

World Day of Prayer FOR THE CARE OF CREATION



Hear both
the cry of
the Earth
and the
cry of
the poor.
Pope Francis

© Diocesan



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

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

SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES OF THE PARISH:

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

MINISTERS OF OUR SCHOOL:

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

MINISTERS OF OUR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:

Sister Donatella Merulla, A.R., M.R.E.
Sister Mary Attilia Todaro, A.R., M.R.E.
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
CCD OFFICE: (703) 455-0372
CCD OFFICE FAX: (703) 455-6832

SUNDAY MASSES: 5:00 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass
7:00 p.m. Vigil Mass in Spanish
7:00 a.m./9:00 a.m./11:00 a.m./
1:00 p.m./5:30 p.m.

WEEKDAY MASSES: 7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday
12:00 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday
9:00 a.m. on Saturday

HOLY DAY MASSES: As Announced

RECONCILIATION: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Saturday
or, if necessary, by appointment

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

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

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

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



*"Humble yourself the more, the greater you are,
and you will find favor with God" - Sir 3:18*

My dear parishioners,

The word "humility" comes from the Latin word "humilis" which means literally "on the ground." So when we are advised to be humble, this is an invitation to be "grounded," to be on the same level as all people as the children of God. All persons are given life by God. We are equally loved and esteemed by our Holy God. We also recognize our place in relationship to God. God is God, and we are not. God is the Creator, we are God's creatures made in His image and likeness with dignity and worth. God is the giver of all life and every good gift. We are the stewards of the gifts God gives us.

Jesus tells us from a stance of humility who to invite into our lives..... The poor, the stranger, the sick, the hungry, those who cannot repay us, and those with disabilities. To be grounded is to recognize the bondedness we share with all humanity. Pope Benedict XVI said that "one can only celebrate an authentic Eucharist if one remembers the poor and needy." At each Mass we "tithe" from our offertory to support charitable works. One Sunday a month we bring food to feed the hungry. Remember the Poor Boxes at the doors of the church and support emergency assistance. These are tangible ways of inviting others to our table.

September 1st began the Season for Care of Creation established by Pope Francis. I am grateful for the good work of the Nativity Creation Care Committee who advocate by action and teaching best practices to be good stewards of our earth, our common home. As we celebrate Labor Day, let us renew our resolve so all God's children may share in the goods of creation for generations to come.

Love and Blessings,

Fr. Bob Cilinski

Fr. Bob Cilinski,
Pastor

**IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY THE PARISH
OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ALL DAY ON
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH (Morning Mass at 9:00 am)**

**DONUT
SUNDAY**



NEXT WEEKEND

NATIVITY CATHOLIC CHURCH

FALL FESTIVAL

Volunteers Needed!!

SIGNUP USING THE QR CODE



WE NEED YOUR HELP ON SEPT 30, 2023
FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- CAKE DONATIONS FOR CAKE WALK
- GAMES
- TICKET SALES
- PUMPKIN DECORATING
- AND MORE!

SIGN UP OR CONTACT
FALLFESTIVAL@NATIVITYBURKE.ORG

**"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.

October 6 -8 2023
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 August 15 thru September 15

Space is limited! Registration closes September 15.
Contact retreat@ccda.net or call (703) 841-3830.
Provide your contact information and a member of the nursing team will contact you for an intake interview.

IT'S PIE TIME!

Our Fall Festival Pie Contest Is Back!

Time to start practicing those prize-winning recipes. There will be both adult and junior divisions this year with cash prizes for first, second, and third place in each. Individuals may submit up to three pies. Sorry, no pies needing refrigeration. Pre-registration not required, but appreciated.

Registration begins September 1st.

We are also looking for judges on festival day.

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT LYNN DYSART (LDYSART@COX.NET)



CALLED: A Conference for Young Adults

Bishop Burbidge invites all young adults (ages 19 to 35, single and married) from parishes across the Diocese of Arlington to join him at **CALLED: A Conference for Young Adults**. Join him on Saturday, September 23, 2023, for the annual Mass for Young Adults, an inspirational keynote from Mr. Sam Goodwin who was trapped in Syria's notoriously brutal prison system, breakout sessions, dinner, prayer, live music, vendors, ministry booths, and plenty of social time! Make new friends and connect to your local Young Adult Ministries as we contemplate how we've been **CALLED** to holiness. We are excited to offer complimentary childcare for this conference! Invite your friends! The Mass and Conference will run from 2:00pm-9:15pm.



Register now to take advantage of Early Bird Pricing! To register visit:
<https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/young-adult-ministry/called/>

The Nativity community is invited to a Blessed Virgin Mary Foundation Night of Gratitude at the Hylton Center, September 16th in support of the two Catholic Charities Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinics that arose from the closing of the Manassas abortion clinic on the Feast of the Archangels in 20015

Join the celebration with drinks starting at 6:45pm, before entering the beautiful Hylton auditorium at 7:45pm for the story of the closure of the abortion clinic and its redemption by the Catholic Charities Clinic. Then, enjoy Catholic convert and professional comedian, Jeremy McLellan, who will perform. Tickets are only \$10 and you can get them by visiting the link below or by using the QR code. You are welcome to invite friends, family, neighbors. The Hylton Center has a seat for you!

Jeremy McLellan is a rising star in the standup comedy world, honored as a New Face of Comedy at the prestigious "Just for Laughs Comedy Festival" in Montreal and has completed sold-out tours in the US, UK, Canada, and Pakistan. Last year he was awarded a Teaching Fellowship at Bishop Barron's Word on Fire Institute where he released a 7-part course on Comedy and the Catholic Life.

Get your tickets by visiting: <https://bit.ly/3QYnmpP>



Attention Scouts - Religious Emblem Program Kick-Off

All Scouting BSA Scouts ages 13 & up are invited to start their Catholic Religious Emblems at 7:30pm on Thursday, 21 September at the Nativity School (location TBD). We will conduct the first sessions of both the Ad Altare Dei (Ages 13 & 14) and Pope Pius XII (Ages 15+, Grade 9 & above) programs, followed by monthly meetings thru April 2024.



The emblems offer Scouts a fun way to learn and grow in their faith while enhancing their scouting experience. Please contact Mr. Sam Morthland, Nativity's Religious Emblem Coordinator at 571-594-1333 or spmorthland@gmail.com to register to attend and receive additional program information.



Pope Francis' message for WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE CARE OF CREATION September 1, 2023

Pope Francis urges us to "seek first the kingdom of God" (Mt 6:33), maintaining a right relationship with God, humanity, and nature so that justice and peace will flow. Francis tells us to act now with greater urgency, so we do not miss our chance to create a more sustainable and just world. "We can and we must prevent the worst from happening." An "ecological conversion" is needed, which Saint John Paul II encouraged us to embrace: "the renewal of our relationship with creation so that we no longer see it as an object to be exploited but cherish it instead as a sacred gift from our Creator." We are challenged to be mindful "about our habits and economic decisions so that all can thrive" – using resources with moderation and a joyful sobriety, recycling waste, and making use of available products and services that are environmentally and socially responsible. Francis reminds us we must listen to science and institute a rapid and equitable transition to end the era of fossil fuels. "Truly, much can be done" (LS, 180).

Farm Gleanings

Join Catholic Charities and Commissioned by Christ to support pantries within our Diocese by volunteering for a half-day mission trip to glean fresh vegetables. This is a great family event and an opportunity to help feed the hungry. Please join us on Saturday, September 9, from 8:00-11:00 am in the Northern Neck at Parker Farms in Colonial Beach, VA, and from 1:00-3:00pm at the St. Lucy Warehouse in Manassas, VA. To sign-up visit www.cbc-missions.org under local missions. For more info, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at maria.rodriguez@ccda.net.

RCIA – Encounter Jesus through Full Communion with the Catholic Church ‘Come and See’

Are you interested in becoming Catholic or learning more about Catholicism? Are you missing the Sacrament of the Eucharist or Confirmation? We invite you to join Nativity’s Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) journey of faith, starting September 18, 2023, with our Monday evening sessions from 7:00pm to 8:30pm in the Fr. Ready Room.

RCIA forms new disciples, as adults prepare to enter the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil, Saturday, March 30, 2024, with reception of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion. Our Monday sessions continue until just prior to Pentecost Sunday 2024, 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.

RCIA 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 Church at (703) 455-2400, or speak to Father Bob Cilinski, or e-mail Linda Loffredo at lindaloffredo@gmail.com. Visit our website <https://nativityburke.org/rcia/> for more information and registration.



MASS INTENTIONS

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

Monday, September 4th

9:00 am † Joyce Fahey

Tuesday, September 5th

7:30 am † Mary Kershes

12:00 pm † Karen McCurley

Wednesday, September 6th

7:30 am † David Edward Grayson

3:00 pm † Moises Reyes Sr. (Sunrise)

Thursday, September 7th

7:30 am † Viam Faggioni-Balcazar

12:00 pm † Anthony Lisi & Donna Busch

Friday, September 8th

7:30 am † Tess DeLaney

9:00 am † Lisa Dawn Celestino

Saturday, September 9th

9:00 am † Mena Macaluso

5:00 pm † John Betts

7:00 pm † Felix Otoniel Rueda

Sunday, September 10th

7:00 am † Sara Llanos

9:00 am Special Int. for Patrick Kelley

11:00 am Special Int. for John & Linda Matty

1:00 pm † Nelly Caceres de Espinoza

5:30 pm Parishioners

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

2023 WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT SALE
Price: \$22.00 (Cash, check, or credit card)

WHEN: September 9/10, 2023 (before/after Masses)

WHERE: Nativity Vestibule/Narthex and Ministry Fair

WHEN: September 16/17, 2023 (before/after Masses)

WHERE: Nativity Vestibule/Narthex



Front Side



Back side

The Women of Nativity (WON) much appreciate your continued support of our fundraiser benefiting ministries within Nativity and within the local community!

NATIVITY CATHOLIC CHURCH

2023

MINISTRY FAIR

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY SEPT 9

(EVENING MASSES)

& SUNDAY SEPT 10

The 2023 annual Parish Ministry Fair will be held next weekend Saturday, September 9th (Evening Masses) and Sunday, September 10th before and after Masses

God chooses us to share in the building of the Kingdom, is there a parish ministry that God is asking you to become involved in? Some of the ministries, groups and organizations that will be represented at the fair:

We have Bible studies and prayer groups for women and men. We offer fellowship and support for married and engaged couples, families with young children, widows and caregivers. We have opportunities for you to serve our local community and brothers/sisters abroad. There is a place for you to serve in the Mass as a lector, cantor, or Eucharistic Minister. We also have many opportunities for children in Youth Ministry, Scouts, CYO Basketball and more!



Honor the Heroes

Marriage Enrichment Ministry

—
Join us for a hike on September 9th at Lake Mercer at
10:30 AM. Register on the parish website or email
marriage@nativityburke.org



PILGRIMAGE
to Emmitsburg, MD
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7TH

National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes



National Shrine of Elizabeth Ann Seton

Free Time After College Classes? Join the Nativity School Extended Care Team
** Competitive Hourly Rate! **

Love working with children? Creative with Fingerpaint?
Like to Sift Sand? The following qualifications are necessary:

- A LOVE of Children and ‘Can-Do’ Attitude
- Afternoon Availability, 2 to 6 p.m.
- Diocesan Compliance to Work With Kids

To apply, or for more info, please contact Jen Behan, Director, at jbehan@nativityschool.org, or (703) 455-2300.

MARIAN HOMES, INC. for the intellectually disabled

DOCUMENT SHREDDING EVENT



SATURDAY-SEPTEMBER 23

SPONSORED BY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
Nativity Catholic Church
6400 Nativity Lane, Burke, VA 22015
Parking Lot - Drive thru - from 10:00 am-12:00 noon

DONATIONS GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTED
Proceeds will be for the benefit of the intellectually disabled
Bring your old documents, cancelled checks, paper, manila folders, windowed envelopes, etc.
NO newspapers, magazines, card board
NO heavy metal objects, especially 3-ring binders
NO hard-drives, discs, tapes, etc.



Come as you are.

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE

Make authentic connections with other women | Learn more about God

Join us for **Opening Your Heart: The Starting Point** as we explore the fundamental questions of our Catholic faith and our relationship with Jesus Christ.



Email wvwnativity@gmail.com or visit www.nativityburke.org/wvp for more info about our 4 study choices this year.

We meet on Wednesdays at 9:30 am and 7:00 pm

walking with purpose
www.walkingwithpurpose.com

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

Call For Entertainers!

We have **available slots for entertainment acts on the big stage** for the upcoming **Nativity Fall Festival** on September 30.

For inquiries, please contact macladyva@aol.com



Upcoming Events

Fall 2023

Marriage Enrichment Ministry

Date Night

**September
23**

6:00-8:30 PM with Fr. Bob Cilinski
"Our Blessed Mother"
Refreshments will be served.
Childcare will be offered.

Fall Marriage

**October
13**

Program Kicks Off

Meets on Fridays from 7-8:30 PM in the art room. "Choice Wine" is the program. Starts with a potluck dinner. Oct. 13-Nov. 17th

Adult Children of

**October
28**

Divorce Mini-Retreat

9 AM Mass; Retreat from 10 AM-Noon in the church.

Speakers: Art Bennett and Alex Wolfe
Refreshments will be served.

Date Night

**November
18**

6:00-8:30 PM with Laraine Bennett
"Art of Living with Less"
Refreshments will be served.
Childcare will be offered.

Book Fellowship

**December
2**

With Deacon Kelly from 7:00-8:30 PM in the cafeteria.

For detailed information
email Anna Lisa or see the
upcoming events on the
parish website

marriage@nativityburke.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



- Catechists
- Assistant Catechists
- Office Assistants
- Substitutes (catechists)
- High School Catechist Assistants
- SPRED Volunteers

Classes begin September 17th

There is a 50% RE tuition discount for catechists for their year commitment.

It is a Diocesan and Parish requirement that we perform background checks on all our volunteers working with children.

Lead Catechist needed:

Day	Grade	Time
Sunday (Session 1)	1	3:45-5:00pm
Sunday (Session 2)	K, 1, 4	7:00-8:15pm
Monday (Session 3)	1, 6	4:45-6:00pm
Monday (Session 4)	1, RCIC, 5	7:00-8:15pm
Tuesday (Session 5)	1, 2	4:45-6:00pm
Tuesday (Session 6)	K, 3, 5	7:00-8:15pm

Assistant Catechist needed:

Day	Grade	Time
Sunday (Session 1)	1, 5, 6	3:45-5:00pm
Sunday (Session 2)	1, 3, 4, 5, 7	7:00-8:15pm
Monday (Session 3)	6	4:45-6:00pm
Monday (Session 4)	RCIC, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8	7:00-8:15pm
Tuesday (Session 5)	K, 1, 6, 7	4:45-6:00pm
Tuesday (Session 6)	K, 7	7:00-8:15pm

To Sign-up visit:

OUR PARISH WEBSITE:
NATIVITYBURKE.ORG
UNDER THE RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION TAB
OR USE QR CODE
nativityburke.org



ECHO Food Room Most Needed Items - September Nativity Collection: Next weekend 9 & 10 September

Choose sizes appropriate for our average family size of four. Because of the generosity of our community, ECHO cannot give our clients food whose expiration date is long past, open food, or repackaged food (no zip-loc bags). ECHO continues to see a deficit of several thousand pounds a month between food donated and food given to clients. Any donation, large or small, is most gratefully welcomed. We collected 663 lbs last time.

NEEDED ITEMS: Protein Items (can chicken, Spam, sardines, chili with meat, can beef stew), Spaghetti Sauce, Baked Beans, Ketchup or Mayonnaise, Milk products (canned, shelf stable, hot chocolate), Sugar, Masa (Corn) Flour, Honey or Jelly, Cooking Oil, Canned Pasta, Box Potatoes, Lentils, Coffee (Instant), Canned fruit, Bag beans (black, red, or garbanzo), Bag Rice, Pancake Mix and Syrup, Crackers, Spices (garlic, onion, cinnamon, salt, pepper), Lemon/Lime Juice, Juice (Bottles or Box), Tortillas, Muffin/Cornbread Mix, Diapers Sizes 4 & 5, Baby Wipes, Toilet Paper, Deodorant, Shampoo, Facial Tissues, Dish Soap, Bath Soap, Paper Towels, Shaving Cream/Razors, Laundry Detergent.



BIOETHICS SEMINARS FOR ADULTS

WITH SR. MALIA GRACE REED, O.P.

hosted by SAINT JOHN PAUL THE GREAT CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Tuesdays at 7:00pm



REGISTER HERE!

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| September 12, 2023 | ... | What is Truth? |
| September 19, 2023 | ... | The Dignity of the Human Person |
| September 26, 2023 | ... | From Love to Desire to Joy |
| October 3, 2023 | ... | The Rational Powers of the Human Soul |
| October 10, 2023 | ... | The Nature of Human Love |
| October 17, 2023 | ... | Marriage & Human Sexuality |



Sister Malia Grace Reed, O.P., is the chair of the Bioethics Department at John Paul. Sister Malia Grace has been a Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia (also known as the "Nashville Dominicans") for 13 years and a member of the John Paul faculty for 8 years. She has a background in philosophy through her studies as a Dominican and under the mentorship of Sister Terese Auer, O.P., the author of John Paul's four-year Bioethics Curriculum.



Statement from Bishop Burbidge on Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

During the month of September, we recognize Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Through his mercy and grace, Jesus provides us a clear path to peace and happiness. Yet, for many, mental health issues and conditions can impede that path. According to the Centers for Disease Control, one person dies by suicide every 11 minutes. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for those between the ages of 10-24.

We must all learn the warning signs of someone who is in distress. If a loved one is struggling with suicidal thoughts or actions, help them know that help is available. United to the healing love of God, we can all be a true friend to those struggling. We should be mindful of others around us, ask how they are doing and stay connected and present. Sometimes a person just needs someone else to listen to them and reassure them that there is hope for change in their lives.

For those enduring the pain of suicidal thoughts: There is hope even in the darkest moments, and there are people ready to walk with you. Through a friend or the new "988" suicide lifeline, please, reach out for help.

May those who are experiencing these thoughts and those who love them call on our Lord, who will walk with them from the darkness to the light of his love.

Declaración del obispo Burbidge sobre el Mes de Concientización sobre la Prevención del Suicidio

Durante el mes de septiembre, reconocemos el Mes de Concientización sobre la Prevención del Suicidio. A través de su misericordia y gracia, Jesús nos proporciona un camino claro hacia la paz y la felicidad. Sin embargo, para muchos, los problemas y condiciones de salud mental pueden impedir ese camino. Según los Centros para el Control de Enfermedades, una persona se suicida cada 11 minutos. El suicidio es la segunda causa principal de muerte entre personas de entre 10 y 24 años.

Todos debemos conocer las señales de advertencia de alguien que está en peligro. Si un ser querido está luchando con pensamientos o acciones suicidas, ayúdelo a saber que hay ayuda disponible. Unidos al amor sanador de Dios, todos podemos ser un verdadero amigo de quienes luchan. Debemos ser conscientes de los que nos rodean, preguntarles cómo les está yendo y permanecer conectados y presentes. A veces una persona simplemente necesita que alguien más la escuche y le asegure que hay esperanza de cambio en sus vidas.

Para aquellos que soportan el dolor de los pensamientos suicidas: hay esperanza incluso en los momentos más oscuros y hay personas listas para caminar contigo. A través de un amigo o de la nueva línea de vida contra el suicidio "988", por favor, solicite ayuda.

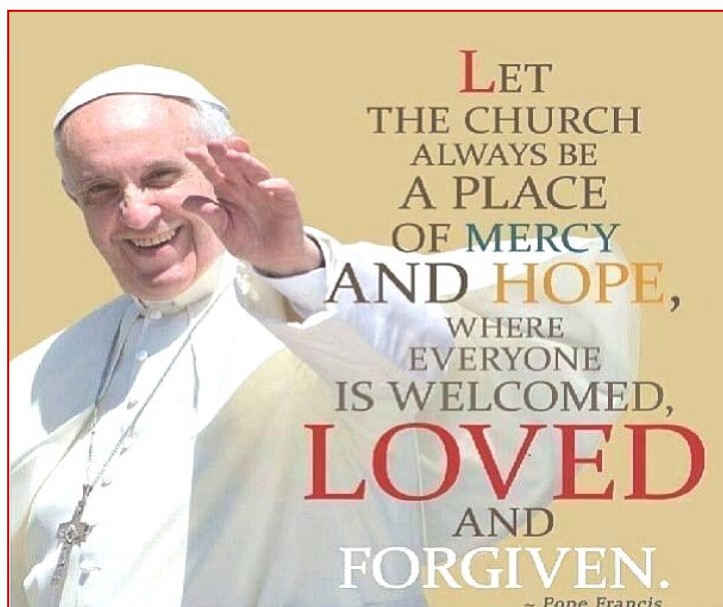
Que quienes estén experimentando estos pensamientos y quienes los amen invoquen a nuestro Señor, quien caminará con ellos desde las tinieblas hasta la luz de su amor.

Mission Trip for Young Adults

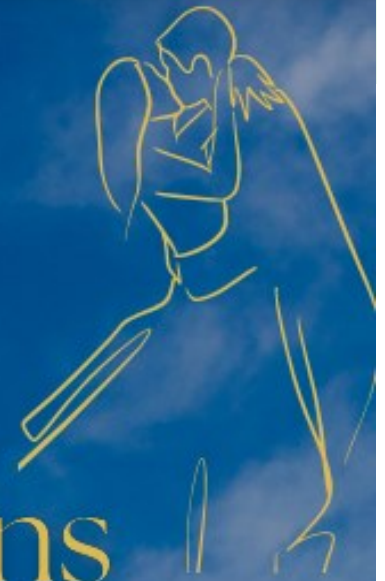
The Diocese of Arlington Young Adult Ministry is partnering with Commissioned by Christ to offer a Mission Trip for Young Adults to Piura, Peru. It is often by being sent on Christian service that a person's faith life becomes a much more tangible and important part of who they are. Join other young adults from around the diocese February 28 - March 2, 2024 on a transforming journey serving the Catholic mission parish Santísimo Sacramento. For more information and to sign up, visit the website at www.arlingtondiocese.org/young-adult-ministry/mission-trip-for-young-adults/.

St. Martin de Porres Senior Center Open House

You are invited to our open house to welcome back seniors, who reside in the City of Alexandria, on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 from 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. at 4650 Taney Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304. See the new center and check our activities. To reserve your space, contact maria.mellor@ccda.net or call 703-751-2766.



Mass for Marriage Jubilarians



Married in 1998 or 1973?

Join us for the annual Mass for couples celebrating silver (25 year) or golden (50 year) anniversaries!



Sunday October 15, 2023
St. Agnes Catholic Church | 3:00 pm
1910 N. Randolph St., Arlington, VA

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



Catholic Diocese of Arlington | Office of Marriage, Family and Respect Life
703-841-2550 | FamilyLife@arlingtondiocese.org



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

Linktree Universal Sign-up Link: Volunteer for an event! Scroll down to view all events at: https://linktr.ee/fr_sikora_council_7992.

8 September, Priest's BBQ Volunteer on linktree.

14 September, Exemption: Meet in the church at 7pm. New members and 1st and 2nd Degree Knights who wish to make 3rd Degree should arrive in coat and tie. Reach out to Br. Chris Odell at cokofc7992@gmail.com. Families and Brother Knights are encouraged to attend.

23 September, Marian Homes Shed Event: 9:45am – noon. Volunteer on linktree.

26 September, 7:00 – 8:30 pm: Catholic Investments for Catholic Families - Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors' advisory services. RSVP free, but required, scan the QR Code to register. Event will be in the Nativity Catholic School Cafeteria. Learn more about our faith-based investments at our upcoming Financial Seminar and Social. Call Our Knights of Nativity Field Agent, Worthy Past Grand Knight, Carlos Perez at 1-866-868-1492 if you have any questions about the event. **All parishioners are invited to attend & learn how Catholics now have an opportunity to work with Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors (KoCAA) through one of our Financial Advisors.*



29 September, Nativity Fall Festival, Set-up: Volunteer on linktree.

30 September, Nativity Fall Festival: Events & clean-up: Volunteer on linktree.

30 September, Soccer Challenge: Volunteer on linktree.

Mowing: A deceased Knights family needs your help taking care of the lawn this summer. Volunteer on linktree.

Food for Others: Volunteer drivers for food distribution 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 Vince Augelli at VaKC23@gmail.com.

Sunday Mass Coffee and Cookies: We are providing coffee and cookies following Sunday morning Masses. Volunteer on 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." Email handyknightsfnativity@gmail.com.

The Fraternal Committee: Brothers helping brothers in need of assistance: Brothers and the families of living and deceased brothers in need of a helping hand, contact Br. John Landy at navyy8@yahoo.com or 703-250-1492.

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

Join the Knights! The Knights of Columbus is an international Order of Catholic men who are called to lead with faith, protect our families, serve others, and defend values in a busy changing world. Join today! <https://www.kofc.org/joinus> and experience the Knights free for one year: Enter the Agent Code "CPEREZ", click "Add" and complete the form. Be sure to enter our council #7992 for local information when you register. Please email our Deputy Grand Knight at cokofc7992@gmail.com or the Grand Knight at pmdelatte@gmail.com if you have any questions.

The K of C Ladies Auxiliary: Formed to assist and support the Knights, our Church and the four virtues of Charity, Unity, Sorority and Patriotism. We are spouses, daughters, mothers, or sisters of Knights of Columbus who are in good standing or deceased. Our fellowship and informational meetings are the First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Fr. Ready Room. Contact kdelatte65@gmail.com for information or to be added to our email distro.

** Event pre and post management tools are available on linktree. Event leads, please review and complete all event tasks.*



33 Days to Morning Glory

A Do-It-Yourself Retreat in Preparation for Marian Consecration written by Fr. Gaitley. Fr. Gaitley is truly an inspiring writer who offers us an updated version of spiritual readings and prayerful pondering inspired by St Louis de Montfort.

Here is what people have said about the 33 Days to Morning Glory program. "Fr. Gaitley lays it all out for us and unpacks how we work to become a saint" and "Consecration to Mary was a doorway to other things. . . I received the grace of trust and how I handle day to day life is now different." We are offering this program with a weekly small group discussion during the month of October. Each person buys their own book and has a daily reading. On Wednesday evenings 7:45 to 9 PM, we meet via Zoom for 6 meetings.

We look forward to having you, beginning Sept 27th. Register on the Nativity website: nativityburke.org/33-days/#register or contact Jim Housel, 33dayconsecration@nativityburke.org.

Annual Father Capodanno Mass

The Memorial Mass for Father Vincent R. Capodanno, MM, will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, in the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, 400 Michigan Avenue, Northeast, Washington, D.C. His Excellency, the Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D., Archbishop for the Military Services, USA, will be the principal celebrant. This annual Mass is celebrated in memory of Father Capodanno, killed in Vietnam on September 4, 1967, as he ministered to embattled Marines. He posthumously received the Medal of Honor, and in May 2006 the Catholic Church officially proclaimed him a Servant of God and thus formally initiated his Cause for Canonization. For more information, visit www.CapodannoGuild.org. All are invited to attend the Memorial Mass on the 56th anniversary of his death. There will be open seating, so please plan to arrive early. Military members are encouraged to wear uniform of the day, and business attire is appropriate for civilians.

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT MINISTRY DATE NIGHT

Speaker: Fr. Bob Cilinski

Our Blessed Mother

REFRESHMENTS • CHILDCARE • FELLOWSHIP

Saturday, September 23, 2023

6:00-8:30 PM in the Cafeteria

Register on the parish website or by emailing marriage@nativityburke.org



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A Blue Ribbon School of Excellence
nativityschool.org



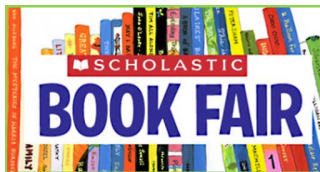
JOIN OUR STAFF! Consider joining our School Staff as part of our Extended Care Team to help us provide After-School Care by contacting our Extended Care Director, Mrs. Jen Behan at (703) 455-2300, or jbehan@nativityschool.org.

To assist us as a Lunch/Recess Monitor, or Substitute Teacher, please contact Rich Godwin at (703) 455-2300, or rgodwin@nativityschool.org.

Important Upcoming Dates

- Monday, September 4 - Labor Day, No School
- Tuesday, September 5 - Preschool/PreK Begins
- Tuesday, September 5 - 8th Grade Fellowship
- Tuesday, September 5 - Piano Demo, K-3
- Wednesday, September 6 - Band Demo, 4th - 8th
- Wednesday, September 6 - Back-to-School Night, 6-8
- Thur., Sept. 7 - Back-to-School Night, Preschool/PreK
- Thursday, September 7 - Back-to-School Night, K-5
- Thursday, September 7 - Band & Piano Sign-Up, 6 pm.
- Friday, Sept. 8 - Priest Barbecue - Free Hot Dog Lunch
- Sunday, Sept. 10 - Friday, Sept. 15 - Book Fair!
- Tuesday, September 19 - Eighth Grade Retreat
- Friday, Sept. 22 - PTO Family Game Night - 6-8:30
- Tuesday, Sept. 26 - Homework Assistance Begins
- Monday, October 2 - 7th Grade Fellowship

Book Fair Just Around the Corner!



Sunday, Sept. 10 thru Friday, Sept. 15 - Book Fair!

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.

Contact Mrs. Shannon Murphy, our Registrar, for more information, at (703) 455-2300 and/or smurph@nativityschool.org.

PW Catholic Business Network – September Meeting

The Prince William Chapter of the Catholic Business Network of Northern Virginia invites YOU to our next event on Wednesday,

September 20, from 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM at the Benedictine Monastery (9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow). Join us in this beautiful new meeting space for a timely presentation on human trafficking by Bill Wolf, who has dedicated his personal and professional life to combatting human trafficking – most notably recognized by receiving the Presidential Medal for Extraordinary Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Light refreshments provided. Members: \$25 / Non-members, door, or less than 48 hours before the event: \$35. Register today through the PW-CBN website at: <https://cbnova.org/event-5382582>.

YOUTH MINISTRY

LIFE TEEN: GRADES 9-12

Sundays | 6:30-8:30pm
Next Gathering: September 10



DINNER - FELLOWSHIP - PRAYER & FORMATION

EDGE: GRADES 6-8

Alternating Sundays | 3:30-5:00pm
& Fridays | 7:00-8:30 pm
Gatherings resume in September



EDGE CAPTURE THE FLAG KICK-OFF - SEPTEMBER 8

EDGE CAPTURE THE FLAG KICK OFF

September 8 | 7:00-8:30 pm
All middle schoolers are invited to join us for the most epic Capture the Flag tournament ever! Lace up those sneakers and be prepared for a fun and friendly competition! Please register for the 2023-2024 year of ministry in advance.

✉ cym@nativityburke.org 📷 @nativitycym



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

PRIME TIME SINGLE CATHOLICS (PTSC)

We are a social group, mostly age 60 and over.

(40 to 59? Ask about our free associate-membership group.)
Meet us for: picnic at Occoquan Regional Park (Sept 3); Square Dancing (Sept 5, 19, 26); outdoor Stations of the Cross at Nativity Church (Sept 6); Slavic Festival (Sept 10); Thursday lunches (Sept 14, 28); dinner in Fairfax (Sept 17); walk on the W&OD Trail (Sept 21); musical "Into the Woods" (Sept 24). For details, visit our website: bit.ly/ptsc. With questions or to RSVP, email Tom at ptscnva@gmail.com.

Mass Honoring Military and First Responders

Fr. Diamond Council #6292 and Fr. Malloy Assembly #1894 of the Knights of Columbus will host our 8th annual Mass Honoring Military and First Responders at St. Leo the Great Catholic Church (3700 Blenheim Blvd, Fairfax, 22030) on Sunday, September 10, 2023 at 11:00 am

Fr. Robert J. Rippy, Chancellor of the Diocese, will be the principal celebrant, with Bishop Emeritus Paul Loverde as a concelebrant. All are welcome to join us; Military, Law Enforcement, and Fire and Rescue personnel are encouraged to wear their dress uniform.

A group photo will be taken after Mass in front of the church; a reception in the school gym will follow. For more details, please contact Dave Todd, Jr., at djtoddjr@gmail.com.

NATIVITY GIFT SHOP - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The Gift shop desperately needs volunteers to open after all Masses on Sunday. Training will be provided, the work is easy and will require only about 15 minutes of your time (about half an hour on busy days). All proceeds benefit Nativity charities. We should have 2 volunteers at every Mass. Currently the biggest need is for the 7:00am, 9:00am, 1:00pm, and 5:30pm Mass. If interested, please call or stop by the parish office, or leave your name and telephone number at the Gift shop.

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.

Living Waters

A Christian Response to Gender, Sexuality and Freedom

for parents, young adults and high school students

- What is sexual orientation? **Monday, September 18, 2023**
- What does it mean to be chaste? **6:30pm**
- What does integration look like for those who experience same sex-attraction?
- Helping young adults navigate sexual and relational issues.
- The transgender craze.
- The Church's teaching on human sexuality as a roadmap to freedom.

**St. Mary of the Immaculate
Conception Church
Fredericksburg, VA**

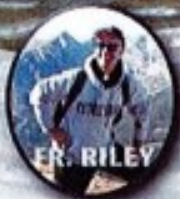
Presentation by
Marco Casanova
Associate Director
Desert Stream Ministries



Finding Jesus as

MEN after Christ's own Heart

SILENT RETREAT
SEPT 15-17
FRIDAY - SUNDAY
2023



As a Band of Brothers we will gather at Christ's feet; Single Men, Husbands, Fathers, and Priest...listening and seeking Jesus in deep quiet prayer.



Retreat cost is \$285. Financial assistance may be available.

For more information or to register, please contact Deacon Maines:

Mark.Maines@arlingtondiocese.org or visit our website at ArlingtonDiocese.org/Retreat



Catholic Diocese of Arlington



Healing Retreat for Adult Children of Divorce

Are your parents divorced? Join us for the
Arlington Life-Giving Wounds retreat this Fall!
Come experience the healing love of Christ.
September 8-10, 2023



arlingtondiocese.org/healingretreat

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Arlington, VA 22203

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

To make a gift online:

https://arlingtondiocese.org/Donate_SEEF



Take aim at holiness

Quo Vadis Paintball Challenge

Saturday October 28, 2023

8:15am - 2:00pm

Corpus Christ Parish/Pev's Paintball/Aldie, VA
Mass, Paintball, Lunch with priests &
seminarians. Dads welcome.

Cost: \$50, includes gear and ammo.

Aid available. Register by Oct. 13.

www.ArlingtonDiocese.org/QuoVadis



Good News

INSPIRATION FOR DAILY LIFE

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Sunday September 3

Jeremiah 20:7-9
Ps 63:2-6,8-9
Romans 12:1-2
Matthew 16:21-27

Monday September 4

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Ps 96:1,3-5,11-13
Luke 4:16-30

Tuesday September 5

1 Thessalonians 5:1-6,9-11
Ps 27:1,4,13-14
Luke 4:31-37

Wednesday September 6

Colossians 1:1-8
Ps 52:10-11
Luke 4:38-44

Thursday September 7

Colossians 1:9-14
Ps 98:2-6
Luke 5:1-11

Friday September 8

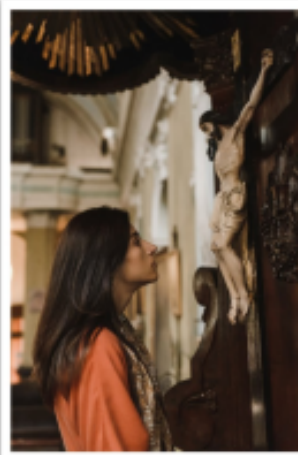
Nativity of Bl. Virgin Mary
Micah 5:1-4a or
Romans 8:28-30
Ps 13:6abc
Matthew 1:1-16,18-23

Saturday September 9

St. Peter Claver, Priest

Colossians 1:21-23
Ps 54:3-4,6,8
Luke 6:1-5

Today's first reading is one of my personal favorites. I have often felt the way Jeremiah does here. I have yelled at God, "You duped me, O Lord, and I let myself be duped!" And I allow it again and again. "You knew this would happen, Lord! Why did you lead me into this trial?" Have you ever felt that way?



God. We can tell him, without getting punished, that we do not like working for him. Complaining to others, however, is a sin because it causes gossip and prejudices and makes God look bad.

Asking for prayer support during our trials is important, but

Why do we let him do this to us? Why do we trust God even though he leads us into difficult situations? Why do we follow Jesus into giving our help and love to others even though it's going to feel very uncomfortable if not downright painful?

complaining to others shows how little we trust God. Eventually, we will see the good that comes from our sacrifices, and this is what we should communicate to others.

Walking with God and serving his kingdom is an adventure. We can expect the unexpected, and unfortunately in this world that includes suffering – denying ourselves the opportunity to pursue self-centered agendas, taking up crosses, and following Jesus all the way to Calvary (but then of course, all the way to resurrection, too, as explained in the Gospel reading).

Reflect & Discuss:

- † How do you feel when you do a good deed and it later works against you? Have you said "no" to allowing it to happen again?
- † What brings the healing love of Jesus to you to help you recover?
- † What unexpected sufferings have you encountered while giving someone a gift of unconditional love or while doing some other service for the kingdom of God?
- † How did you feel about God at that time? Was the cross you carried worth all the hardships? Explain.

Because we love God, we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, like the second reading asks us to do. This is the highest form of worship; it's a spiritual communion that we experience outside of the Eucharistic liturgy of Mass. In union with Jesus, we are the Eucharist.

As Jeremiah's complaint shows us, we can safely complain to

NO SOMOS CIUDADANOS DE SEGUNDA!

Domingo XXII (A)

Javier Leoz

Se agota el mes de agosto, y en el Día del Señor, hemos de seguir sintiendo la seducción, la cercanía y el lenguaje de un Dios que, lejos de abandonarnos, confía en lo poco o en lo mucho que podamos realizar en su nombre. ¿Que no nos entienden? ¿Y? ¿Pasa algo? ¿Comprendieron a los profetas? ¿Asumieron nuestros hermanos mayores del Antiguo Testamento todo lo que los Patriarcas indicaban o enseñaban? ¿Fue el camino de Juan Bautista un sendero virginal sin espinas ni abrojos? ¿El nacimiento, crecimiento y pasión de Cristo fue, igualmente, un aplauso y un reconocimiento rotundo a su persona? ¿Y el testimonio y la vida de la mayoría de los santos?

Amigos; muchos interrogantes que, al unísono, merecen una única respuesta. La que San Pablo nos da en la segunda lectura de este día: **lejos de ajustarnos a los moldes del mundo, hemos de agradar a Dios.**

*Agradar a Dios, muchas veces, conlleva el pelear con los “dioses”, con los “pequeños diosillos” de turno que nos rodean.

*Agradar a Dios, en diversas ocasiones, es ir contracorriente. Es decir “no” o un “¡basta!” allá donde creemos que se excede la conducta, los experimentos o el relativismo visceral que nos rodea.

Quien no lo quiera, como no lo deseaba Pedro, es pretender o soñar con un Jesús a la medida del mundo. ¿Que nos seducen otros cantos de sirena más que la voz exigente de Jesús? Estamos a tiempo. Pero ¿y a la larga? ¿Qué permanecerá eternamente estable y provechoso? Ni más ni menos que la fuerza de Dios. Sus promesas. Su Palabra que supera, con creces, la palabrería del mundo. A mí, como sacerdote, no me alarma el hecho de que algunos sonrían de algunas cosas que, para nosotros, son sagradas. Si que me llama la atención que, muchas de esas risas, vengan desde el graderío de muchos que, siendo bautizados y profesando la misma fe que nosotros, hacen burla o mofa de aquello que, según ellos, acogieron desde la libertad y en el sacramento del Bautismo.

A nosotros, como creyentes, no nos tiene que importar demasiado el no ser secundados en nuestros criterios. En nuestra forma de ver la sociedad o el mundo. En cambio, como creyentes, si que nos tiene que llevar a un análisis de si, el mundo, no estaría mejor si se rigiera con ciertos cánones o mínimos que nos marca el Evangelio.

Últimamente, la Iglesia Católica, en diversas latitudes –no solamente en España- está sometida a una especie de acoso. De incomprensión. Parece como si, su presencia, fuera una especie de privilegio que debiera de desaparecer. Pero, no lo olvidemos, la razón principal es otra: **hay un intento de despejar a fuera de juego a Dios. Hay una intencionalidad, clara y malévola, de apartar todo lo que suene a religioso.**

Ante ello, como creyentes, nos toca jugar un papel fundamental: **ante el acoso y derribo hemos de resistir con una fe formada, auténtica y convencida.** Es en estos momentos, en los que nos toca vivir aquí y ahora, donde Dios va cribando con delicadeza y atención la paja del trigo, la cizaña del buen grano, los cristianos fortalecidos de los cristianos vencidos por la debilidad o sonrojados por el qué dirán. Sí, amigos; nuestro seguimiento a Jesús no es camino dulce. Nuestra amistad con Cristo no nos lleva a una mesa repleta de tarta de manzana o

vinos de solera. Pero, eso sí, quien siga hasta el final (ojala estemos en esa final todos los que estamos en esta Eucaristía) se encontrará, nos encontraremos, con las promesas fielmente cumplidas por Cristo. Mientras tanto, lejos de mirar hacia el cielo esperando una señal de que estamos en la dirección adecuada, nos volcaremos de lleno en nuestra misión de cristianos. Que lejos de escondernos, como si fuéramos ciudadanos de segunda o de tercera, sepamos sazonar todas las situaciones que nos vienen a la mano, desde la seguridad de que Dios nos acompaña y nos aconseja. ¡Feliz Día con el Señor!



COGERÉ TU CRUZ, SEÑOR

Pues su madera, bien lo sé, Jesús
es escalera que conduce a la Resurrección.

Cogeré tu cruz, Señor,
pues su altura, es altura de miras
para los que creen en otro mundo
para los que esperan en Dios
para los que, cansándose o desangrándose,
saben compartir y repartir en los demás.

Cogeré tu cruz, Señor;
pues sus clavos, pasan la carne
pero no matan la fe.

Es la fe, quien a la cruz,
le da otro brillo y hasta otro color:
ni es tan cruel ni es definitiva.

Después de la cruz, vendrá la vida.

¡Dame tu cruz, Señor!

Merece la pena arriesgarse por Ti

Merece la pena sembrar en tu campo

Merece le pena sufrir contratiempos

Merece la pena adentrarse en tus caminos
sabiendo que, Tú, los recorriste primero.

¡Cogeré tu cruz, Señor!

Enséñame dónde y cómo

Indícame hacia dónde

Háblame cuando, por su peso,

caiga en el duro asfalto.

Quiero coger tu cruz, Señor,

porque bien lo sé,

hace tiempo que lo aprendí

que ideales como los tuyos

tienen y se pagan por un alto precio

Quiero coger tu cruz, Señor,

porque es preferible

en el horizonte de los montes

ver tu cruz

que el vacío del hombre errante

Amén

Orar en momentos de crisis

Ron Rolheiser (Trad. Julia Hinojosa) - Lunes, 25 de marzo de 2013

¿Cómo podemos elevar hacia Dios nuestros momentos más oscuros, más deprimidos y solitarios? ¿Cómo podemos orar cuando nos sentimos tan profundamente solos, desamparados, y todo nuestro mundo parece estar derrumbándose? Podemos aprender de Jesús y de cómo él oró la noche antes de su muerte en el Huerto de Getsemaní, en su hora más oscura: Era tarde en la noche, acababa de tener su última cena con sus amigos más cercanos, y tenía una hora para prepararse para enfrentar a su muerte. Su humanidad se abre paso y Jesús se encuentra postrado en el suelo, pidiendo una vía de escape. Así es como los Evangelios lo describen: Jesús se retiró de sus discípulos, aproximadamente a un tiro de piedra de distancia, y se tiró al suelo y oró. "Abba, Padre, todas las cosas son posibles para ti, si quieres, pasa de mí esta copa. Sin embargo, que se haga tu voluntad y no la mía". Y al regreso encontró a sus discípulos durmiendo. Así que se retiró otra vez y oraba con una angustia aún más intensa, y su sudor caía a tierra como grandes gotas de sangre. Cuando se levantó de la oración, fue a donde estaban los discípulos y los encontró dormidos por pura tristeza. Y él les dijo: "¿Por qué están durmiendo? Levantaos y orad para que no sean puestos a prueba." Y él oró por tercera vez, y un ángel vino y lo fortaleció, y se levantó para enfrentar con fuerza lo que le esperaba. Esta oración de Jesús en Getsemaní puede servir como un modelo de cómo podemos orar cuando estamos en crisis. En cuanto a la oración, podemos destacar siete elementos, cada uno de los cuales tiene algo que enseñarnos en términos de cómo orar en nuestros momentos más oscuros:

- 1. Los temas de la oración nacen en la soledad:** Los Evangelios destacan esto, tanto en términos de que la oración tiene lugar en un jardín (el lugar arquetípico para el amor) y en que Jesús está "a la distancia de un tiro de piedra" de sus seres queridos quienes no pueden estar presentes ante lo que él está pasando. En nuestras más profundas crisis, siempre estamos dolorosamente solos, a dos pasos de distancia de los demás. Una profunda oración se debe hacer desde ese lugar.
- 2. La oración es de una gran familiaridad:** Comienza la oración llamando a su padre "Abba", el término más familiar posible, la frase que un niño usaría sentado en su regazo o el de su padre. En nuestros momentos más oscuros, tenemos que estar con mayor familiaridad con Dios.
- 3. La oración es de una total honestidad:** Clásicamente oración se define como " la elevación de la mente y el corazón hacia Dios". Jesús hace esto, radicalmente, siendo completamente honesto. Le pide a Dios que le quite el sufrimiento, que le dé una salida. Su humanidad se estremece ante el deber y pide una vía de escape. Esa es oración sincera, verdadera oración.
- 4. La oración es de una total impotencia:** Él cae al suelo, postrado, sin convicción sobre su propia fuerza. Su oración contiene la petición de que si Dios va a hacer esto a través de él, Dios necesita darle la fuerza para ello.
- 5. La oración es de apertura, a pesar de la resistencia personal:** A pesar de que él se encoge ante lo que se le está pidiendo que se someta y pide un escape, él todavía le da a Dios el permiso radical para entrar en su libertad. Su oración le abre a la voluntad de Dios, si eso es lo que en última instancia se pide de él.
- 6. La oración es de repetición:** Repite la oración varias veces, cada vez con más insistencia, sudando sangre, y no sólo una vez, sino varias veces.
- 7. La oración es de transformación:** Finalmente un ángel (fuerza divina) va y le fortalece y él se entrega a lo que se le pidió que se sometiera en base a ésta nueva fuerza que viene de fuera de él. Sin embargo esa fuerza sólo puede fluir en él después de que, a través del desamparo, deja a un lado su propia fuerza. Es sólo después de que el desierto ha hecho su obra en nosotros que estamos dispuestos a dejar que la fuerza de Dios fluya en nosotros.

En su libro *Paso Hacia la libertad*, Martin Luther King relata cómo una noche, después de recibir una amenaza de muerte, él se asustó, se entregó al miedo, y, no muy diferente a Jesús en Getsemaní, literalmente, se derrumbó en el suelo con miedo, con soledad, con impotencia y en oración. El confesó que su oración esa noche fue toda una súplica a Dios para que le permitiera encontrar una forma honorable de escapar, sin embargo Dios pidió algo más de él. He aquí sus palabras finales a Dios en oración: "Aunque ahora tengo miedo. Las personas me están buscando por liderazgo, y si me presento ante ellos sin fuerza y ??valor, ellos también se tambalearán. Estoy al final de mis poderes. No me queda nada. He llegado hasta el punto donde no puedo afrontarlo solo." Luego añade: "En ese momento sentí la presencia de Dios como nunca lo había experimentado antes." Un ángel le encontró. Cuando oramos sinceramente, cualquiera que sea nuestro dolor, un ángel de Dios siempre nos encontrará.



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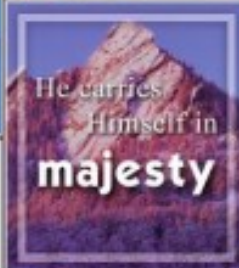
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