered in sorrow to unite ourselves with Christ who has known our pains. And always we have shared generously giving of ourselves to the poor and needy as Jesus commanded us to do. We rejoice today in the love and faith of Nativity parish on this jubilee day. The journey that began 50 years ago has been guided by the Holy Spirit and ultimately leads us to heaven and that great communion.

Let us honor Christ by recognizing the image of God in each of our brothers and sisters, especially the poor, the stranger, and weakest among us. *“Whatever you do to the least you do to me.”* (Matt 25). Happy Feast Day and Happy Anniversary!

Love and Blessings,

Fr. Bob Cilinski

Fr. Bob Cilinski, Pastor

**NATIVITY 50th
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

June 11, 2023

FATHER MARTIN CENTER | AFTER ALL MORNING MASSES



This weekend, June 11, Nativity Parish will celebrate it's 50th anniversary! You and your family are invited to attend any Sunday Mass this weekend in honor of the anniversary. There will be a donut breakfast reception in the Father Martin Center after all the Sunday morning Masses, and a reception after the 11:00am Mass. Bishop Burbidge will celebrate the 11:00am Mass.

THERE WILL BE NO 1:00PM MASS SUNDAY, JUNE 11

**On This Date in Nativity History
11 June 1977**

On this date, the fourth anniversary of the founding of the parish, the groundbreaking for a new church was held. In this photo, our pastor, Father Frank Ready turns over the first spade of dirt at the groundbreaking ceremony. To the left is Jack Herrity, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. To the right is Marie Travesky, member of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors representing the Springfield District.



This historical note is the 53rd, and last, of a weekly Bulletin feature leading up to Nativity's fiftieth anniversary, 11 June 2023. We hope you have enjoyed these brief trips back to see the rich history of our parish. We hope you will want to buy a copy of the parish History book, “A Faith Community's First Half Century.”

Please be aware that this weekend's 50th Anniversary Masses, will be heavily attended. The Church and parking lots will be very busy, please plan accordingly and respect all non-parking areas. Please DO NOT park along the yellow lines. Overflow parking will be available across the street at Kiddie Country Learning Center, 9601 Old Keene Mill Road.

A FATHER'S DAY NOVENA OF MASSES

Will be said during the month of June for all Fathers, living and deceased. Spiritual Bouquet cards will be available at the Church entrance and the Parish office. Their names will be placed on the alter. The Novena of Masses Schedule will be as follows:



Sunday June 18	9:00AM
Sunday June 18	11:00AM
Sunday, June 18	5:30PM
Monday, June 19	7:30AM
Tuesday, June 20	12:00PM
Thursday, June 22	7:30AM
Friday, June 23	7:30AM
Saturday, June 24	9:00AM
Saturday, June 24	5:00PM

Religious Education Coordinator Position
Nativity Catholic Church in Burke, Virginia is seeking a full time Religious Education Coordinator

The applicant will assist the Directors of Religious Education in leading a vibrant 1,100 student K through 8th grade Catholic Religious Education Program.

The ideal candidate should possess an advanced level degree in Catholic Theology, Religious Education or Catechetics. The person should be competent in applying age appropriate catechetical methods and basic program development. One should be open to training and certification in the Diocese of Arlington. The applicant should have good human relationship skills and the ability to work well with others on a supportive team of staff and volunteer catechists.

A competitive salary based on experience is offered. Submit cover letter and resume NLT June 24, 2023 to Fr. Bob Cilinski c/o Ann Benson at 6400 Nativity Lane Burke VA 22015 or via email to abenson@nativityburke.org.

BLESSING OF THE NATIVITY GROTTO

June 5, 2023



Coordinator of Marriage Enrichment

We are seeking a person to coordinate a vibrant Marriage Enrichment program that has been established at Nativity parish and is supported by a core team of volunteer married couples

The applicant should have experience in church ministry, married in the church, and an understanding of the sacrament of marriage and human relations. An openness to continuing formation and training in Christian marriage is essential for leading others in faith formation. This ministry empowers couples to build healthy relationships in a non-judgmental and welcoming atmosphere.

This is a part-time position 20-25 hours per week. Competitive pay based on experience is offered.

Submit cover letter and resume NLT June 24, 2023 to Fr. Bob Cilinski c/o Ann Benson at 6400 Nativity Lane Burke VA 22015 or via email to abenson@nativityburke.org.



A message from The Nativity Creation Care Ministry

On May 24th, two members of Creation Care Ministry, Linda Nordstrom and Marilyn Dorner, visited Ms. Fetzer's 4th grade class during Colonial Day. They visited to help the students plant the Three Sisters plants in the Nativity Raised bed vegetable gardens. The students planted corn, squash and beans. Any produce harvested will be donated to the food insecure in our area.



If you would like to assist with weeding and watering the vegetable gardens over the summer, please contact: nativitycreationcare@gmail.com to receive sign-up genius information.

"In Mary's Footsteps" a group for Widows

Please join us for our next meeting of Nativity's group for widows, run by widows on June 12th at 11:00am in the church training room. We strive to go forward in our Blessed Mother's footsteps of strong faith and peace without our husbands here on earth. Our group supports each other in faith and fellowship on our journey. Activities have included retreats for widows, dinners out, and other "field trips" together.

For more information, please contact Cat Sands, Pastoral Minister, at csands@nativityburke.org. Meetings are typically held on the second Monday of the month. Please feel free to join us.

ALTAR FLOWERS Donated by



Debby and Rex McHail
 In Loving Memory of
 Our Parents



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl meeting for this month will be held on Monday morning, June 12th at 9:30am in the Fr. Ready room. All are welcome!



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FRENCHY CYR SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDEES

The following students each were awarded the 2023-2024 \$1000 Frenchy Cyr Memorial scholarship for Catholic secondary school tuition for their exemplary academic performance, sustained school and community involvement, and outstanding Church and religious activity participation.

Hannah Ly (Nativity School), and Liam Ginty attending Saint John Paul the Great High School, Jennifer Dee and Sophia Cassidy attending Bishop Ireton High School, Mackenzie Boland (Nativity School) attending Bishop O'Connell High School, and Teagan Kelly (Nativity School) attending Saint Pail VI High School

Congratulations to all our winners!

The Nativity History Book is NOW ON SALE!!



For \$15 you and your family can take home a copy of the first 50 years of our parish history. This book was written by a committee of Nativity parishioners and includes many colorful photos for the whole family to enjoy.

You're welcome to purchase your copy after Sunday Mass, stop by the gift shop or parish office during business hours with a check or cash (exact change please).



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

NOW OPEN!
on the parish website



The Campus Ministry at George Mason University is hosting Thursday Night Gatherings (TNG) for all local college students and graduating high school seniors every Thursday in June and July starting at 7:00pm at the St. Robert Bellarmine Chapel (4515 Roberts Road, Fairfax, VA). It's a great way to meet college students from different schools! Follow us @catholic.patriot on Instagram! Find out more at www.gmuccm.org or email lnavarro@ccmgmu.org



MASS INTENTIONS

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

Monday, June 12th

7:30 am † Alfred Visco

Tuesday, June 13th

7:30 am † Maurie Martin

12:00 pm † Deceased Members of the Torres - Espinoza Family

Wednesday, June 14th

7:30 am † Ricky Medina Jr.

Thursday, June 15th

7:30 am † Carmen Pennington & Herman Ferguson

12:00 pm † Storm Watkins

Friday, June 16th

7:30 am 50th Wedding Anniversary of Richard & Linda Spachtholz

Saturday, June 17th

9:00 am † Lauraine Laverdiere

5:00 pm † Angela Machado

7:00 pm Parishioners

Sunday, June 18th

7:00 am Parishioners

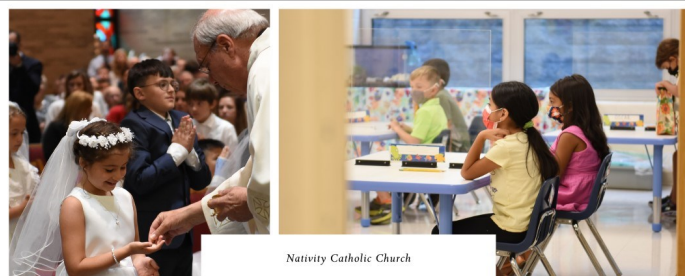
9:00 am Father's Day Novena

11:00 am Father's Day Novena

1:00 pm † Joseph Shia

5:30 pm Father's Day Novena

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



Nativity Catholic Church

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

REGISTER ONLINE NOW





TWO WORDS: "EGADS! THE NATIVITY YARD SALE IS ALMOST HERE!"

Collections of treasures will begin Thursday, June 15, 2023 and continue through Wednesday, June 21, 2023. Check our flyer for treasures that are acceptable and non-acceptable. Your donations are tax-deductible and sincerely appreciated.

FOR FURNITURE PICK-UPS CALL 703-598-0698 or EMAIL NATIVITYYARDSALE@GMAIL.COM. ALL DONATIONS MUST BE IN GOOD CONDITION AND ACCEPTABLE (CHECK THE NON-ACCEPTABLE LIST).

Interested in helping with the yard sale. Volunteers are always welcome. No experience required. Sign-up to volunteer to help with collections June 15th through June 21st at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0D4EACAC29A2F58-nativity3>

The Nativity Annual Yard Sale for Charity, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Father Vincent S. Sikora Council 7992, is Saturday, June 24, 2023.

CHILDREN'S ROSARY NEWS



June, July, August: We will be on summer break. Meetings will resume in September on the SECOND and FOURTH Saturdays of each month (we added a second meeting time this year and will continue this rhythm next year), barring holiday weekends. We will meet in the School Chapel at 4:00pm. This is also a location change, we no longer meet in the Training Room.

THE CATECHISM IN A YEAR

2023 GATHERING DATES

7pm | Art Room

February 1

April 19

June 14

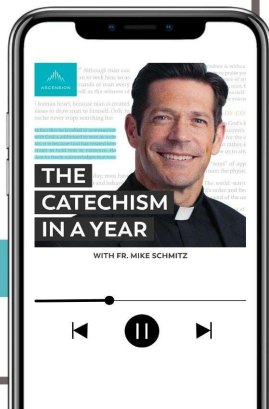
August 23

November 29

Celebration dinner

7pm | Teacher's Lounge

January 5



Church Of the Nativity

Parish Yard Sale for Charity

Saturday, June 24—8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

6398 Nativity Lane, Burke, VA

No strollers during sale -- All sales final



Donations collected at the Nativity cafeteria/Fr. Martin Center (gym)

SEE REVERSE FOR ACCEPTABLE/NON-ACCEPTABLE ITEMS PLEASE—ALL DONATED ITEMS MUST BE IN GOOD CONDITION!

Drop-off Hours

Thursday/Friday, June 15-16	6:00 PM-9:00 PM
Saturday, June 17	9:00 AM-2:00 PM
Sunday, June 18	2:00 PM-5:00 PM
Monday, June 19	10:00 AM-4:00 PM
Monday 6/19-Wed. 6/21	6:00 PM-9:00 PM
Thursday/Friday, June 22-23	NO COLLECTIONS!

Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
6/15	6/16	6/17	6/18	6/19	6/20	6/21	6/22	6/23
6-9 PM	6-9 PM	9 AM -2 PM	2 PM-5 PM	10AM - 4 PM; 6-9 PM	6-9 PM	6-9 PM	NO drop-offs!!	NO drop-offs!!

For more information please call: Dave Zivich 703-598-0698

Tax receipts provided

Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Fr. Vincent S. Sikora Council 7992

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS

- Linens (clean)
- Dishware/cookware/kitchen items
- Clothing (clean; see non-acceptable list below)
- Small appliances (working)
- Electronics (working; see non-acceptable list below)
- Sporting goods/ Toys/games
- Furniture (clean/undamaged; see non-acceptable list below)
- Books/DVDs/CDs
- TVs—flat screen only!
- Tools
- Jewelry

NON-ACCEPTABLE ITEMS

- Undergarments (boxers/briefs/panties/bras, etc.)
- Shoes/footwear
- Medications/Cosmetics/Food
- Computer desks
- Unboxed Christmas trees
- Computers/hardware/printers/network hardware
- Metal desks/drawers/filing cabinets
- Desks > 5-foot wide
- Microwave ovens/Large appliances
- Unframed mirrors/glass
- Mattresses/beds/Sofa Beds
- Pressboard furniture
- Upholstered furniture
- Rugs (any size)
- Pianos/organs
- Tires
- Skis
- Flammables
- Motorized fitness equipment
- Multi-function workout stations
- China cabinets
- ALL Entertainment centers

Furniture pick-up requests 703-598-0698 or davezivich@gmail.com

(First floor or walk-out level only!!)



June 4, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our diocesan priests dedicate their lives to serving and guiding us on our life-long journey of faith. They have administered the sacraments, preached the Gospel, encouraged and prayed for us and our families. They look forward to peace in their retirement years, while continuing to pray for our diocese and God's holy people. Many priests continue to minister and offer their priestly services in retirement.

Currently there are 195 diocesan priests serving in our diocese. Of these, 29 priests are retired, and over the next ten years, 18 additional priests will reach retirement age.

On June 10-11, at all Masses, the annual second collection for retired priests will take place in the parishes of our diocese.

This special collection will provide funds for clergy post-retirement health care, nursing home care, and the priests' pension fund. The collection also assists several specific needs, including the ongoing operational expenses of the *Saint Rose of Lima Priests Retirement Villa*, a residence for up to 15 priests.

I ask you to be as generous as possible so that our priests, who have faithfully served the People of God in our diocese, may be cared for in their retirement years.

May Our Risen Lord Jesus bless you with the gift of His peace and watch over you always.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Arlington

Catholic Diocese of Arlington

Support Our Retired Diocesan Priests

"My retired brother priests and I are truly blessed to know of the care and compassion shown by parishioners through this special collection which helps to support us in our retirement years."
-Msgr. John Cregan

Special Collection THIS WEEKEND

St. Rose of Lima Retirement Villa



AREAS OF SUPPORT

- The Saint Rose of Lima Priests' Retirement Villa
- Funds for future needs such as health care during retirement and Nursing Home Care
- The Priests' Pension Fund

OUR PRIESTS AT A GLANCE:

- 195 Diocesan priests
- 29 are retired
- Another 18 priests will retire in the next ten years.

YOUR DONATION WILL HELP SUPPORT DIOCESAN RETIRED PRIESTS WHO HAVE SERVED OUR CHURCH

Religious Education Registration for 2023-2024 classes

NOW OPEN

Please visit our parish website for all details and registration will be up on our Religious Education page nativityburke.org

National Celebrate Life Day: June 24th

Join the first-ever National Celebrate Life Day Rally at the Lincoln Memorial from 10:30am-12:00pm ET on Saturday, June 24th in Washington, D.C. and hear from many leaders in the pro-life movement! Celebrate the anniversary of the Dobbs decision that put Roe on the ash heap of history Sign up and get a free "Celebrate Life" Rally Pass in the mail! By being together, we will show America that the Post-Roe Generation is more committed to protecting the unborn and their moms with the truth more than ever before. We are on the right side of history, science, and human rights.

The Nativity Religious Education Program Needs Volunteers for the 2023-2024 School Year

Please prayerfully consider assisting this vital program in our church. Volunteers (like you!) are the good witnesses of the Catholic faith that the youth of our parish need. Available positions: Catechists, Assistant Catechists, Office Assistants, High School Catechist Assistants, SPRED Volunteers, and Substitutes Catechists. There is a 50% RE tuition discount for the children of catechists during their year of commitment. For more information, please visit our website, or email: nativity.ccd@nativityschool.org

Rosary Ministry

We are happy to announce that the Rosary makers are gathering on Tuesday, June 13th, at 1:00 PM in the Fr. Ready Room. All are invited to learn about the World Mission Rosaries as encouraged by Bishop Fulton Sheen. These are beautiful rosaries of different colors and we enjoy sending them all over the world. For more information email us at rosaryministry@nativityburke.org

Love Is Given Prayer Group

Please join us every Thursday evening from 7:00PM-8:30 PM for an evening of prayer, praise and community. We meet each week in the Fr. Ready room. Come in through the school entrance, first room on your left. We look forward to seeing you!

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!

CELEBRATING 19 YEARS!

SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS

~ SUMMER CAMPS ~

THIS SUMMER,
YOUR CHILD WILL
ACT OUT LOUD.
CREATE
A MASTERPIECE.
SING & DANCE.
TAKE A BOW.

July 10-21, 2023

**All Saints Catholic Church
in Manassas, VA**

**Nativity Catholic Church
in Burke, VA**

**THEATRE, MUSIC,
AND ART CAMPS
FOR ELEMENTARY,
MIDDLE SCHOOL,
AND HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS**

**FREE
T-SHIRT
AND
DISCOUNTS
AVAILABLE
FOR EARLY BIRD
REGISTRATIONS**

SpotlightSummerCamps.com



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.

Mowing: A deceased Knight's family needs your help taking care of the lawn this summer. Sign up on Linktree.

50th Anniversary: 10-11 June: Help set up the tents, clean up and direct traffic. Check out the linktree.

Yard Sale: ALL HANDS event! Brothers, please sign up for at least one day's work, or just show up during our 2 week yard sale. Families and friends welcome. We have huge amounts of treasures to sort and price. If you have a truck or van, sign up to help pick up furniture. Be a cashier on the day of. We need everyone available to assist June 15-24th. This is the council's second biggest charity fundraiser! Sign up on the linktree. Contact Br. Dave Zivich with any questions at davezivich@gmail.com.

National Celebrate Life Day: Join the first-ever National Celebrate Life Day Rally at the Lincoln Memorial at 10:30am-12:00pm ET on Saturday, June 24th in Washington, D.C. and hear from many leaders in the pro-life movement! Celebrate the anniversary of the Dobbs decision that put Roe on the ash heap of history. Sign up and get a free "Celebrate Life" Rally Pass in the mail! By being together, we will show America that the Post-Roe Generation is more committed to protecting the preborn than ever before. We are on the right side of history, science, and human rights. Then at 7:00pm join in the 2023 Celebrate Life Gala at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington D.C. honoring heroes of the pro-life movement from 1973 to the 2000s (\$250/ticket). Contact Br. RickLoffredo@outlook.com.

Vacation Bible Camp BBQ: We will need some grillers to help feed kids on the evening of 30 June. Details to follow.

Food for Others: We need volunteer 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.

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.

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.



WorkCamp 2023

The teens and adults of Nativity have been in formation since November, and our week away is just around the corner (June 17-23, 2023). Our hope is that you can start praying for us as we get ready to head to Winchester, Virginia for a week of intentional service and Christian community. If you would like to write any of the teens or adults notes, we would love that as well. Please drop them off at the Parish Front Office by Thursday, June 15, 2023. Thank you for your continued support and love as we venture out as disciples this summer.

Teens

Dylan Aranibar
Noah Beard
Michael Birden
Liam Caron
Hannah Engdahl
Jaren Riley Fontejon
Charlotte Gaeta
David Griffith
Sebastian Haworth
Gabiella Lazarte
Alex Lazarte
Noel Mazzola
Noah Mazzola
Austin Nguyen
Rachel Pryor
Sidney Resch
Simon Resch
Zach Smith
Megan Smith

Adults

Tom Svercl - Adult Leader
Stephen Resch - Adult Leader
Bill Birden - Homebase
Beth Monroe - Homebase
Mike Giardina - Contractor
Bob Colella - Contractor
Christine Birden - Nurse
Sonia Garcia - Nurse
Laura Laverdiere - Project's Office
Wren Griffith - Security
Camille Pryor - Security
Marta Griffith - Security / Lunch Prep
Hannah Griffith - Security
Marc Laverdiere - Security
Glen Caron - Security
Rebecca Judge - Director of Youth Ministry
Brigid Williams - Stakeholder / Project's Office

The Importance of Sunday Mass

As the body will die without food, the soul will expire without nourishment. As Catholics, that spiritual nourishment comes at the Sunday Eucharist. The Lord's Day is essential for our faith. Make Sunday Mass the heart of your week.



NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
A Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

nativityschool.org



Come See All We Have To Offer. We look forward to meeting you! For School Year 2023-2024 we Have Classroom Seats Available for 3rd, 4th, & 7th Graders!

Nativity Students Command the Stage



In one of our more theatrical endeavors, both our Third and Eighth Graders take to the stage! Our Third Grade presents the classic, Charlotte’s Web, while our Eighth Graders perform a Shakespearean play. This school year, it was Macbeth!

First, let’s take a look at our Third Graders performing the story of a small pig who is raised by a young girl, and saved from being served up for dinner on several occasions throughout the story by his animal friends.



Then, our Eighth Graders – along with three witches dressed in black – ‘stirred up’ trouble over a big, boiling pot, “Double, double, toil and trouble.”



Performing the Shakespeare play, Macbeth, the witches prophesy that Macbeth, himself, will become King. Macbeth moves the plot along with the encouragement of his wife, killing all contenders for the title.

Spoiler Alert: It doesn’t end well for Macbeth. But it does for our Eighth Graders. Kudos all around. And they gave a stellar performance at the Paul VI Shakespeare Festival, too!

At Nativity, faith fills us. Love lives here. Nativity Stars are filled with the Holy Spirit! Join us to see how your child would spend his or her days here -- learning, praying, sharing, and laughing. We may be just the school for which you’ve been searching! Contact us at www.nativityschool.org, (703) 455-2300, or smurph@nativityschool.org.

JOIN OUR 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.

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SUMMER CAMPS

We are currently recruiting adult and teen volunteers for our two summer camp programs, Vacation Bible Camp and Camp on the Edge. Consider joining our team! Register to volunteer on the parish website.



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

Looking for a Project for Your Group or Family?

Holding a drive for things that ECHO needs is a great project for your group or for teaching generosity to your children. ECHO provides guidelines and tips on our website at echo-inc.org on how to do it. Click on “Donate Goods,” and choose “ECHO Donation Drive Guidelines.” You can hold a drive for things that won’t cost your donors any money such as gently used children’s fall and winter clothing for Back to School, or large pots and pans or towels that the original owner no longer needs. If your intended collection audience is willing to purchase things for ECHO, remember that we will be gathering new school supplies for our Backpack Program this summer, and we can always use non-perishable food and personal hygiene supplies.



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WEEK

Embracing the Divine Gift of Freedom: Religious Freedom Week 2023

Religious freedom allows the Church, and all religious communities, to live out their faith in public and to serve the good of all. Beginning June 22, the feast of Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher, the USCCB invites Catholics to pray, reflect, and act to promote religious freedom.

Respect for Sacred Spaces

Religious Freedom Week 2023: June 22

Pray that Christian witness in the face of attacks on our churches will convert hearts to faith in Jesus Christ, and that people of all faiths would be free to gather in sacred spaces without fear.

Reflect

The very nature of a sacred space is that it is set apart from other spaces as a place of divine worship and thus should be treated with respect. In a pluralistic society such as ours, respect for sacred spaces is especially vital for the sake of civil peace, which is part of the common good. In recent years, a wave of vandalism and arson has hit Catholic churches and statues. That wave rose following the leaked draft of the Dobbs decision, and it crested after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, allowing states to regulate abortion. June and July of 2022 saw a huge spike in anti-Christian and anti-life attacks on churches. There have been over 250 attacks so far, and that number steadily continues to grow. But Catholics and other Christians are not alone in defending their sacred spaces. In Arizona, Native American tribes have been fighting to preserve Oak Flat, a space that has been used for prayer and worship since time immemorial, from being destroyed by a copper mining company. The circumstances in these two cases are different, but the underlying principle is the same: attacks on sacred spaces, whether from political ideology or commerce, are harmful to religious freedom. A culture that embraces the divine gift of freedom will respect sacred spaces.

Act

Religious communities express their faith through their sacred art and architecture. Sacred spaces and devotional art all testify to the strength and hope of these diverse communities. How has this legacy affected you? Share an image of your favorite church building, devotional art, or other sacred sign of faith!

@USCCBFreedom #ReligiousFreedomWeek



Good News

INSPIRATION FOR DAILY LIFE

Solemnity of Corpus Christi

Sunday June 11

Dt 8:2-3,14b-16a
Ps 147:12-15,19-20 (12)
1 Corinthians 10:16-17
John 6:51-58

Monday June 12

2 Corinthians 1:1-7
Ps 34:2-9
Matthew 5:1-12

Tuesday June 13 St. Anthony of Padua

2 Corinthians 1:18-22
Ps 119:129-133,135
Matthew 5:13-16

Wednesday June 14

2 Corinthians 3: 4-11
Ps 99:5- 9
Matthew 5:17-19

Thursday June 15

2 Cor 3:15 – 4:1,3-6
Ps 85:9ab,10-14
Matthew 5:20-26

Friday June 16

Sacred Heart of Jesus
Deuteronomy 7:6-11
Ps 103:1-4,6-8,10 (17)
1 John 4:7-16
Matthew 11:25-30

Saturday June 17 Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2 Corinthians 5:14-21
Ps 103:1-4,9-12
Luke 2:41-51

The second reading tells us that the Eucharist increases our unity with Christ's body on earth, the church community through which he provides the various resources that we need. In this unity (when it's activated as it should be) no one lacks anything good because all necessary goods are shared. And

This Sunday we celebrate the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the reason why we believe it is truly and physically the presence of Jesus.

In the first reading, we're reminded that God always provides the food and drink we need for survival in the desert days of life's hardships.

What he did for the Israelites, he does for us whenever we experience hot trials and dry faith. He provides what we need by giving us the True Presence of Christ, who comes to us in the bread of Mass (the Eucharist), and in the presence of his Holy Spirit dwelling within us (Baptism and Confirmation), and in the priest whose ordination makes Jesus present to us in Confession.

The Gospel passage tells us that the Eucharistic food and drink are truly Jesus himself, not a mere symbol of his love. Oh-me oh-my, how we need this food and drink to survive the serpents and scorpions and the parched and waterless ground of our desert experiences! Jesus literally fills us and quenches our thirsts. As we consume him, he consumes us. As we draw him into us, he draws us into himself. In this unity, we walk through our trials with all that we need for success.



ultimately in this unity, as Jesus said in the Gospel, we're assured of eternal life in heaven, where all needs are met perfectly and completely.

Reflect & Discuss:

- † What are the "serpents and scorpions" in your life right now?
- † In what ways do you feel parched, thirsty to the point of desperation?
- † During Mass, imagine that you're walking through a desert to receive from Jesus what you need. How does it feel to approach Jesus this way?
- † How has the Eucharist helped you through a difficult time? Why did it make a difference?
- † Some people kiss the Host before placing it in their mouths; what do you do that helps you become more aware of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist for all your needs?

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar Flower Book is open with several dates still 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/>.



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.



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!



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888-456-HOPE (4673)

Iglesia de la Natividad

**Venta de patio parroquial para caridad
Sábado, 24 de junio—8:00 AM a 2:00 PM**

6398 Nativity Lane, Burke, VA

No hay cochecitos durante la venta - Todas las ventas finales



Donaciones recogidas en la cafetería/Centro P. Martin (gimnasio)

**VER REVERSO PARA ARTÍCULOS ACEPTABLES/NO ACEPTABLES
POR FAVOR, ¡LOS ARTÍCULOS DEBEN ESTAR EN BUENAS CONDICIONES!**

Horas de entrega

Jueves/Viernes, 15-16 de junio	6:00 PM-9:00 PM
Sábado, 17 de junio	9:00 AM-2:00 PM
Domingo 18 de junio	2:00 PM-5:00 PM
Lunes 19 de junio	10:00 AM-4:00 PM
Lunes 6/19-Mié 6/21	6:00 PM-9:00 PM
Jueves/Viernes, 22-23 de junio	SIN COLECCIONES!

Jueves	Vie	Sábado	Sol	Mi	Martes	Miércoles	Jueves	Vie
6/15	6/16	6/17	6/18	6/19	6/20	6/21	6/22	6/23
6-9 PM	6-9 PM	9 AM -2 PM	2 PM-5 PM	6-9 PM	6-9 PM	10 AM-4 PM	iiSIN drop-offs!!	iiSIN drop-offs!!

Para obtener más información, llame al: **Dave Zivich 703-598-0698**

Recibos de impuestos proporcionados

Patrocinado por Knights of Columbus Fr. Vincent S. Sikora Council 7992

ARTÍCULOS ACEPTABLE

- Ropa de cama (limpia)
- Vajilla/utensilios de cocina/artículos de cocina
- Ropa (limpia; consulte la lista no aceptable a continuación)
- Pequeños electrodomésticos (en funcionamiento)
- Electrónica (en funcionamiento; ver lista no aceptable)
- Artículos deportivos/Juguetes/juegos
- Muebles (limpios / sin daños; ver lista no aceptable)
- Libros/DVDs/CDs
- Televisores: ¡solo pantalla plana!
- Herramientas
- Joyería

ARTÍCULOS NO ACEPTABLES

- Ropa interior (boxers/calzoncillos/bragas/sujetadores, etc.)
- Zapatos/calzado
- Medicamentos/Cosméticos/Alimentos
- Escritorios de computadora
- Árboles de Navidad sin caja
- Computadora s / hardware / impresoras / hardware de red
- Escritorios/cajones/archivadores metálicos
- Escritorios > 5 pies de ancho
- Hornos microondas/electrodomésticos grandes
- Espejos/vidrio sin marco
- Colchones/camas/Sofás cama
- Muebles de cartón prensado
- Muebles tapizados
- Alfombras (cualquier tamaño)
- Pianos/órganos
- Neumáticos
- Esquí
- Inflamables
- Equipo de fitness motorizado
- Estaciones de entrenamiento multifunción
- Gabinetes de China
- TODOS los centros de entretenimiento

Recogida de muebles 703-598-0698 or davezivich@gmail.com

(¡Solo en el primer piso o en el nivel de salida!!)



Jesus helped people, even when they thought it was too late. Read the story below.

A ruler came and knelt before Jesus. He told Jesus that his daughter had died. Jesus and His disciples went with the man. Jesus told the noisy crowd that the girl was not dead, that she was sleeping. What happened next?

Unscramble the words to find the answer.

ehT	rdocw	hugdlae	
ta	mHi	tBu	ethn
eJssu	okot	eth	
rgli	yb	eth	
dahn	nda	hes	
tgo	pu	!	



Matthew got up and followed Jesus. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with Him and His disciples.

Find the underlined letters in the picture below.



Children's Worship Bulletin™

Ages 7+

June 11, 2023 • Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Jesus Calls Matthew and Heals Others

Matthew was a tax collector. He was in his tax-collection booth when Jesus called to him.

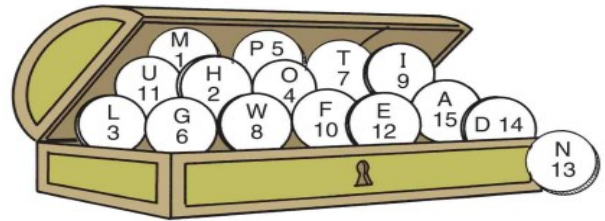
Write the letters from the coins on the lines.

What did Jesus say?

" 10 4 3 3 4 8 1 12 "

What did Matthew do?

2 12 6 4 7 11 5 15 13 14
10 4 3 3 4 8 12 14 2 9 1 !



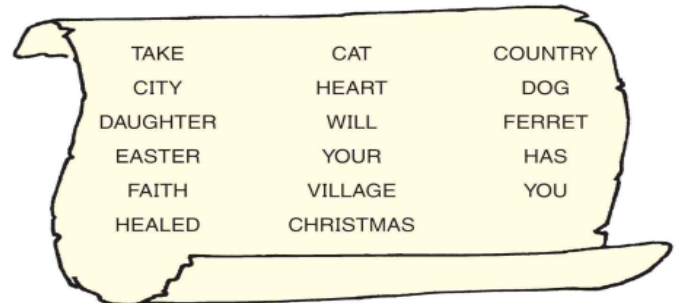
A woman had been ill for 12 years. She came behind Jesus and touched the edge of His coat. She thought if she could just do that, she would be healed. Jesus turned and said something to her.



Cross out the words that are:

- 1) the names of animals
- 2) words with double consonants (ss, ll, etc.)
- 3) locations to live
- 4) special holidays

Arrange those that remain to find the answer.



" _____ , _____ , _____ "

¡Gracias, Señor, por este maravilloso regalo de tu amor hacia mí! Reflexiones Eucaristía Solemnidad del Corpus Christi. La Eucaristía es el sacramento por excelencia de la Iglesia, porque brotó del amor redentor de Jesucristo.



Por: P. Sergio A. Córdoba | Fuente: Catholic.net

Hay, en Tierra Santa, un pueblecito llamado Tabga. Está situado junto a la ribera del lago Tiberíades, en el corazón de la Galilea. Y se halla a los pies del monte de las Bienaventuranzas. La Galilea es una región de una gran belleza natural, con sus verdes colinas, el lago de azul intenso y una fértil vegetación. Este rincón, que es como la puerta de entrada a Cafarnaúm, goza todo el año de un entorno exuberante. Es, precisamente en esta aldea, donde la tradición ubica el hecho histórico de la multiplicación de los panes realizada por Jesús.

Ya desde el siglo IV los cristianos construyeron aquí una iglesia y un santuario, y aun hoy en día se pueden contemplar diversos elementos de esa primera basílica y varios mosaicos que representan la multiplicación de los panes y de los peces.

Pero hay en la Escritura un dato interesante. Además de los relatos de la Pasión, éste es el único milagro que nos refieren unánimemente los cuatro evangelistas, y esto nos habla de la gran importancia que atribuyeron desde el inicio a este hecho. Más aún, Mateo y Marcos nos hablan incluso de dos multiplicaciones de los panes. Y los cuatro se esmeran en relatarnos los gestos empleados por Jesús en aquella ocasión: “Tomando los cinco panes y los dos peces, alzó la mirada al cielo, pronunció la bendición sobre ellos –dio gracias, nos dice san Juan—, los partió y se los dio a los discípulos para que se los repartieran a la gente”.

Seguramente, los apóstoles descubrieron en estos gestos un acto simbólico y litúrgico de profunda significación teológica. Esto no lo advirtieron, por supuesto, en esos momentos, sino a la luz de la Última Cena y de la experiencia post-pascual, cuando el Señor resucitado, apareciéndose a sus discípulos, vuelve a repetir esos gestos como memorial de su Pasión, de su muerte y resurrección. Y, por tanto, también como el sacramento supremo de nuestra redención y de la vida de la Iglesia.

Año tras año, el Papa san Juan Pablo II escribió una carta pastoral dirigida a todos los sacerdotes del mundo con ocasión del Jueves Santo, día del sacerdocio y de la Eucaristía por antonomasia.

En la Encíclica *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* nos dice que “La Iglesia vive de la Eucaristía”. Así iniciaba el Papa su meditación. “Esta verdad no expresa solamente una experiencia cotidiana de fe, sino que encierra en síntesis el núcleo del misterio de la Iglesia”. Y a continuación tratará de hacernos comprender, valorar y vivir esta afirmación inicial.

En efecto, la Eucaristía es el sacramento por excelencia de la Iglesia –y, por tanto, de cada uno de los bautizados— porque brotó del amor redentor de Jesucristo, la instituyó como sacramento y memorial de su Alianza con los hombres; alianza que es una auténtica redención, liberación de los pecados de cada uno de nosotros para darnos vida eterna, y que llevó a cabo con su santa Pasión y muerte en el Calvario. La sangre y el agua que brotaron del costado traspasado de Cristo sobre la cruz nos hablan de este mismo misterio.

El Sacrificio eucarístico es –recuerda el Papa, tomando las palabras del Vaticano II— “fuente y culmen de toda la vida cristiana”. Cristo en persona es nuestra Pascua, convertido en Pan de Vida, que da la vida eterna a los hombres por medio del Espíritu Santo.

San Juan Pablo II nos confesó que, durante el Gran Jubileo del año 2000, tuvo la grandísima dicha de poder celebrar la Eucaristía en el Cenáculo de Jerusalén, en el mismísimo lugar donde la tradición nos dice que fue realizada por Jesucristo mismo la primera vez en la historia. Y varias veces trajo el Papa a la memoria este momento de gracia tan singular. El Papa sí valoró profundamente lo que es la Eucaristía. En el Cenáculo –nos recuerda el Santo Padre— “Cristo tomó en sus manos el pan, lo partió y lo dio a sus discípulos diciendo: Tomad y comed todos de él, porque esto es mi Cuerpo, que será entregado por vosotros” (Eccl. de Euch., nn. 1-2).

Estos gestos y palabras consacratorias son las mismas que empleó Jesús durante su vida pública, en el milagro de la multiplicación de los panes. Si Cristo tiene un poder absoluto sobre el pan y su naturaleza, entonces también podía convertir el pan en su propio Cuerpo, y el vino en su Sangre.

Y decimos que la Eucaristía es el “memorial” de nuestra redención porque –con palabras del mismo Santo Padre— “en ella está inscrito de forma indeleble el acontecimiento de la pasión y muerte del Señor. No sólo lo evoca, sino que lo hace sacramentalmente presente. Es el sacrificio de la Cruz que se perpetúa por los siglos”. Esto, precisamente, significa la palabra “memorial”. No es un simple recuerdo histórico, sino un recuerdo que se actualiza, se repite y se hace realmente presente en el momento mismo de su celebración.

Por eso –continuó el Papa— la Eucaristía es “el don por excelencia, porque es el don de sí mismo (de Jesucristo), de su persona en su santa humanidad y, además, de su obra de salvación.

Ésta no queda relegada al pasado, pues todo lo que Cristo es y todo lo que hizo y padeció por los hombres participa de la eternidad divina y domina así todos los tiempos... Cuando la Iglesia celebra la Eucaristía, memorial de la muerte y resurrección de su Señor, se hace realmente presente este acontecimiento central de salvación y se realiza la obra de nuestra redención” (Eccl. de Euch., n. 11).

Ojalá, pues, que en esta fiesta del Corpus Christi, que estamos celebrando hoy, todos valoremos un poco más la grandeza y sublimidad de este augustísimo sacramento que nos ha dejado nuestro Señor Jesucristo, la Eucaristía, el maravilloso don de su Cuerpo y de su Sangre preciosa para nuestra redención: “Éste es mi Cuerpo. Ésta es mi Sangre, sangre de la alianza nueva y eterna, que será derramada por vosotros y por muchos, para el perdón de los pecados. Haced esto en memoria mía”.

Que a partir de hoy vivamos con una fe mucho más profunda e intensa, y con mayor conciencia, amor y veneración cada Eucaristía, cada Santa Misa: ¡Gracias mil, Señor, por este maravilloso regalo de tu amor hacia mí!

Solemnidad del Santísimo Cuerpo y Sangre de Cristo, Ciclo A.**El Cáliz y el Pan de Vida****Autor: P. Raniero Cantalamessa, ofmcap****Sitio Web: [P. Raniero Cantalamessa, ofmcap](#)**

Dt 8,2-3.14b-16a.; Sal 147,12-20; 1Co 10,16-17; Jn 6,51-58),

En aquel tiempo, dijo Jesús a la multitud de los judíos: «Yo soy el pan vivo, bajado del cielo. Si uno come de este pan, vivirá para siempre; y el pan que yo le voy a dar, es mi carne por la vida del mundo». Discutían entre sí los judíos y decían: «¿Cómo puede esté darnos a comer su carne?». Jesús les dijo: «En verdad, en verdad os digo: si no coméis la carne del Hijo del hombre, y no bebéis su sangre, no tenéis vidas en vosotros. El que come mi carne y bebe mi sangre, tiene vida eterna, y yo le resucitaré el último día».

El Cáliz y el Pan de Vida

La fiesta del «Corpus Domini» asume un significado del todo especial en el año de la Eucaristía. Uno de los frutos que el Papa Juan Pablo II (aún nos cuesta convencernos de que ya no está entre nosotros) esperaba de este año era «reavivar en los cristianos el estupor eucarístico», esto es, la maravilla de frente a la «enormidad divina» (Paul Claudel) que es la Eucaristía.

En la segunda lectura de la fiesta del día, San Pablo escribe: «La copa de bendición que bendecimos ¿no es acaso comunión con la sangre de Cristo? Y el pan que partimos ¿no es comunión con el cuerpo de Cristo?». La Eucaristía es por lo tanto fundamentalmente un misterio de comunión. Conocemos distintos tipos de comunión. Una, muy íntima, es aquella entre nosotros y el alimento que comemos, porque éste se convierte en carne de nuestra carne y sangre de nuestra sangre. He oído a las madres decir a sus criaturas, mientras las estrechan contra su pecho y las besan: «¡Te quiero tanto que te comería!». Es verdad que el alimento no es una persona viva e inteligente con la que podamos intercambiar pensamientos y afectos, pero supongamos por un momento que el alimento fuera él mismo vivo e inteligente, ¿no parece que entonces se tendría finalmente la perfecta comunión?

Esto es precisamente lo que ocurre en la comunión eucarística. Jesús, en el pasaje evangélico, dice: «Yo soy el pan vivo, bajado del cielo... Mi carne es verdadera comida... Quien come mi carne tiene vida eterna». Aquí el alimento no es una cosa, sino que es una persona viva. Se tiene la más íntima, si bien también la más misteriosa, de las comuniones.

Veamos lo que ocurre en la naturaleza en el ámbito de la alimentación. Es el principio vital más fuerte el que asimila al menos fuerte. Es el vegetal el que asimila el mineral; es el animal el que asimila el vegetal. También en las relaciones entre el hombre y Cristo se verifica esta ley. Es Cristo quien nos asimila a él; nosotros nos transformamos en él, no él en nosotros. Un famoso materialista ateo dijo: «El hombre es lo que come». Sin saberlo dio una definición óptima de la Eucaristía. Gracias a ésta, el hombre se convierte verdaderamente en lo que come, ¡o sea, cuerpo de Cristo!

Leemos a continuación del texto inicial de San Pablo: «Porque aún siendo muchos, un sólo pan y un solo cuerpo somos, pues todos participamos de un solo pan». Está claro que en este segundo caso la palabra «cuerpo» ya no indica el cuerpo de Cristo nacido de María, sino que indica «todos nosotros», indica ese cuerpo de Cristo mayor que es la Iglesia. Esto quiere decir que la comunión eucarística es siempre también comunión entre nosotros. Comiendo todos del único alimento, formamos un solo cuerpo.

¿Cuál es la consecuencia? Que no podemos hacer verdadera comunión con Cristo si estamos divididos entre nosotros, nos odiamos, no estamos dispuestos a reconciliarnos. «Si has ofendido a un hermano», decía San Agustín, «si has cometido una injusticia contra él, y después vas a recibir la comunión como si nada, tal vez lleno de fervor, te parece a uno que ve llegar a un amigo a quien no ve desde hace tiempo. Corre a su encuentro, le echa los brazos al cuello y se eleva sobre la punta de sus pies para besarle en la frente... Pero, al hacer esto, no se da cuenta de que le está pisando los pies con zapatos de clavos. Los hermanos, de hecho, especialmente los más pobres y desamparados, son los miembros de Cristo, son sus pies posados aún en la tierra».

Al darnos la hostia, el sacerdote dice: «El cuerpo de Cristo», y nosotros respondemos: «¡Amén!». Ahora sabemos a quién decimos «Amén», esto es: «Sí, te acojo»: no sólo a Jesús, el Hijo de Dios, sino también a quien tenemos al lado.

Stmo. Cuerpo y Sangre de Cristo - A

Evangelio de la Misa: Jn 6,51-59 - El alimento espiritual

El largo discurso de Jesucristo sobre la Eucaristía, el llamado discurso eucarístico del cap. VI de san Juan, abre horizontes insopechados a quienes le escuchan.

Aquellas gentes, además de contemplar admirados el milagro de la multiplicación de los panes y de los peces, tienen que agrandar su admiración por las palabras que les dice: El, Jesús, les dará a comer su carne como el verdadero pan del cielo; y quien no lo coma no alcanzará la vida eterna. Los Apóstoles solo lo entenderán en la Última Cena, y los cristianos lo “entendemos” cuando comulgamos frecuentemente con fe y devoción.

Oración para cada día de la semana

Señor, Jesús, que nos has dicho que eres el "pan vivo" bajado del cielo, y que hemos de "comerte" si queremos tener o alcanzar la Vida eterna; te pido, en primer lugar, humildad y fe para acoger tus palabras. No son fáciles de comprender a primera vista, pero ¡que agradables y reconfortantes se hacen cuando te recibimos en la Comunión con fe y

devoción! ¡Cómo lo han entendido todos los cristianos santos y ejemplares, que nos han precedido!

Todos los santos han centrado su vida en la piedad eucarística; y en Ella, y desde Ella, han sacado fuerzas para santificarse y servir a los demás; y por tanto para ver en los demás

—sobre todo en los pobres y necesitados— a Ti mismo.

Señor, que también yo, como los santos asiente mi vida en la piedad eucarística participando en la Santa Misa y comulgando con frecuencia. Que el Sagrario sea mi casa de Betania, donde me encuentre a gusto contigo, para fomentar esa amistad y ese amor que debe mantenernos unidos.

¡Con qué claridad, Señor, nos hablas de la Vida Verdadera y qué rotundo eres en tus afirmaciones para que te recibamos, te comamos, te comulgemos. Quiero "saborear" tus mismas palabras para que nunca las olvide.

"Si no coméis la carne del Hijo del hombre, y no bebéis su sangre, no tendréis Vida en vosotros. El que come mi carne y bebe mi sangre tiene Vida eterna, y yo le resucitaré el último día".

Que ni vida interior, Señor, y mi caridad con el prójimo, encuentren en la Comunión diaria (o frecuente) el verdadero alimento espiritual Padre Segismundo Fernandez Rodríguez



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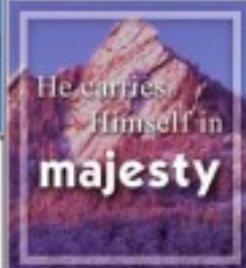
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