



**MY FLESH IS TRUE FOOD &  
MY BLOOD IS TRUE DRINK.**

**JOHN 6:55**



1973

2023

*Celebrating 50 Years!*  
"We are God's people" - 1 Peter 2:10

**6400 Nativity Lane,  
Burke, Virginia 22015**  
[nativityburke.org](http://nativityburke.org)

**REV. ROBERT C. CILINSKI, PASTOR**  
**REV. EDWARD BRESNAHAN, PAROCHIAL VICAR**  
**REV. JONATHAN BENNETT, PAROCHIAL VICAR**  
**REV. CEDRIC P. WILSON, ASSISTING PRIEST/  
SPANISH MINISTRY**  
**DEC. RICHARD F. KELLY**

**SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES OF THE PARISH:**

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

**MINISTERS OF OUR SCHOOL:**

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

**MINISTERS OF OUR RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION PROGRAM:**

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

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES COUNSELOR**

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



**PARISH OFFICE:** (703) 455-2400  
**PARISH FAX:** (703) 455-6832  
**NATIVITY SCHOOL:** (703) 455-2300  
**NATIVITY FAX:** (703) 569-8109  
**PRE-SCHOOL:** (703) 455-2300 ext. 136  
**R.E. OFFICE:** (703) 455-0372  
**R.E. OFFICE FAX:** (703) 455-6832

**SUNDAY MASSES:** 5:00 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass  
7:00 p.m. Vigil Mass in Spanish  
7:00 a.m./9:00 a.m./11:00 a.m./  
1:00 p.m./5:30 p.m.  
Monthly Sensory Mass on the  
second Sunday of every month  
at the 1:00pm Mass

**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](mailto:bulletin@nativityburke.org).

**WEBMASTER:**  
Emilia Hartline, [webmaster@nativityburke.org](mailto:webmaster@nativityburke.org)

**SOCIAL MEDIA:**  
Mary Castellano, [socialmedia@nativityburke.org](mailto:socialmedia@nativityburke.org)  
**Assisted hearing devices are available**

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



*“I am the living bread that came down from heaven,  
whoever eats this bread will live forever.”  
- John 6:51*

My dear parishioners,

Jesus feeds the five thousand and engages the crowd in his explanation of the gift of the Eucharist. Jesus provides a new exodus that leads us from this life over the waters of death to eternal life. The Eucharist is the Bread of Life, the food of our journey. Jesus lifts the crowd up to the new reality of his work. Something new is happening. Jesus comes not only to feed them with ordinary food but to bring them to eternal life. God wants to give us a new bread, everlasting bread.

Jesus reveals this new gift. *“I am the Bread of Life.”* Now our longings and hunger are satisfied by a person who will give himself as food. He is the true bread come down from heaven. The new bread God gives the world is Himself. God now feeds us with the Eucharist. This new heavenly bread is His very self.

Jesus wants to transform us. Let us rejoice in this most wondrous gift. Lord, we want to get to know you better and to change our hearts. Lord, I want to be formed in you. *“Lord gives us this bread always.”* That is our prayer.

Love and Summer Blessings,

*Fr. Bob Cilinski*  
Fr. Bob Cilinski,  
Pastor

**Annual Mission Cooperative Plan Appeal  
Catholic Near East Welfare Association  
Monsignor Peter Vaccari is scheduled to preach  
this weekend, August 17 and 18**

This weekend, our second collection supports the annual Mission Cooperative Plan Appeal for our diocese. Our parish mission organization is:  
**The Catholic Near East Welfare Association.**

This appeal helps our brothers and sisters who do not have access to basic pastoral services that support and grow their faith, like Mass, the sacraments, religious education as well as basic needs – like food, shelter, and healthcare. You can support this organization through next week’s 2nd Collection. If donating by check, please make your check payable to Nativity and put “MCP” in the memo line. Through your support, the MCP Appeal helps these mission organizations form vibrant faith communities and strengthens the global Church. Please visit <https://arlingtonmissions.org/mission/catholic-near-east-welfare-association/> to find out more about their ministry. Please be generous, thank you!



**Married in 1999 or 1974?**

Join us for the annual Mass for couples celebrating silver (25 year) or golden (50 year) anniversaries!!  
The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington, will be the principal celebrant and homilist at the Mass.  
If interested, please register by contacting the Parish office by October 1st.  
Where: Cathedral of St. Thomas More, Arlington, VA  
When: October 20, 2024 | Mass at 3:00pm

Our Sensory Masses will take place on the Second Sunday of each month. The next Sensory Mass is on September 8th at 1:00 pm.

**5th Annual  
POTLUCK  
Gathering**

You're invited to our potluck gathering, where the table will be laden with a scrumptious spread. Bring a dish, appetizer, or dessert to share. Everyone pays for their own drinks.  
For more information and to register visit:  
<https://nativityburke.org/heroes-hike/#register>

**Saturday, September 14th**

6:30-8:30 PM  
Bunnyman Brewing  
5583 Guinea Rd, Fairfax, VA 22032

For more information contact  
Anna Lisa at 571-208-2821 or  
[marriage@nativityburke.org](mailto:marriage@nativityburke.org)




# You're Invited!

Fr. Bob Cilinski, the Priests, Deacon, Sisters,  
and staff invite you to attend the

## Adult Volunteer Ministers Appreciation Mass & Reception

Wednesday, August 28, 2024 | 7:00 PM | Nativity Catholic Church

Please RSVP by August 21 online or scan the QR Code  
[nativityburke.org/volunteer-appreciation/](http://nativityburke.org/volunteer-appreciation/)



**We Joyfully Announce this Year's LUMEN GENTIUM  
Award Recipients:  
William & Janet Canavan and Don & Martha Lemieux**



### PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The next Prayer Shawl meeting after the summer break will be held on Monday morning, September 16th at 9:30am in the Fr. Ready room. All are welcome!

### Diocese of Arlington Scholarship Foundation

*Give a child the gift of a Catholic education and receive most of your donation back in federal and state tax savings!*

The Virginia Education Improvement Scholarships Tax Credit Program will award a 65% state tax credit for donations made to the Diocese of Arlington Scholarship Foundation, which will, in turn, provide scholarships for new students wishing to attend our diocesan Catholic Schools. You do not have to itemize in order to receive the 65% tax credit! Donations must be preauthorized in advance. Please call Jeanne Combos at 703-841-2764 (or email at [DASF@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:DASF@arlingtondiocese.org)) or go online for more details and to download the preauthorization request form at:

<https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/Scholarship-Foundation/>

**5th Annual Heroes Hike**

Join the Marriage Enrichment Ministry and the Creation Care Ministry for a hike around Lake Mercer

**SEPTEMBER 14TH AT 10:30 AM**  
 MEET AT THE SOUTH RUN REC CENTER FIELD HOUSE - REGISTER ONLINE AT [www.nativityburke.org/heroes-hike/](http://www.nativityburke.org/heroes-hike/) OR EMAIL [marriage@nativityburke.org](mailto:marriage@nativityburke.org)





Hosted by Nativity School PTO

**NATIVITY BASEBALL NIGHT!**

**Cubs at Nationals**

Aug 31, 2024 4:05 PM EDT  
 Nationals Park  
 1500 South Capitol St. SE, Washington, DC 20003, US

*Sign-up and Purchase your Tickets today!  
 Special Rate: \$35 per ticket*



<https://tinyurl.com/Nativity-Nationals>

For questions: contact JC Ramirez - hoyasjc@yahoo.com or Robert Walters - robertmwalters@gmail.com





Ancient Order of **HIBERNIANS**  
 Irish • Catholic • American

**TRIP TO IRELAND**

The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), the oldest and largest Irish American Catholic fraternal organization, is sponsoring a raffle to win a "Trip for Two to Ireland," 7 Days – 6 Nights, roundtrip airfare, B&B, and rental car included. The AOH will be selling a limited number of \$10 raffle tickets after Mass THIS weekend, August 17 and 18. Also, the "Irish Basket of Cheer" will be given away to one winner at the Nativity sale. Congratulations to last year's winner parishioner Brenda Canas. Proceeds support local AOH Catholic charities and projects including Pro-Life, Catholic Schools, Religious Vocations, and Veterans Programs.

**Back to School Special - Sunday, August 18**  
 Don't cook, come to Ledo Pizza in Springfield for dinner. 10% of all checks go to TEACH. Your generosity will feed your family and help students in Guatemala go to school. It's a win-win. Check details at [www.teacham.org](http://www.teacham.org) or call Shari Zamarrá 703-216-5129.

**Happy Summer from the Rosary Ministry!!**



We hope you are all enjoying your summer. Remember the Rosary making doesn't stop for the summer even though we are not having meetings until September. There are plenty of supplies available in the church office. Feel free to pick some up and even make them with your kids. I have them string 10 beads then I make the knot. It keeps them busy and helps us get more rosaries into the hands of those who need them.

Last year we made about 4000 rosaries. Even though that's a lot we are way down from a few years ago when we made 12,000. We would love to see our numbers rising this year.

If you are already part of our ministry THANK YOU! If you would like to join see our link under ministries on the parish website. We will be starting meeting in September. Look for the announcement in the bulletin and on Facebook next month.

*wanted*

**NATIVITY USHERS AND OFFERTORY COLLECTORS FOR MASS**

Interested in participating more at Mass? Nativity needs additional Ushers and Offertory Collectors, both men and women, at all Masses but especially at the Sunday 1 PM and 5:30 PM Masses.

Ushers assist in seating attendees at Mass, selecting members to bring up the offertory gifts, and helping identify the elderly or handicapped who wish to receive Holy Communion.

Offertory Collectors perform the money collections by passing the baskets row-by-row in a designated section of the church.

Please consider joining our current Ushers or Offertory Collectors. Contact Bill Canavan at [wcanavan@cox.net](mailto:wcanavan@cox.net) to learn more or to sign up for a training session.

Thank you!

**LIFE TEEN | GRADES 9-12**  
**NATIVITY YOUTH MINISTRY**




**Slip n' Slide Kickball Kick-Off**

**Sunday, August 25, 2024 | 6:30 - 8:30pm**  
in the Well (Youth Ministry Room)

Dive into the new school year at our slip 'n slide kickball event!  
Please register for the 2024-2025 year of ministry using our free, online form.

**Pray the Pro-Life Rosary with Us!**

 When: Usually Friday mornings after Nativity's 7:30 am Mass. Where: 900 S. Washington St, Falls Church, VA.

Join Nativity in peacefully praying the Pro-Life Rosary on the sidewalk in front of the Falls Church abortion facility for mothers in need and for the protection of human life. Contact [rickloffredo@outlook.com](mailto:rickloffredo@outlook.com) if you'd like to join us!

**JOIN THE YOUTH CHOIR!**

**Children's Choir:**

Do you have a 3rd-6th grade student who likes to sing? Great news! We are restarting the Children's Choir this Fall! We will start our rehearsals this September, but registration starts now! We will rehearse every other Monday evening from 7:00-8:00pm in the church. See the website or contact Sara Prince, [sprince@nativityburke.org](mailto:sprince@nativityburke.org) for more information.

**Youth Choir:**

Do you have a 7th-12th grade student interested in joining the Youth Choir? We will start our rehearsals again this September, but registration starts now! We will rehearse every other Monday evening from 7:00-8:30pm in the church. See the website or contact Sara Prince, [sprince@nativityburke.org](mailto:sprince@nativityburke.org) for more information.

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

Pray for those who are discerning a call to proclaim the hope of the Resurrection as religious brothers, sisters, priests or deacons. If you feel God is offering you the grace of a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life, contact Fr. Michael Isenberg, Vocations Director, at (703) 841-2514 or email: [vocations@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:vocations@arlingtondiocese.org).



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

**Monday, August 19th**

7:30 am † Hilda Williamson Valenta Seary

**Tuesday, August 20th**

7:30 am † Lisa Celestino  
12:00 pm Special Intention for Ramil Parra

**Wednesday, August 21st**

7:30 am † Ronald Lane  
3:00 pm † Dylan Leskusky (*Burke Healthcare*)

**Thursday, August 22nd**

7:30 am † Antonio Alves de Freitas  
12:00 pm † Madeline Casazza

**Friday, August 23rd**

7:30 am † Mary Catherine Gill  
9:00 am † Michael O'Connor

**Saturday, August 24th**

9:00 am † Bob Fram  
5:00 pm † Robert DeVito  
7:00 pm † Bismark Gomez

**Sunday, August 25th**

7:00 am † Fred Boos  
9:00 am † Susana Basurto  
11:00 am † Ashley Jean Stone  
1:00 pm Parishioners  
5:30 pm † Julie Warsowick Neil

**In prayer, let us remember  
the sick and deceased of the parish  
visit [nativityburke.org](http://nativityburke.org) for the Priest Mass Schedule**

**Summer Sports & Prayer Nights:**

**High School Boys Edition**

**Tuesdays from 7:00-8:30 pm**

**August 27**  
**September 10**  
**September 24**

Stay connected to your friends and your faith this summer! Boys in grades 9-12 (including recently graduated 8th graders) are welcome! Meet in the Narthex of the Church

Contact Ryan Remias: [cyosports@nativityburke.org](mailto:cyosports@nativityburke.org)



**Classes  
Start Sept.  
15th!**

**We are in need of:**  
 Primary Catechist  
 Assistant Catechist  
 Office Assistants  
 SPRED Program volunteers

Dear parishioners,

We need your help to teach our children! Volunteer catechists are urgently needed for various grades and times. Your support in shaping the future of our youth is invaluable. Prayerfully consider to serve our children.

High Schoolers are welcome to volunteer!

***All volunteers 18+ must submit Diocesan paperwork and background check before working this children.***

Thank you for helping us serve our children!

Session	Day & Time	Grade-Primary Catechist	Grade-Assistant Catechist
1	Sunday 3:45-5:00pm	5	3, 7, 8
2	Sunday 7:00-8:15pm	K, 1, 4, 6	K, 1, 3, 4, 6
3	Monday 4:45-6:00pm	K, 2, 6, 8	K, 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, office assistant
4	Monday 7:00-8:15pm	RCIC, 3	RCIC, 6, 7
5	Tuesday 4:45-6:00pm	1, 2	3, office assistant
6	Tuesday 7:00-8:15pm	K, 5,	N/A

**SPRED PROGRAM VOLUNTEER-** Work with special needs children. Program meets 2 times a month (9am-1pm). More information please email us [nativity.ccd@nativityburke.org](mailto:nativity.ccd@nativityburke.org)

QR-code will take you directly to the volunteer page



## Nativity Catholic Church



### EMAIL & TEXTING SCAM ALERT

Nativity parishioners, please be aware of email scammers posing as Nativity priests. If you receive an email or text from any Nativity clergy urgently asking you for favors or money, this is a scam. Please ignore and block the sender. If you have any questions, please call the Nativity Parish office: (703) 455-2400

Historically, scammers have posed as Father Bob, now they are posing as our other Nativity priests.

### Mass Honoring Military and First Responders

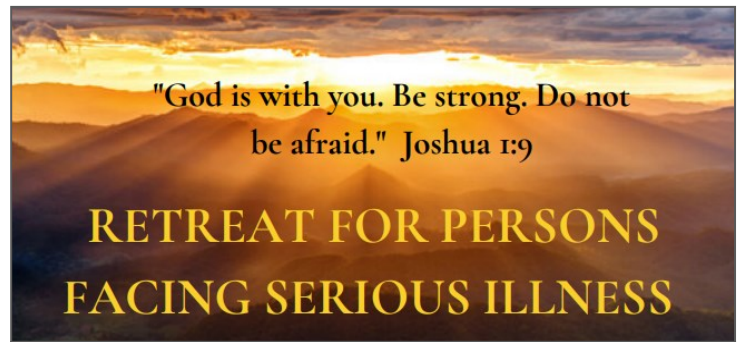
The Ninth Annual Mass Honoring Military and First Responders will be held on Sunday, September 8, at 11:00 am at St. Leo the Great Catholic Church, 3700 Blenheim Blvd, Fairfax. The Very Reverend Robert J. Wagner, Dean, and pastor of St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church will be the celebrant. All Military, Law Enforcement, and Fire and Rescue personnel are welcome to join us with their families, and are requested to wear their dress uniform for the Mass. A group photo will be taken after the Mass. Following, all are welcome to a luncheon in the school gym.

### WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY STARTS SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

In September, Nativity Women's Bible study will begin a comprehensive study of the Old and New Testament with The Bible Timeline: *The Story of Salvation* (Ascension Press) We will have a Meet and Greet on **Friday, September 6th at 10:00am in the Father Ready room.** Weekly meetings will begin Friday, September 13th at 10:00am in the Fr. Ready room (note - January and February sessions will occur via Zoom). All Nativity women are welcome to join us for prayer, study, and fellowship! Online registration via the Nativity website will close August 23rd (or when at capacity). Questions? Contact Camille Pryor at [wbs@nativityburke.org](mailto:wbs@nativityburke.org) or for more information visit: <https://nativityburke.org/bible-study/#womens-bible-study>

### Help Transform Lives by Donating Your Car

Help transform the lives of the poor and vulnerable by donating your used car, truck, motorcycle, RV, or boat, to Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington. Your donation is tax deductible while supporting a cause that is near and dear to your heart. We'll arrange for the pickup of your vehicle donation at no cost to you. Please call 877-570-GIVE (4483) or visit <https://ccda.careasy.org/home> to complete our online form.



## RETREAT FOR PERSONS FACING SERIOUS ILLNESS

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024  
SAN DAMIANO RETREAT CENTER  
WHITE POST, VA

This retreat is appropriate for:

- Individuals facing serious illness and their caregivers
- Men and Women

We are unable to accommodate individuals who are dealing with

- Serious mental illness:
- Impaired memory

**SPACE IS LIMITED - NO COST TO PARTICIPATE**  
Register at [retreat@ccda.net](mailto:retreat@ccda.net)



**Saturday, September 21, 2024**  
Sheraton Reston Hotel

**Bishop Burbidge invites all young adults (19-35)!**

Registration opens on July 1st



**Mass with Bishop Burbidge**



**Keynote from Arthur C. Brooks**

- Breakout Sessions
- Dinner
- Live Music & Dancing
- Complimentary Childcare



Presented by the Office of Youth, Campus & Young Adult Ministries





# WARMING UP VIRGINIANS

Catholic Charities Migrants and Refugees Ministry and Nativity Parish have a **10,000 Coats Collection Challenge.**

Please help us by donating wearable and clean coats, fleeces, and jackets to keep the less fortunate warm.



**DROP OFF IN THE BOX IN THE NARTHEX  
NOW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 15**





Holy Spirit Catholic Church is pleased to announce a ministry that will bring hope and healing to those who have experienced the pain and loneliness of a broken marriage. The 12-week Surviving Divorce program begins on Tuesday, September 10 at 7:30 pm. This program is for the newly separated and divorced and those still struggling with issues many years later. It will help them find answers to their questions, restore their hope, and begin authentic healing. For additional information or to enroll in the program, please contact [divorcedministry@holyspiritchurch.us](mailto:divorcedministry@holyspiritchurch.us).

walking with purpose

# Come as you are.

**YOU ARE WELCOME HERE**

WWP Bible studies combine personal study with small group discussion, linking our everyday challenges to solutions given through Scripture. If you desire to grow in your faith—in a supportive community of Catholic women—join us!

**New Studies Start September! We meet on Wednesday's at 9:30am OR 7pm and look forward to studying God's Word together!**

To Learn More and Register go to:  
[www.nativityburke.org/wwp](http://www.nativityburke.org/wwp)

[www.walkingwithpurpose.com](http://www.walkingwithpurpose.com)

**Pro-Life Corner:** The Carrying of the Cross. Jesus was not condemned by the power of wicked people. He was condemned because of the silence of good people. Silence always helps the oppressor, never the victim. Let us pray that we may never be silent about abortion, but rather will clearly speak up to save babies from death. *(Priests for Life's Pro-Life Rosary)*

**Profile Mary's Comfort of VA:** Mary's Comfort is a new Christ-centric program which provides housing for women facing a crisis pregnancy, along with supportive help and guidance for mother and baby for up to two years! If you need help or want to help, go to [www.maryscomfortva.org](http://www.maryscomfortva.org).

**"Under Siege: No Finer Time to be a Faithful Catholic":** 7:30pm Tuesday, August 20th, join us at St. Leo's parish in Our Lady of Guadalupe Room for this timely talk by Austin Ruse, President of Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute.

**2024 Diocesan Respect Life Conference:** Saturday, Sept 7th, 9am-Noon, join us at St. Ambrose's to spend time with other parishioners from the diocese as we seek to restore respect for all human life from the moment of conception until natural death in accord with the teachings of our Catholic faith. The featured speaker is Monica Kelsey, founder of Safe Haven Baby Boxes, and there will be an update on the Diocese's own Baby Box Initiative. This event is free, but registration is required: <https://secure3.arlingtondiocese.org/events/events/multiuse/step1.aspx?eventcode=OFLRL24>

**Northern Virginia Baby Box Fundraiser:** Safe Haven Baby Boxes' ([www.shbb.org](http://www.shbb.org)) mission is to prevent illegal abandonment of newborns by raising awareness, offering a 24-hour hotline for mothers in crisis and offering the Safe Haven Baby Boxes as a last resort option for women who want to maintain complete anonymity. Donations are welcome!



**OCIA – ENCOUNTER JESUS THROUGH FULL COMMUNION WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
*'Come and See'*

*Are you interested in becoming Catholic or learning more about the Catholic Faith? Are you missing the Sacrament of the Eucharist or Confirmation? We invite you to join Nativity's OCIA/Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (previously known as RCIA/Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) journey of faith, starting September 16th, 2024, with our weekly Monday evening sessions from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Fr. Ready Room.*

OCIA forms new disciples, as adults prepare to enter the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 19th, 2025, with reception of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion. Our Monday evening sessions continue until just prior to Pentecost Sunday 2025, preparing for life in the Church as intentional disciples. This faith journey deepens one's personal relationship with Jesus by encountering him through passionate teaching, personal witness, table discussion time with opportunities for Q&A, prayer and Eucharistic Adoration, spiritual events, and a Lenten outreach project.

OCIA is open to those who have not been baptized, Christians baptized in another faith, and baptized Catholics who have not received catechesis for the other Sacraments of Initiation. For details, contact the Parish Office at (703) 455-2400, speak to Father Bob Cilinski, or e-mail Linda Loffredo at [lindaloffredo@gmail.com](mailto:lindaloffredo@gmail.com). Visit our website <https://nativityburke.org/rcia/> for more information and online registration.

# OCIA ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF

*Adults*



**SEP | 16<sup>th</sup> | 2024**

**OCIA – ENCOUNTER JESUS THROUGH FULL  
COMMUNION WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*'Come and See'*

email Linda Loffredo at [lindaloffredo@gmail.com](mailto:lindaloffredo@gmail.com) or  
visit our website <https://nativityburke.org/rcia/>  
for more information and online registration



**Gifts for Seminarian Education Endowment Fund (SEEF)**

Please support our seminarians and SEEF, a permanent endowment fund established in 2011. SEEF's income provides funding for annual seminarian expenses such as room, board, tuition, health insurance and books, which total almost \$45,000 per seminarian. Please give generously!

To donate, make checks payable to: "Foundation for the CDA - SEEF." Mail to: The Foundation, 200 N. Glebe Road, Suite 811, Arlington, VA 22203. Questions: contact John French at [john.french@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:john.french@arlingtondiocese.org) or (703) 841-3819.

**ALTAR FLOWERS**

The Altar Flower Book for 2024 is open. 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/>.

**NEED TO TALK?**

Catholic Charities provides quality mental health services & counselors grounded in a Catholic understanding of the human person. "Nativity's Counselor" Ms. Marguerite Turner, MS, LPC visits Nativity to counsel clients in-person on Thursdays from 10:00am-6:00pm. She is available to talk with any parishioners who may be struggling. To set up an appointment, please contact Marguerite at 703-454-2415 or [mmturner@ccda.net](mailto:mmturner@ccda.net).

**2024 Retreat for Adult Children of Divorce**

Registration for the 2024 Arlington Life-Giving Wounds retreat is open. We warmly invite anyone who comes from divorced parents to attend this powerful retreat taking place Friday-Sunday, September 13-15, at San Damiano Retreat Center, White Post, VA. Welcome our Lord into this wound, connect with others from this background, and go forward renewed in faith, hope, and love. Cost is \$375 through August 14, or \$425 after August 14.

Registration can be found at [www.arlingtondiocese.org/healingretreat](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/healingretreat). Do you know someone who might benefit from this retreat? Please tell them about it. If they have questions, they can call the Office of Marriage, Family, and Respect Life at 703-841-2550.

**MARION HOMES FUNDRAISER**

Join Marian Homes, Inc. for a thrilling casino night fundraiser on September 27, 2024, at 7:00pm, at the Country Club of Fairfax. Enjoy a night of high stakes and excitement to benefit the Marian Homes, Inc. capital campaign. Tickets are \$100 until August 1, including playing chips and great food, with additional beverages available at a cash bar. Dress to impress in cocktail attire and dance to a live DJ. Try your luck at blackjack, roulette, craps, Texas Hold'em, and more. Participate in a raffle for extra winnings. All proceeds support intellectually disabled adults. Purchase tickets here: <https://shorturl.at/vm2XD>. Don't miss out! Contact [marketing@marianhomes.org](mailto:marketing@marianhomes.org) for more info.

The Car Ministry accepts vehicles, reconditions them and then provides them as a gift to low-income families referred by pastors and social agencies. Click on the "Donate your Car" link on the Car Ministry's website, [www.carministry.org](http://www.carministry.org), or contact the charity's Director, Larry Gordon at 703.237.8479 for more info.

**NO HANDS BUT YOURS MINISTRY**

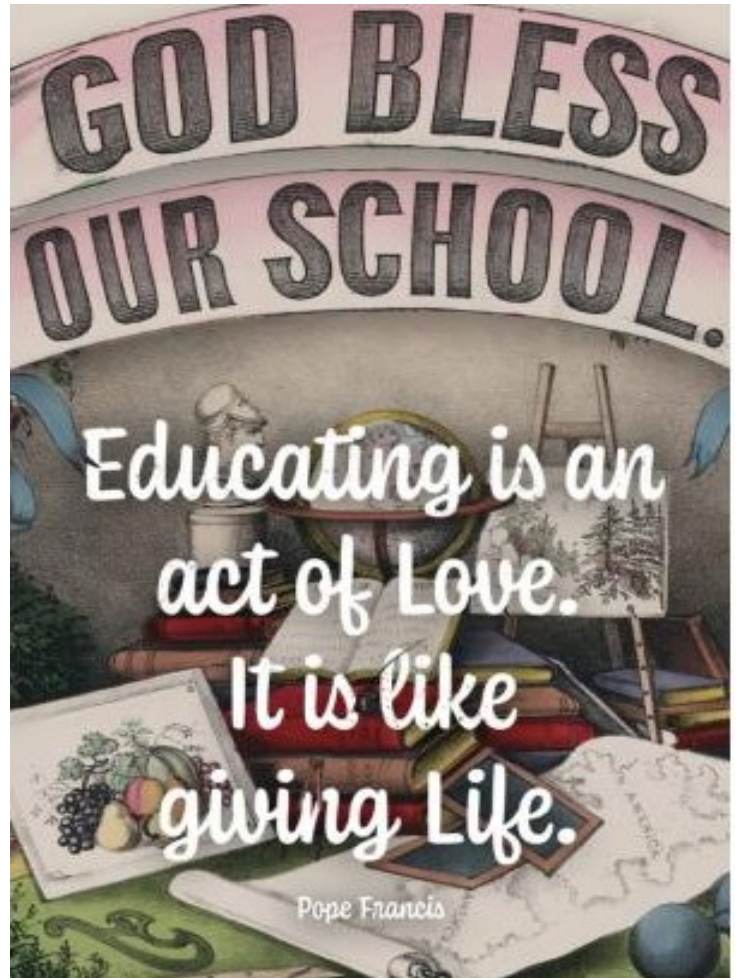


The No Hands But Yours (NHBY) Ministry is an original Nativity Ministry doing God's work by serving those less fortunate members of His flock. NHBY works distributing food, clothing, & personal items to the poor & homeless in DC & NoVA every Sunday morning, rain or shine.

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 continue to grow through our Nativity community and other ecumenical communities.

For more details on the NHBY Ministry you can visit the Nativity Parish website and under the Ministry tab, select No Hands But Yours. We also have a Signup Genius where you can access specifics along with our schedule where you can volunteer to assist. Families are also always welcomed! Monetary donations are also welcomed via the Nativity Catholic Church Donation Page at <https://osvhub.com/nativityburke/giving/funds>.

If you have interest in learning more and would like to participate in daily/Sunday runs, please contact Manuel Ponciano ([manuelmar10@yahoo.com](mailto:manuelmar10@yahoo.com)); Joe McKane ([joeinxpt@gmail.com](mailto:joeinxpt@gmail.com)); Jim Valentine ([val6405@gmail.com](mailto:val6405@gmail.com)); Jim Housel ([jchousel.60@gmail.com](mailto:jchousel.60@gmail.com)), and/or John Rubino ([john.albert.rubino@gmail.com](mailto:john.albert.rubino@gmail.com)). Thank you all for helping the needy.





**NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
A Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

[nativityschool.org](http://nativityschool.org)



**DO YOU HAVE AN ENERGETIC, INQUISITIVE CHILD AT HOME? ARE YOU LOOKING TO GET HIS/HER SCHOOL EDUCATION OFF TO A TREMENDOUS START?**

Nativity could be the place for you. We have a few seats open now in Kindergarten! Let's Meet! Call (703)455-2300, or email [smurph@nativityschool.org](mailto:smurph@nativityschool.org), for a school tour and additional information.



\*\*\*\*\*

**NEEDED: 3-YEAR-OLD FOR OUR PRESCHOOL CLASS**

We Have One Seat Open in Our 3-Year-Old Preschool Class this School Year and We'd Like to Offer It to Your 3-Year-Old. Come Tour Our Campus, Visit the Classrooms, and Meet Our Students and Teachers. Learn How We Spend Our School Day! For more information, please contact Jen Behan, our Early Childhood Education Program Director, at 703-455-2300.

\*\*\*\*\*

**"QUITE - A - DAY ... AT NATIVITY!"**

One of the best sellers from our annual auction is Principal of the Day, which includes several Teachers of the Day, Lunchroom Director of the Day, and, often, Mr. Carlos of the Day. Each of the students who step in for a school staff member work very closely with that staff member, experiencing a normal school day, whether it's involvement in a series of meetings, teaching classes, operating the lunch room, taking photos of special events happening all over our school, and many others. It's a day that both the students and the staff look forward to sharing.



**IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES**

\*\*\*\*\*

Wednesday, Aug 21

- First Day of School
- K-8 Sneak-A-Peek
- 12 NOON Dismissal
- PTO Ice Cream Social

Friday, Aug 23 - 12:00 NOON Dismissal

Thursday, Aug 29 - Preschool/Pre-K Sneak-A-Peek

Friday, Aug 30 - 9:00 am Mass

- 12:00 NOON Dismissal

Monday, Sep 2 - NO SCHOOL - LABOR DAY

Tuesday, Sep 3 - Preschool/Pre-K First Day

\*\*\*\*\*

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

Yes, Catholic education is worth the investment!

Nativity Catholic School is committed to making Catholic education accessible to those who desire it, and offers financial assistance to make their dream come true.



**Linktree Universal Sign-up Link - Volunteer for an event!**  
**Scroll down to view all event.**  
[https://linktr.ee/fr\\_sikora\\_council\\_7992](https://linktr.ee/fr_sikora_council_7992).

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

**Exemplification Ceremony:** Scheduled at 7:00 PM in the church, we will welcome new members to our council. Sign up to be a member below. All Knights, families and friends are welcome to attend.

If you are a current 1st or 2nd Degree Knight, reach out to [dgk7992@nativityburke.org](mailto:dgk7992@nativityburke.org) to make your 3rd Degree.

**Linktree Universal Sign-up Link:**

Volunteer for an event! Scroll down to view all events.

[https://linktr.ee/fr\\_sikora\\_council\\_7992](https://linktr.ee/fr_sikora_council_7992)

**Delta Drive:** Aug 10 - 11. Volunteer to recruit new Knights!

See SUG on Linktree.

**Donut Sunday:** Aug 11. Volunteer to serve your Catholic family.

See SUG on Linktree.

**Adopt-a-Highway:** Saturday, Aug 17. The Council will clean Old Keene Mill Rd at 10 AM. See SUG on Linktree.

**Summer Family Movie Day:** Sunday, Aug 18 from 12:30PM to 3:30PM

- The Council will cohost a back to school movie and snacks event with the Family Outreach ministries. We will show a movie in the cafeteria and serve snack food. Four Knights are needed to help with event logistics 11:30 AM to 4:30 PM. See SUG on Linktree.

**Exemplification Ceremony:** September 11 at 7:00 PM in the church we will welcome new members to our council. Sign up to be a new member of the Knights below. All Knights, families and friends are welcome to attend. If you are a current 1st or 2nd Degree Knight reach out to [dgk7992@nativityburke.org](mailto:dgk7992@nativityburke.org) to make your 3rd Degree.

**Food for Others:** Volunteer for food distribution to the poor, delivered on designated Thursday or Friday evenings. For Thursdays, contact Br. Mark Sawyer at [sawyerkoc7992@verizon.net](mailto:sawyerkoc7992@verizon.net). For Fridays, contact Br. Matt Stockburger at [mstock\\_w@yahoo.com](mailto:mstock_w@yahoo.com).

**Name Tags:** If you have not received your name tag, email Warden Br. Lenny Richoux at [warden7992@nativityburke.org](mailto:warden7992@nativityburke.org).

**Nativity Ushers assist at collections:** Volunteer for your Mass!

Volunteer on Link Tree to maintain a database of potential helpers!

**Sunday Mass Coffee and Cookies:** We are providing coffee and cookies following Sunday morning Masses. See info on Linktree.

**Handy Knights Ministry:** Parishioners unable to perform basic maintenance tasks or small home repairs due to health or other factors, contact the "Handy Knights." Email [handyknightsofnativity@gmail.com](mailto:handyknightsofnativity@gmail.com).

**The Fraternal Committee:** Brothers helping brothers in need of assistance. Brothers and their families (living and deceased) in need of a helping hand, contact Br. John Landy at [navy8@yahoo.com](mailto:navy8@yahoo.com).

**3rd Degree Knights - Grow with 4th Degree:** participate in patriotic activities that promote Catholic citizenship. 4th Degree Assembly meets the second Tuesday of the month in the Nativity school cafeteria: 7:30 pm rosary, 7:45 pm business meeting followed by fellowship. Next meeting is August 13. If you are interested, please contact our Faithful Navigator Mark Corzine at [fn2996@vakofc.org](mailto:fn2996@vakofc.org).

**Join the Knights!** The Knights of Columbus is an international Order of Catholic men who are called to lead with faith, protect our families, serve others, and defend values in a busy changing world. Join today at <https://www.kofc.org/joinus>. Your dues will be **free for one year**: Be sure to enter our council #7992 and the code BLESSEDMCGIVNEY when you register.

# MATRIMONY



## Why does our parish have a Marriage Enrichment Ministry?

The Marriage Enrichment Ministry strengthens marriages in the Church and supports and accompanies engaged and married couples called to the holy vocation of marriage.

Our roots are grounded in the 2014-2015 Synods of Bishops on the Family and the apostolic exhortations “Amoris Laetitia” and “Familiaris Consortio,” the Pathways document addresses these concerns and calls for, among other things:

- *Providing couples with effective and thorough preparation for sacramental marriage,*
- *using prayer and rituals to reinforce the need to partner with God to form a strong marriage, and*
- *providing ongoing support for recently married couples as they embark on marriage and family life.*

## Why attend events and programs?

First and foremost, to strengthen your marriage and your relationship with God. And, to help you accomplish that, you and your spouse will have the opportunity. . . To spend dedicated time in prayer and reflection with each other. To hear encouraging testimonies from our speakers and each other. For fellowship with other married couples of faith.

## Birthday Celebration for the Blessed Virgin Mary

On Saturday, September 7, 2024 the Legion of Mary will host a celebration for Mary’s Nativity (feast day is September 8th) with a reception in the Father Ready Room following the 9:00 am Mass. Please join your fellow parishioners in this tribute to the “Mother of Jesus”.

## Golden Jubilee Celebration Livestream Event

On Thursday, September 5th, all the faithful are encouraged to participate virtually in a special Golden Jubilee Celebration Livestream Event, featuring a premiere of a historical documentary of the diocese, an exclusive narrated first-look of the renovated Cathedral of Saint Thomas More, followed by the Solemn Mass and Altar Dedication celebrated by the Most Rev. Michael F. Burbidge. This is a livestream-only event.

Event Link: <https://arlingtondiocese.org/event/livestream-event-golden-jubilee-celebration/>

12:30 p.m. Historical documentary premiere (30-min) commemorating 50 years as a diocese

1:15 p.m. Exclusive video tour of the renovated Cathedral of Saint Thomas More, narrated by Father James Hudgins, pastor of St. Theresa’s Catholic Church in Ashburn

2:00 p.m. Solemn Mass | Diocesan Golden Jubilee Celebration and Dedication of the Altar

## STELLA MARINA UPDATE



To our fellow parishioners:

We want to thank you for 10 years of supporting Stella Marina and our mission to help the midwives, mothers, and babies in the slums of Haiti. In our 10 years, we have made over 21,000 birthing kits – saving over 42,000 lives – and over 9,000 newborn kits. In addition, we trained hundreds of midwives through our in-person training in 2018 and through the videos we made in conjunction with INOVA and provided through a cloud account to Dr Maklin. None of this could have been achieved without your support and generous donations.

Through your generosity, we also provided hundreds of pack ‘n plays to new moms, providing a clean, safe place for their babies to sleep and play. We provided medical supplies and equipment to St Anthony Clinic and New Hope Hospital. And we sent school furniture to the Nativity villages thanks to Nativity School and Paul IV High School.

Most importantly, our amazing volunteers helped us in small and large ways. From cutting plastic and cloth diapers, supporting kits builds through setting up the space and making the kits, picking up supplies at Nativity, to loading almost 10 shipping containers filled with our donations to Dr. Maklin and Food for the Poor.

Unfortunately, due to the unrest in Haiti and changes in our personal lives, we are unable to continue our mission. We cannot ship any items to Haiti as we risk high tariffs and “truck-jackings” of the items. Dr. Maklin has begun to make modified birthing kits with the midwives, which we currently provide the funding to purchase the items for the kits. And we will try to continue to support this endeavor as long as possible.

\* Lastly, we both have moved from Virginia and managing this hands-on ministry is not possible when we are not in the area. We both continue to pray to find our new callings and what God has for us in these new stages of our lives.

Please continue to pray for Haiti and for resolution of the unrest so that the people of Haiti can be served by others.

*\*If you wish to donate to help support Dr Maklin’s kit builds, please visit the Nativity website and click the Donate button. Scroll until you see Stella Marina and click that box.*

God bless and thank you,  
Melinda Engelbretksson and Meg Hanrahan



welcome

**BACK to SCHOOL**

"God is with you. Be strong. Do not be afraid." Joshua 1:9

# RETREAT FOR PERSONS FACING SERIOUS ILLNESS

This retreat offers a unique opportunity for persons who face serious physical illness to participate in a weekend retreat of spiritual renewal and refreshment.

Be comforted, inspired, and renewed by God's great love for you through prayer, worship, talks, breakout session and reflection time, led by our team of priests, doctors, nurses and caring volunteers. Spiritual Direction provided by Father Bob Cilinski.

**September 27 - 29, 2024**

**San Damiano Retreat Center**

**White Post, VA**

**NO COST TO PARTICIPATE**

This retreat is appropriate for

- Individuals facing serious illness and their caregiver
- Men and Women

We are unable to accommodate individuals who are dealing with

- Serious Mental Illness
- Impaired Memory

**\*No smoking or vaping on premises\*  
SPACE IS LIMITED!**

Register at [retreat@ccda.net](mailto:retreat@ccda.net)

**CONTACT**

[retreat@ccda.net](mailto:retreat@ccda.net)  
703-841-3830  
[www.ccda.net](http://www.ccda.net)

**VOLUNTEER** at the retreat  
[https://bit.ly/vol\\_retreat](https://bit.ly/vol_retreat)



# Good News

INSPIRATION FOR DAILY LIFE

## 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 18, 2024: Prv 9:1-6 | Ps 34:2-7 | Eph 5:15-20 | Jn 6:51-58

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, thank you for the precious gift of your presence in the Holy Eucharist. Amen.

### Abide in me, Lord, and I will Abide in You.

Jesus says, "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and me in him." This week, we continue focusing on Christ's sermon, the "Bread of Life discourse," a teaching of profound spiritual significance. We already know that Jesus meant exactly what He said when He told us to eat His body and drink His blood to gain everlasting life. Let us now look at what He meant by the words "abides in me, and me in him."

God loves us and has a unique plan for each of our lives. Part of that plan is to have a loving relationship with Him so He can help us reach our potential. God wants to abide in us, to dwell or live in our hearts, and to fill our souls with His supernatural grace.

What a great blessing to receive Jesus' real Body and Blood, His Real Presence, through the Holy Eucharist! Even amid this troubled world with so much discord and so many contrary messages against Gospel teachings, we know that God abides in us. If we allow Him, He will transform us to speak, think, and act according to His Holy Will. This heavenly food fuels us to discern right from wrong, fight



temptations, forgive one another, and love like Christ.

Through the power of Jesus in the Eucharist living within us, we are empowered to live the Gospel daily, look for Christ's face in others, and share the reason for our joy, hope, and peace with the world around us.

### Reflect & Discuss:

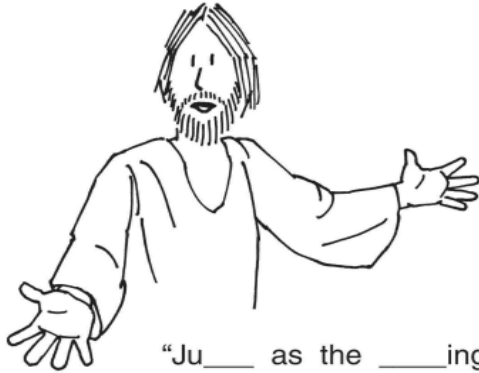
- † In what ways do you prepare your heart to receive Jesus in Communion?
- † How does knowing Jesus is alive and abiding within you affect how you treat yourself and others?
- † How does receiving the Eucharist lead to a life of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society?
- † How does the frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist in Communion build interior joy and peace?



What else does Jesus say?

Find the missing sections of the words in this box to fill in the blanks.

\_ne    \_st    \_eds    beca\_\_\_\_  
\_ve    liv\_\_\_\_    liv\_\_\_\_    Fat\_\_\_\_  
\_nt    w\_\_\_\_    \_ther    \_ause























"Ju\_\_\_\_ as the \_\_\_\_ing

Fa\_\_\_\_ se\_\_\_\_ Me and I \_\_\_\_e bec\_\_\_\_  
of the \_\_\_\_her, so the o\_\_\_\_ who fe\_\_\_\_  
on Me \_\_\_\_ill li\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_use of Me."

What did Jesus say when the Jews began arguing with one another about Him?

Fill in the blanks in each row with the words or letters that match the clues.

 in	 Very	 His	 and	 you	 flesh	 life
 drink	 of	 truly	 Son	 tell	 no	
 eat	 I	 unless	 blood	 the	 have	 Man

" \_\_\_\_\_ 8 \_\_\_\_\_ 15 \_\_\_\_\_ 7 \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_ 13 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 13 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 10 \_\_\_\_\_ 17 \_\_\_\_\_ 18 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_ 17 \_\_\_\_\_ 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 14 \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_ 11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 13 \_\_\_\_\_ 12 \_\_\_\_\_ 9 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 13 \_\_\_\_\_"



# Children's Worship Bulletin™

Ages 7+

August 18, 2024 • John 6:51-58

## Real Food and Drink



What does Jesus say He is?

Make your way through the maze and read what Jesus says along the complete path.

START ↓

When

money

END

"I \_\_\_\_\_ see \_\_\_\_\_ am \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ bread \_\_\_\_\_ eclipse \_\_\_\_\_ Whose \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ living \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ eats \_\_\_\_\_ night \_\_\_\_\_ cruise \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ feet \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ lamp \_\_\_\_\_ When \_\_\_\_\_ ever \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ came \_\_\_\_\_ blessed \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Whoever \_\_\_\_\_ contain \_\_\_\_\_ darkness \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_ desert \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ down \_\_\_\_\_ heaven \_\_\_\_\_ sun \_\_\_\_\_ bread \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ traveled \_\_\_\_\_ blessed \_\_\_\_\_ some \_\_\_\_\_ Whose \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ those \_\_\_\_\_ path \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ lamp \_\_\_\_\_ about \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_ trees \_\_\_\_\_ forever."  
\_\_\_\_\_ heat \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ oil \_\_\_\_\_ live \_\_\_\_\_ dark \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ forever \_\_\_\_\_



What does Jesus say about eternal life?

Use this code to fill in the blanks.

10	F	Z	S	X	O
9	H	K	B	N	J
8	P	M	R	T	Y
7	D	E	U	W	I
6	A	C	L	G	V
	1	2	3	4	5



" \_\_\_\_\_  
4,7 1,9 5,10 2,7 5,6 2,7 3,8  
2,7 1,6 4,8 3,10 2,8 5,8 1,10 3,6 2,7 3,10 1,9  
1,6 4,9 1,7 1,7 3,8 5,7 4,9 2,9 3,10  
2,8 5,8 3,9 3,6 5,10 5,10 1,7 1,9 1,6 3,10  
2,7 4,8 2,7 3,8 4,9 1,6 3,6 3,6 5,7 1,10 2,7  
1,6 4,9 1,7 5,7 4,7 5,7 3,6 3,6  
3,8 1,6 5,7 3,10 2,7 4,8 1,9 2,7 2,8  
3,7 1,8 1,6 4,8 4,8 1,9 2,7  
3,6 1,6 3,10 4,8 1,7 1,6 5,8"





## OFERTA: PAN DE DIOS

Javier Leoz

XX

“Pasen y vean”. “Vean y elijan”. “Prueben y compren”. Y, la sociedad envuelta en un manto de oferta y demanda, se debate en un interrogante: ¿dónde lo mejor y al mejor precio?

1. Seguimos en estos domingos, de la mano de ese mostrador de valores divinos que es la Iglesia, acercándonos al Pan más sabroso, divino y gratuito: ¡PAN DE DIOS!.

Muchos, por tenerlo en abundancia, no lo valoran lo suficientemente. Están tan acostumbrados a llevarlo al paladar que, tal vez, son inconscientes de la grandeza que lleva dentro.

Otros, especialmente en los países de escasez sacerdotal, recorrer kilómetros y kilómetros para hacerse con ese “pan de ángeles” o, cuando llega el último domingo, esperan con ansias la llegada del presbítero que haga presente el memorial de la Pasión, Muerte y Resurrección de Cristo.

Y es que, la oferta del pan de Dios, sigue estando vigente allá donde hay debilidad y hambre de Dios. Allá donde la injusticia necesita de un temple o de un ánimo para sacar a hermanos nuestros de horas amargas u oscuras. El Pan de Dios lo saborea, lo mastica y lo digiere en toda su verdad aquellas personas que saben que es alimento del creyente, salvación y presencia real y misteriosa de un Cristo que, escondiéndose, se ofrece, se da y se diluye para que nosotros seamos más pan para los demás.

2. Pidamos al Señor que sea la vida de nuestra vida. La sangre que corra por nuestras venas. El horizonte de nuestra existencia.

Pidamos al Señor que, su Cuerpo y su Sangre, sea alto precio que El pague por nuestras debilidades, fracasos, traiciones o deserciones.

Pidamos al Señor que, la Eucaristía, sea una fiesta en la que nos sintamos hermanos. Ser cristiano, además de estar configurados con Cristo, es saber que el que está a nuestro lado, no es un adversario; es un hermano, un amigo, un hijo de Dios.

Alguien que, siempre, puede contar conmigo. Entre otras cosas porque tenemos un mismo Padre.

San Juan de Ávila al ver cómo un sacerdote celebraba de una forma poco delicada la eucaristía le llegó a sugerir (mirando al Santísimo): “Trátalo bien que es Hijo de Buena Madre”.

También nosotros, para que ese pan haga su efecto, tendríamos que preguntarnos sobre el trato que dispensamos a tanta generosidad por parte de Dios:

-Comulgamos dignamente y con conciencia de lo que hacemos?

-Damos gracias al Señor una vez que lo hemos recibido?

-Somos conscientes de que, por un momento, nos convertimos en sagrario del mismo Cristo?

-Procuramos que el pan de la Eucaristía, lejos de endurecerse en nuestras almas, se mantenga permanentemente a punto con nuestra caridad, nuestra oración, nuestra fe o nuestra esperanza?

### LA FIESTA ERES TU, SEÑOR

Javier Leoz

Cada domingo, con la Eucaristía,  
nos unimos en un mismo sentir,  
en una misma esperanza.

Brotó la alegría de creer  
la esperanza del más allá.

Nuestra fiesta, la auténtica fiesta,  
eres Tú, Señor.

Cada domingo, la mesa del altar,  
se agranda de tal manera

que, nadie puede quedar sin pan;  
sin el pan de la fraternidad

sin el pan de tu Palabra

sin el pan de tu presencia

junto a Ti, junto a Dios, en el Espíritu  
con María, la Virgen, allá en el cielo.

Eres fiesta, cada domingo Señor,  
eres fiesta que pone en vilo nuestras almas.

¿Qué tiene tu pan, Señor?

Tiene el sabor de la eternidad

El brillo del cielo

El amor de Dios

La fuerza del Espíritu

¿Qué tiene tu pan, Señor?

Tiene el gozo de la vida cristiana

Es fiesta adelantada del cielo

Es pregón de lo que un día nos espera

Sí, Señor; ¡Eres fiesta, eterna fiesta!

Aquí, en esta mesa del altar,

aperitivo, un adelanto

de lo que estamos llamados a gustar

de una forma definitiva y eterna

Amén



## Reza por mi

**Rezar, y sobre todo que recen por ti, es la mayor aspiración que uno puede tener en la vida**

**Por: Miguel Ángel Robles | Fuente: Religión en Libertad**



Rezar es una conversación con los que ya no están, el recuerdo de los que te antecedieron y la oración para seguir su ejemplo. Rezar es pedir por ellos. Y también pedirles a ellos por los que estamos aquí. Es el momento de más calma del día, y, en mi caso, el de primera hora de la mañana, poco más de las seis, y el agua de la ducha caliente cayendo despacio sobre los hombros. Rezar es una fotografía en sepia, un regreso a la casa de tus abuelos y al tiempo sin tiempo de tu infancia. Es pasar por la Iglesia de San Pedro, de camino al colegio, y rezarle al Cristo de Burgos un Padre Nuestro para que te ayude en los exámenes. Es el refugio del frío, y el silencio acogedor. Rezar es tener memoria.

Rezar es lo que va antes del trabajo o después del trabajo, y lo que nunca lo suplanta, porque ya lo dice el refrán: a Dios rogando y con el mazo dando. Es lo único que puedes hacer cuando ya no puedes hacer más, y es la forma de comprometerse de quien no tiene otro medio de hacerlo, como cuando rezamos por un enfermo que se va a operar y ya está todo en manos del cirujano (y de Dios). Rezar no hace milagros, o sí los hace, eso nunca lo sabremos, pero ofrece consuelo al que reza y a aquel por quien se reza. Rezar nunca es inútil, porque siempre conforta.

Rezar es decir rezaré por ti y, también, reza por mí. Y es, por tanto, lo contrario a la vanidad. Rezar es la aceptación de tus limitaciones. Es aprender a resignarse cuando lo que pudo ser no ha sido. Es vivir sin rencor, aprender a olvidar, aceptar la derrota con dignidad y celebrar el triunfo con humildad. Rezar es resignación cuando procede, pero también arrebató y pundonor cuando toca. Es buscar las fuerzas si no se tienen y confiar en que las cosas van a ser como deberían ser. Rezar es optimismo, no dar nada por perdido, luchar y resistir, como en la canción, erguido frente a todo, y es mi padre antes de morir. Rezar es fragilidad y entereza.

Rezar es curar las heridas, restañar los arañazos, superar el daño que te han hecho. Pasar página y empezar de cero. Perdonar las ofensas y también pedir perdón. Y sobre todo tener gratitud. Rezar es dar las gracias por vivir y por lo que la vida te ha dado. Es despertarse con las ilusiones renovadas. Aferrarse desesperadamente a lo inmaterial. Acordarse de lo que de verdad importa, y relativizar todo lo demás. Es establecer las prioridades, poner en orden los papeles de tu mesa, buscar la trascendencia, pensar a lo grande.

Rezar es desconectar y apagar el móvil. Es introspección en la sociedad del exhibicionismo. Es relajarse y calmar los nervios. Y prepararse mentalmente para lo que ha de venir. No es solo buscar el coraje, sino también la inspiración, la idea, el enfoque, la luz, el claro en medio de la espesura. Rezar es razonar, aunque parezca lo más irracional que haya. Es la mente funcionando como cuando juegas un partido de tenis. Es planificar y anticipar las jugadas. Es abstracción en los tiempos de lo concreto y lo material. Es pausa en un mundo excitado. Es calma cuando todo es ansiedad. Y es aburrido en la dictadura de lo divertido.

Rezar es una forma extrema de independencia, una actividad casi contracultural, lo más punki que se puede hacer una tarde de domingo. Es la forma más radical de practicar mindfulness, tan pasada de moda que cualquier día se volverá extraordinariamente cool. Rezar podría computar como horas de trabajo para los empleados públicos, pero no sirve porque es una práctica “antisistema”, sin reconocimiento alguno del establishment. Tan políticamente incorrecta que la gente oculta que reza como esconde la tripa para la foto. Rezar es un placer oculto, que se reserva para la intimidad. Un acto privado, y casi a escondidas, que, cuando se hace acompañado, necesita cierta oscuridad y mucha, mucha, confianza.

Rezar es desnudarse y abrir tu alma a la persona con la que rezas. Y es una declaración de amor por la persona que tienes en tus rezos. Es derramar tu cariño sobre los que más quieres y sentir el cariño de los que rezan por ti. Rezar es tener a otros en tus oraciones y estar en las oraciones de otros, que es mucho más que estar solo en su memoria. Rezar, y sobre todo que recen por ti, es la mayor aspiración que uno puede tener en la vida. Un privilegio inmenso. Es querer tanto a alguien como para rezar por él, y que alguien te quiera tanto como para rezar por ti. ¿Cabe mayor orgullo? ¿Existe mayor plenitud que la de saber que hay una madre, un hermano, un hijo o un amigo que quiere que Dios te proteja, y te dé salud, y te ilumine, y te ayude, y te acompañe, y esté siempre contigo?

Rezar es tener fe. Tener fe en la vida, en las personas, en tus amigos, en tus hijos, en tus padres, en Dios. Rezar es la maestría de niños y abuelos. Y es un súper poder que nos predispone al bien. Rezar es creer y ser practicante de un mundo mejor.

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