



Dear Friends,

Although Friday is my day off, my staff knows to always call me in case of a sickness or death. Such was the situation last Friday when Josefa, my secretary, called to let me know that a former parishioner of mine, from Saint James Church where I was assigned in the '80's, was in Hospice and near death. His wife wanted me to come as soon as possible, as he probably would not survive the night. I administered the Sacrament of the Sick and prayed the prayers for the dying. I held Bernard's hand and asked him to remember me when he went to the Lord. Times such as these have never become routine for me and certainly never easy. Although Bernard was not a Catholic, he accompanied his wife to Mass on most Sundays and the final prayers of the Church brought comfort to his wife, which was most important. As I held Bernie's hand in the dimly lit room, I had flashbacks of another Bernard's hand I held for several hours just three years ago as he was about to meet the Lord - my Dad. How often, at times like this, do my wise parents come to mind.

As I drove home that night I thought, "*this* is what my priesthood is really all about. This is why I entered the seminary and was ordained." And yet I kept thinking how my desk is always so cluttered with administrative duties. Unfortunately, too many times the paper and desk work overtake the pastoral. People must come first. So many thoughts of putting things in proper priority came to my mind as I continued my drive home. I sometimes think I did more pastoral work when I was the *associate* pastor.

Living in this highly charged area of the Nation's Capital, my reflection on priorities may be yours as well. Overtime, deadlines, unscheduled meetings, overly long rush hours trying to make it home to be with the family, the list goes on and varies with each one of us. But we all have to think about what is *really* important in our life. I remember my niece telling me that upon coming home from work her plans are to do the household chores and get dinner ready. Many times her two young sons want their Mom's time to play with them in the back yard. What she shared with me I have in turn shared with others: "If the laundry needs to get done and the children want me to spend time with them, the laundry can wait. My children won't always be wanting *me* to play with them. These times come only once. They'll be grown up all too soon and *won't* want "*mommy*" to be with them." When I shared these thoughts with our assistant principal this week her answer was short and to the point: "*She's a smart woman.*"

From time to time we have to ask ourselves what order are our priorities? Sadly, I have encountered some who spend more time in church activities than with their family. Something is wrong with that order. Stephen Covey, author of *First Things First*, wrote wisely: "*Anything less than a conscious commitment to the important is an unconscious commitment to the unimportant.*"

As I write this column, I am still looking at a cluttered desk, but for the moment at least - it doesn't disturb me quite as much. Along with Bernard and the other sick and hurting people I have encountered these past few days I have brought my priorities to their proper order. I hope it lasts.

Have a nice week!

THE SIGN OF PEACE.....

What does it mean and why do we do it. There is a difference between greeting one another before Mass and exchanging the sign of peace before receiving communion. When we greet one another before Mass, we are doing just that. We are getting to know the people around us with whom we will be celebrating the Liturgy. The sign of peace, on the other hand, is an ancient ritual that had been part of the liturgy in the early Church and was lost for a while. The ritual was recovered by the Second Vatican Council. The meaning of this ritual is one of reconciliation and unity with each other before approaching the altar to receive communion. It is based on the gospel of Matthew (5:23-24), which calls for reconciliation with your brother before bringing your gifts to the altar. It has a symbolism that is profound. By its very name we offer to one another the peace of the Lord, a deep lasting peace which comes with true reconciliation and faith in Him. And so we shake hands or offer a “holy hug” to those around us, with the words “Peace be with you”. Like so many of the actions that take place during Mass, the sign of peace has a story to tell. Next week we will take a look at its history and place within the liturgy.



Monday, September 21

ALINE HARKINS.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

Tuesday, September 22

JOHN ROBERT BRANISH.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

Wednesday, September 23

DOROTHY BARBANES.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

Thursday, September 24

DR. FRANCIS SAMAHA.....7:30am - Fr. O’Keefe

Friday, September 25

WILSON LOPEZ.....7:30am - Fr. O’Keefe

Saturday, September 26

Special Intentions of

JOSEFA LOPEZ.....9:00am - Fr. O’Keefe

ROGER BLANCHARD.....5:00pm - Fr. Wilson

Sunday, September 27

JOHN AUSTIN MALONE, SR.....7:30am - Fr. O’Keefe

JAMES LYNCH.....9:00am - Fr. O’Keefe

MARIANNE SIRACUSA.....11:00am - Fr. Wilson

JOHN KEESLER.....12:45pm - Fr. Wilson



Altar Flowers

**In Loving Memory of
The Family and Friends of
Len and Mary Ann Yankosky**

**Special Intentions of
The Der Boghossian Family**



Thought for the Week:

To live in the past and future is easy. To live in the present is like threading a needle.

Walter Percy

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES BEGIN

SEPTEMBER 20, 21, and 22 for students registered by September 7. On the first day of class, students should report to the Parish Hall to meet their teachers and be escorted to their classrooms.

Students registered after September 7, start classes on September 27, 28, and 29.

Confirmation Catechists and Assistants should attend a very important information meeting on Sunday, September 27, at 7:30pm in Room 9.

First Penance Catechists and Assistants should attend a very important information meeting on Sunday, October 4, at 7:30pm in Room 9.

Confirmation Students and Parents are to attend a **VERY IMPORTANT Investiture Service and information meeting** on Wednesday, October 7, at 7:00pm in the church.

Catechetical Sunday, September 20, Nativity’s 9:00am Mass — All Religious Education Program Volunteers will be commissioned.

White House Ornaments have arrived

The Women of Nativity will have the Ornaments available to you on September 19 and 20. The cost remains \$19.00 for each ornament. Stop by our table with your list and either cash or checks. Checks are to be made out to: Church of Nativity. The White House Ornaments continue to be a favorite keepsake and a treasured gift for friends and family. Thanks for your support of WON!



Nativity Catholic School

Nativity Catholic School is continuing to accept enrollments for the 2009-2010 school year. In 2009 Nativity School was awarded the Blue Ribbon of Excellence. Please inquire in the school office or call Amor Paulson at 703-455-2300, ext. 119 for more information.

Nativity Catholic School would like to thank those who continually support the school through their **Combined Federal Campaign** contributions. The school benefits greatly from your CFC donations and would like to ask everyone to please remember our designated number **71097** when making your pledges. Thank you again for your support

FYI...The Baptism class for the month of September will be on Thursday, September 24th at 7:30 pm in the school library

PRO-LIFE CORNER

The Alexandria 40 Days for Life campaign begins on September 23, 2009: 40 Days for Life is a focused Pro-Life effort that consists of 40 days of prayer and fasting, 40 days of peaceful vigil, 40 days of community outreach. See full details at www.40daysforlife.com/alexandria and Stand Up For Life!

Please support the **TEPEYAC FAMILY CENTER**, 11135 Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-273-9440 x 107, with your prayers and financial resources. Info on this crisis pregnancy center can be found at www.tepeyacfamilycenter.com

Pro-Life Rosary-A prayerful, peaceful and public gathering of friends and neighbors who pray the rosary for one hour takes place on Saturdays at 10:00 am on Rolling Road across from Kings Park SC Giant Food. Please call Jane Hamilton, 703-646-5051 for more information.

Crisis Pregnancy Centers Phone Numbers

Catholic Charities National: 1-800-CARE-002
Catholic Charities Local: 703-425-0100
A Woman's Choice: 703-538-4305
Gabriel Project: 1-866-444-3553

SCOUTING NEWS

The **Girl Scout Troops** of Nativity will be holding a fall **Nut & Candy Sale** after all Masses on October 3rd and 4th. Please stop by our table to order some wonderful selections. Delivery of the ordered items is scheduled for mid-November so they'll make great holiday gifts. Thanks in advance for your support of scouting at Nativity.



Boy Scout Troop 1100 will be taking orders for wreaths and holiday greenery products after Mass on October 10th/11th and October 17th/18th.

Proceeds from these sales enhance and aid scout activities throughout the year. Thank you for your generous support.



CLEARANCE!!!! The Little Angel Gift Shop is making room for Christmas items. We have CD's (reduced price), books and gifts (half price). Space is needed for crèches, decorations, cards and more. Come, check out our treasures, you may find that special something that you have been looking for.

**Celebrating a Silver or Golden Wedding Anniversary this year?**

Were you married in 1959 or 1984? Then join Bishop Loverde for the 2009 Marriage Jubilee Mass to be celebrated on Sunday, October 25th at 2:30pm at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More. Contact the parish office (703-455-2400) to register **no later than Friday, September 25th**. For more information, visit www.arlingtondiocese.org/familylife/MJM.php



On September 29th, Nativity will join with other parishes throughout the diocese in prayerful preparation through the Rosary Novena for the Diocesan Pilgrimage. Don't miss the opportunity to tour the Basilica and attend Bishop Loverde's mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Saturday, October 10th. For more information contact Jane Hamilton at 703-646-5051 or Mdhamilton@aol.com

Rick Cortez, our representative from Diocesan Publications, will be here the weeks of September 28th and October 5th. This is the perfect time to think about putting an ad in the bulletin. Look for a flyer and more information on advertising in next week's bulletin.



**KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS**
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

The Knights of Columbus...an organization like no other

The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal benefit society and the world's largest lay Catholic organization with more than 1.75 million members. Last year members of the Knights of Columbus donated more than 68 million hours of volunteer service for charitable causes and contributed more than \$144 million to charity.

Nativity Knights donated over 12,000 hours of volunteer service and raised over \$40,000 for charitable causes last year.

We are searching for the next generation of Knights.

Interested in having the experience of a lifetime by joining this great fraternal organization that is involved in giving back to our church, our families, and our community? E-mail GK7992@VAKOFC.org, visit the coffee room after Mass to visit with a Brother Knight or call Matt Smith (703) 455-3197 or Tom Savage (512) 983-5641.



GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE

Next Knights of Columbus Blood Drive: Saturday, September 26, 7AM to Noon at St. Raymond's Parish Hall. At this blood drive, INOVA Blood Donor Services is emphasizing the urgent need of collecting O Negative, B Negative and A Negative donors. All donors are welcome! Contact John Landy @ 703-250-1492, email navy8@yahoo.com now for your appointment or after Mass to sign up. Thank you!

John Murray, a college Spanish professor, has volunteered to teach beginning Spanish (Classroom 6, 7-9 PM on Fridays, start date TBA). Your only cost would be approximately \$15 for the book. Please contact Josefa Lopez (703-455-2400) to sign up. You may also call John (703-239-2651) for other details or questions.

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OPERATION STARFISH®
NEWS

MISSION TRIP TO HAITI

1 or 2 spaces remain for our parish trip to Haiti Nov. 9-13, 2009. Fr. Martin will be taking another group of Nativity parishioners to visit Nativity Village at Merger, Nativity Village at Prolonge, Nativity Fishing Villages, Nativity Tilapia Farm, St. Anthony Clinic and other sites in Port-au-Prince and Cap Haitien. Call or email right away if you are interested in more information. Contact Jim McDaniel at seas-tar2004@msn.com; 703-455-6874.

FILL A SEA CONTAINER FOR HAITI

Fr. Duken Augustin, Nativity Village at Prolonge, has requested assistance with supplies and materials. We are going to fill a sea container and Food For The Poor will ship it to him. Volunteers are needed to help locate specific items on the needs list. Contact Melinda Engelbrektsson at 703-690-9921, or Katie Scully at 703-690-9379.

DIOCESAN MISSION FAIR OCTOBER 3RD

Bishop Loverde will open the Fair at St. James Church, 905 Park Ave., Falls Church, VA, from 9am to 3pm. On Saturday, Oct. 3. Come hear Fr. Martin speak about mission work! Operation Starfish® will be featured. Guest speakers, workshops and exhibits will highlight mission work by parishes throughout the Arlington Diocese. Lunch available – all are welcome!

All are invited to participate in the **17th International Week of Prayer and Fasting, October 2-12** in Washington, DC.

On **October 10th**, **Journey Conference – Young Adult Festival** at the JPII Cultural Center at 9am, featuring Chris Horn, former NFL Wide-Receiver with Carolina Panthers, Christina Condit on chastity, Chris Padgett on family life issues, Kristan Hawkins on pro-life and Fr. Clement Machado on healing. (www.journeydc.org.) On **October 11th**, the **God's Plan for Live and Love Awards Banquet** will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC at 5:30pm, featuring **former US Sen. Rick Santorum**. On **October 12th**, a **Eucharistic Prayer Vigil** at the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at 9am, featuring Jennifer O'Neill, actress and pro-life activist, Dr. Jackson, lead scientist on Shroud of Turin, Fr. Frank Pavone, Priests for Life, and other speakers. For more info, go to www.iwopf.org.

“If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.” (Gospel) Marriage is about serving each other with a love that brings great joy. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is Nov. 13-15. Early registration is highly recommended, as dates fill up quickly. For more info call John & Lorie Scali 703-631-5289 or visit <http://wwme-nova.org/> [\(en espanol http://www.seccion16emm.com/\)](http://www.seccion16emm.com/)

Mother's Group

The Mom & Me Group invites you to join us on Wednesdays from 10:00 am - 11:30 am at the Church of the Nativity's All Purpose Room. Mom & Me is a cooperative organization of mothers of young children who meet weekly for socialization and service in a Catholic faith environment. Most kids are birth through preschool age. For more information, please contact Kate O'Connor at 703-923-9739 or email k8connor@gmail.com.



POT LUCK...All families of Nativity are invited to join the Family Fellowship Group on Friday, September 25th at **7:00 pm (new time)** in the Parish Hall for a POT LUCK gathering. Bring a dish to share and join us in celebrating our community of families. This group was formed over a year ago to bring families together in fellowship, faith and service. The group serves at the local Ronald McDonald House here in VA. For more information email us at nativityfamilyfellowship@yahoo.com.

ANNUAL WHITE MASS

Join Bishop Loverde at the Annual White Mass honoring physicians and health care professionals on Sunday, October 18th at 10:00am at St. Philip Church in Falls Church. The Mass will be followed by a delicious pancake breakfast and Rev. Peter Ryan, S.J., Professor of Moral Theology at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, who will be speaking on “Caring for Patients in the Persistent Vegetative State., A Catholic Perspective.” Tickets for the breakfast are \$25 per person/\$15 for students until October 10th and then \$50/person. Reservation and payment can be mailed to Dr. Chai Thieda, McLean Pediatrics, 6711 Whittier Ave. #101, McLean, VA22101. For information, contact info@tepevacfamilycenter.com.

“Wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield.” Praying for wisdom will help you yield in Christ's choice of you, should He extend to you the gift of a vocation to the consecrated life or priesthood. If you are discerning your vocation, call Father Brian Bashista 703-841-2514 or write b.bashista@arlingtondiocese.org

**THE WEEK AHEAD
IN OUR PARISH**

Sunday, September 20

BOY SCOUT DONUT SALE (CH)
2:00 pm.....Baptisms (CH)
2:00, 4:00 & 6:00pm...CCD Classes (S,PH)

Monday, September 21

9:30 am.....Prayer Shawl Mtg. (APR)
4:00 & 7:00 pm.....CCD (S,PH)
7:00 pm.....RCIA (GR)
7:00 pm.....RCIC (PH)
8:00 pm.....AA Meeting (APR)

Tuesday, September 22

9:30 am.....Morning Bible Study (APR)
4:30, 7:00 pm.....CCD Classes (S,PH)
7:30 pm.....Legion of Mary (APR)

Wednesday, September 23

10:00am.....Mom and Me (APR)
7:00 pm.....Hispanic Prayer Group (SC)
7:00 pm.....ESL Classes (RM. 5)
7:30 pm.....Evening Bible Study (RM. 9)
7:00 pm.....BSA Troop 1100

Thursday, September 24

9:30 am.....Craft Group (APR)
6:30 pm.....Cadets, Troop 2948 (GR)
7:00 pm.....ESL Classes (RM. 5)
7:15 pm.....Family Choir (SC)
7:30 pm.....Prayer Group (APR)
7:30 pm.....Baptism Class (SL)
7:30 pm.....Venture Crew (RM. 4)

Friday, September 25

7:00 pm.....Family Fellowship Group (PH)
7:00 pm.....JustFaith (RM. 7)

Saturday, September 26

9:00 am.....Mass (CH)
10:00 am.....Dog Obedience Class (PL)
10:00 am.....ESL Classes (RM. 5,6,7,8)
4:30 pm.....Hispanic CCD (S/PH)
7:00 pm.....Hispanic Mass (CH)

VOCATION PRAYER

Ave O Crux! Lord Jesus, may all those now considering the share in Your saving mission to which You are calling them, receive the grace and courage to embrace their cross and follow You in their vocation. Amen.