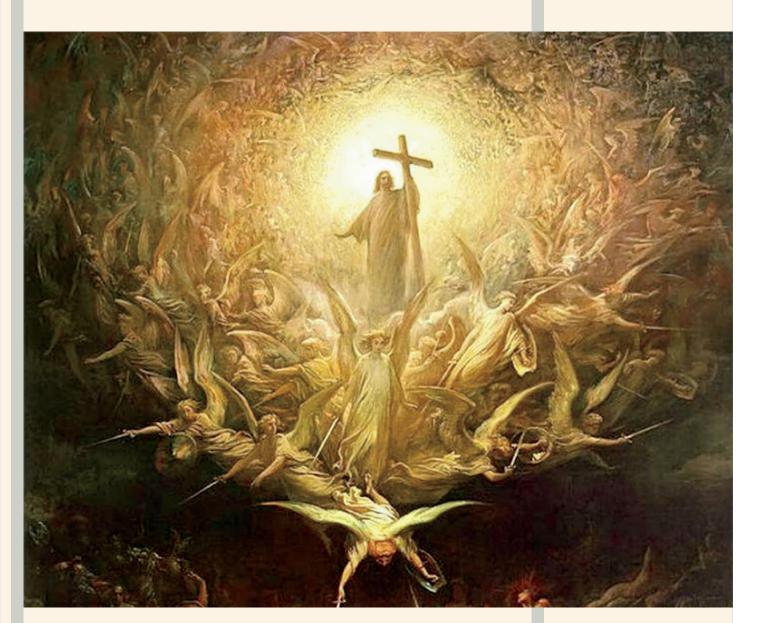
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O God, who willed that your Only Begotten Son should undergo the Cross to save the human race, grant that we, who have known his mystery on earth, may merit the grace of his redemption in heaven. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

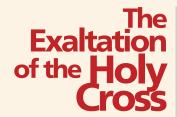
The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

September 14, 2025



The Triumph Of Christianity Over Paganism, Paul Gustave Doré, 1868 Art Gallery of Hamilton, Ontario





September 14, 2025

SUNDAY MASS I

Saturday Vigil in church 5pm (live-streaming) Sunday 7am, 9am, 11am, 1pm (Spanish), 5pm

DAILY MASS

Mon.-Fri., 7 & 9am (live-streaming); Sat., 8am (live-streaming)

Holy Days of Obligation, as announced

LIVE-STREAMING

Monday-Friday, 9am; Saturday, 8am; Vigil Sat., 5pm and Sundays 9 & 11am

DEVOTIONS

Adoration & Benediction, Fridays, 7-8pm (church)

Rosary after 9am weekdays/8am Saturday Masses in church

Taizé Prayer Service, 3rd Mondays, 8-8:45pm (church)

CONFESSION

Sat., 3:30-4:30pm, or by appointment. **English and Spanish Confessions**

PARISH OFFICE

703-451-8576, fax 703-269-1121 office@stbernpar.org

Monday-Friday, 8:30am - 4:30pm

welcome

Pastor, Fr. Don Rooney frdonrooney@stbernpar.org Fr. Jeb Donelan <u>frjebdonelan@stbernpar.org</u> Fr. James Waalkes frjameswaalkes@stbernpar.org Deacon Orlando Caicedo

Pastoral Associate, Rick Caporali rcaporali@stbernpar.org Business Manager, Linda Patterson <u>Lpatterson@stbernpar.org</u> Music Director, David Mathers dmathers@stbernpar.org Executive Assistant, Jean Corday jcorday@stbernpar.org Executive Assistant, Evelyn Vargas, evargas@stbernpar.org Secretary, Janet Chávez-España

SAINT

703-451-8696, fax 269-1121

BERNADETTE

Principal, Dr. Kathleen Burgess school@stbernpar.org

SCHOOL

Assistant Principal, Jennifer Spencer

Registrar, Heidi Thomes

RELIGIOUS

703-451-8576

EDUCATION

Director, Lynn Jones <u>Liones@stbernpar.org</u>

Coordinator of Religious Education, Arlyn Agasen, aagasen@stbernpar.org Administrative Assistant, Victor Mendez vmendez@stbernpar.org

YOUTH

703-451-8576

MINISTRY

Director, Grace Mee gmee@stbernpar.org

Assistant Director, J.P. McLaughlin, jpmclaughlin@stbernpar.org

BAPTISMS

Saturday, 10am, 1st and 2nd Saturdays in English; 3rd Saturday in Spanish. Parish registration is encouraged for parents. Class attendance is required. Please contact the parish office to schedule at least four weeks in advance. All required paperwork must be submitted before a baptism may be scheduled.

WEDDINGS

Sat., 12 & 2pm. Parish registration required somewhere; contact a priest at least six months in advance of desired date.

JOIN US

You are welcome! Registration forms are available in the church vestibule, office, or online www.stbernpar.org.

Articles for the bulletin must be submitted to the parish office no later than first thing Friday morning, ten days before publication date. <u>bulletin@stbempar.org</u>.



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september

14 Sunday, THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

- Live-streaming Masses continue at 9am, 11am and 1pm in Spanish
 Parish Life Weekend, Meet with Ministry leaders after all Masses
- Fall Confirmation 2027 Kickoff, Parents and Students, 6pm, Cafeteria
- 15 Monday, Our Lady of Sorrows (24th Week in Ordinary Time)
 - Taizé Ecumencial Prayer Service, 8pm in the church, please join us!
- 16 Tuesday, Saints Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs
- 17 Wednesday, Weekday [Saint Hildegard of Bingen, Virgin and Doctor]
- 18 Thursday, Weekday
- 19 Friday, Weekday [Saint Januarius, Bishop and Martyr]
 - Adoration, 7-8pm in the church
- 20 Saturday, Saints Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Priest, and Paul Chong Ha-sang and Companions, Martyrs
 - Live-streaming Mass for Sunday begins with the 5pm Vigil Mass
 - Commitment Weekend, please return completed Commitment Cards this weekend
 Fall Confirmation 2026 Kickoff, Parents and Students, 6pm, Cafeteria

 - Filipino Mass at 7pm, all are welcome
- 21 Sunday, TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
 - Live-streaming Masses continue at 9am, 11am and 1pm in Spanish
 - Commitment Weekend, please return completed Commitment Cards this weekend
- 22 Monday, Weekday
- Tuesday, Saint Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest
- 24 Wednesday, Weekday
- 25 Thursday, Weekday
- Friday, Weekday [Saints Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs]
 - Adoration, 7-8pm in the church
- 27 Saturday, Saint Vincent de Paul, Priest
 - Live-streaming Mass for Sunday begins with the 5pm Vigil Mass
- Sunday, TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME **World Day of Prayer for Migrants and Refugees**
 - Live-streaming Masses continue at 9am, 11am and 1pm in Spanish
- 29 Monday, Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels
- Tuesday, Saint Jerome, Priest and Doctor

october

- Wednesday, Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor
- Thursday, The Holy Guardian Angels
- 3 Friday, Weekday
 - Adoration, 7-8pm in the church
- **Saturday, Saint Francis of Assisi**
 - Live-streaming Mass for Sunday begins with the 5pm Vigil Mass
 - Parish Life Weekend, Meet with Ministry leaders after all Masses
- Sunday, TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
 - Live-streaming Masses continue at 9am, 11am and 1pm in Spanish

announcements

Watch your mailbox! All registered parishioners will be receiving our Parish Renewal Handbook, Ministry Catalog and Annual Report, probably beginning September 5. Please read it! We will celebrate Commitment Sunday next weekend. Please review the book and discover how you might get involved in parish life!

Join us for our monthly **Taizé** Ecumenical Prayer service on **Monday**, **15 September** at 8pm in the church. Bring your friends, all are welcome!

On November 4, Virginians will be selecting candidates for all 100 seats in the House of Delegates as well as for Governor, Lt. Governor and Attorney General. We will host a nonpartisan voter registration event after the 9am, 11am and before the 1pm Mass in Spanish next Sunday, September 21. The registration deadline for the general election is Friday, October 24. All materials will be bilingual.

All couples celebrating a Golden or Silver Anniversary are invited to a Wedding Anniversaries Mass on Sunday, October 19, 2:30pm at the Cathedral of St. Thomas **More**. Please call the parish office to register no later than Monday, October 3.

Thank you to all who have responded to our request to reduce our parish envelope costs. If you are receiving offertory envelopes but don't use them or no longer wish to receive them, please contact us. Remember Second and Special Collections can be done electronically through Faith Direct.

+ Mark your calendars for these upcoming dates!

Knights of Columbus 5K, Saturday, October 4 (see page 12)

El Señor de los Milagros/Lord of the Miracles Mass, procession and dinner: Saturday, October 11

Parish Family Picnic, Saturday, October 18 **ECHO Yard Sale**, Saturday, November 1

www.stbernpar.org | page 3

from the pastor





Dear Good People of Saint Bernadette,

I used a quote by Pope Francis in my homily last week that has stayed with me. Do you remember as we watched him walk completely alone through an empty Saint Peter's Square at the height of the pandemic, and the world watched Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the front, locked doors? Kneeling there he prayed to God a prayer of confession for how we have not been good stewards of the gifts we have received, not heeded unprecedented levels of suffering, wars and injustice, not listened to the cry of the poor or of our ailing planet. He said, "We carried on regardless, thinking we would stay healthy in a world that was sick."

I hear it all the time in the confessional. I was talking to a friend of mine who is a pastoral care counselor who spoke about the general reality in the therapeutic community. We are living in a time of uncertainty, confusion, and despair. So many people who do not know what to do. They are "stuck."

I'm working on planning the Burke/Springfield Interfaith Thanksgiving Prayer Service (HERE! Tuesday, November 25 - mark your calendars!) and came across a song while I was gardening last week. I don't think I had heard it before, but it will be the song for the combined interfaith choir. The song is "Thankful," sung by Josh Groban.

Somedays, we forget to look around us. Somedays, we can't see the joy that surrounds us. So caught up inside ourselves, we take when we should give. So for tonight we pray for what we know can be; and on this day we hope for what we still can't see. It's up to us, to be the change, and even though we all can still do more, There's so much to be thankful for.

Look beyond ourselves, there's so much sorrow. It's way too late to say I'll cry tomorrow. Each of us must find our truth, we're so long overdue. So for tonight we pray for what we know can be; and everyday, we hope for what we still can't see...

The solution is to get out of ourselves, and discover something greater. Enough! The solution to depression is not mindless busy-ness. In fact, that often makes it worse. But ask the question: what would you be doing? What can you do to make

a difference? What is important to you? What kind of world – what kind of Church – do we leave for our children?

The therapeutic response for a person in distress is to identify their values. And their boundaries. Ask if they hold themselves accountable? And focus on gratitude to God who has given us so many things we forget on a daily basis to acknowledge. Share that knowledge and faith will grow. Faith that is shared grows many times faster than when I am alone.

The same question applies to a parish community on Parish Life Weekend. Have we identified our values? Our limits? Do we hold ourselves accountable for the life of this parish family?

So what do we do about that? The answer is to do *something*. Actions reveal the integrity of our words. Act, and just do the next right thing.

This weekend is Parish Life Weekend, perhaps you've heard. What I do know is that nothing will happen if we don't act. The challenge to you this weekend is to consider this place where you belong, and your part in making it stronger and more beautiful, all of us together. Through a deeper commitment to the spiritual life. Through a deeper commitment to care for someone or serve others in Church work. Through a deeper commitment to help our parish afford our vision to grow in prayer and service to God and each other.

Pages 14-21 in this bulletin are reprinted from a previous year, a reflection on discipleship (and the four pillars of hospitality prayer, formation, and service) and its authentic expressions. Please review it.

Also, I hope everyone has received our *Parish Renewal Handbook, Ministry Catalog and Annual Report*. Please read it. We did a lot of work to produce it!

Prayerfully consider how we will discover something greater than ourselves in the coming year. "See," Jesus says, "I make all things new." He does that through our service as the living members of his Body in this place, in this time, as we work together to advance the work of salvation.

The Lord be with you, Fr. 12m

Welcoming new families to our school

The Cardinals are back at school. After a summer of quiet halls, our campus is once again alive with the sounds of learning, laughter, and friendship. This year, we were especially blessed to welcome many new families into our Saint Bernadette community.

To help ease the transition, we provide opportunities for our new families to connect, ask questions, and begin building friendships. Our Guardian Angel Program pairs each new family with a "buddy" family, giving them a friendly point of contact for everything from navigating school uniforms and after-school care to understanding the lunch menu.

Sneak-a-Peek, held on 18 August 2025, gave all our families the opportunity to meet their teachers, drop off school supplies, and learn more about our afterschool activities. To make the experience smoother, we invited our new families to arrive 30 minutes early, allowing them time to explore the school at a calmer pace. We know how overwhelming those first days can feel, and this early start helps ensure our newest Cardinals feel comfortable and confident as they begin their journey at Saint Bernadette.

We also give our new parents a chance to mingle and meet with our New Parent Social, which is hosted by our wonderful P.T.O. at the beginning of each school year. This event, which was held September 4 is a cherished tradition that gives parents the opportunity to meet one another, form connections, and ask questions in a relaxed, welcoming, and child-free setting. This evening sets the tone for the school year ahead, with the hope of new friendships blooming and taking root.

At Saint Bernadette Catholic School, we know that when families feel at home, children thrive. We are grateful for the gift of our new families and look forward to growing together in faith, friendship, and learning throughout the year.

cardinal







religious education

Weekly update

Please confact Lynn Jones, Director of Religious Education, at 703-451-8576, ext 136; Arlyn Agasen, ext 132, or Victor Mendez, Administrative Assistant, at ext 138.



Another week of Religious Education in the books. Please remember there are **no cell phones** allowed in classes, and smart watches will need to be put in "do not disturb" mode. Children should bring their book(s) in their clear plastic folder each week to class, and parents should check the folder weekly for assignments and information from the catechist. Class times on Tuesday and Wednesday are 6-7:15pm-please arrive and pick-up on time! Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will have to be signed in by a parent at door 1.

Please remember that the Confirmation kick-off meetings are this month! It is a mandatory meeting for both parents and children held at the church from 6:15-7:15pm. **Confirmation 2027** kick-off will be on September 14 and **Confirmation 2026** kick-off will be on September 28.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) is held during the Sunday 9am Mass to proclaim God's Word to our three-to-six year olds at a level they can understand. If you would like to sign your child up, please use this link: https://forms.office.com/r/jtBEOmO0ys or scan the QR code at left. As the CLOW team preps for the new school year, we are in need of volunteers to help teach the children and to be classroom

aides. If you are interested in supporting this ministry, please reach out to Kathryn Melton at yanezka@gmail.com or Lynn Jones at jones@stbernpar.org.

Volunteers for 2025-2026

We are still in need for volunteers (assistant catechists, teen catechists, and hall monitors). If interested, please contact the Religious Education Office or fill out the Volunteer Form on the website https://stbernpar.org/religious-education-volunteers/.

Living the liturgical year

Today, September 14, we celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The feast commemorates two historic events, the discovery of the True Cross of Christ by St. Helena and the dedication of the basilica on Calvary (Church of the Holy Sepulchre) built by her son, St. Constantine the Great. You can read about the story of the discovery of the True Cross here https:// faithandfabricdesign.com/2013/09/activity-feast-of-exaltation-of-holy.html and it gives you a directions of the Holy Cross activity to do with your children. Or you can go on a pilgrimage to the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in Washington, DC to see the replicas of the Holy Land

youth ministry

Email our director of youth ministry, Grace Mee at gmee@stbernpar.org. or our assistant director JP McLaughlin at jpmclaughlin@stbernpar.org with any questions you may have.

High School Tuesday Socials

All high schoolers are invited to join us for Tuesday Socials every Tuesday from 7-8:30pm! Meet in the youth room (in the parish office) for games, ice cream, and a discussion on the faith. Contact Grace Mee for more information!

Middle School Youth Ministry

Next gathering - September 17 All 6th-8th graders are invited for games, snacks, and fun every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month! Meet in the school gym from 6:45-8pm.

Daily Mass and Donuts - September 23

All high schoolers are invited to take advantage of the FCPS student holiday and join us for 9am daily Mass, followed by donuts and fellowship in the youth room until 10:30.

High School Boys Bonfire - September 25

All 9-12th grade boys are invited to join us for a bonfire, s'mores, and games on Thursday, September 25th from 7-8:30pm. Meet on the rectory patio. Contact JP McLaughlin for more information (JPMcLaughlin@stbernpar.org)

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Catholic Women's Group upcoming events

Come and enjoy warm fellowship and great food. No need to RSVP. For more information, please email us at women@ stbernpar.org.

Monday, September 15 is our next Dinner with Friends at 5pm, at Saratoga Pizzeria, 8050 Rolling Road. This casual meal is one of our normal dinners on the 1st the 3rd Monday of every month.

NEW DATE! Our next monthly meeting will be Tuesday, September 16 at 7pm in the Bradican Room. We have a very special program tonight. Father James will favor us with a vocal and guitar performance including some selfcomposed songs and some more familiar and popular favorites. This will surely be an evening not to be missed!

8th grade High School Placement Test

8th grade students attending public schools or non-Catholic private schools who are interested in attending Catholic High Schools in the Diocese of Arlington need to take the High School Placement Test (HSPT). The date, time and locations

TEST DATE: Sat., November 15, 2025

TEST SITES:

Bishop Ireton High School, Alexandria Bishop O'Connell High School, Arlington St. Paul VI High School, Chantilly Saint John Paul the Great High School, **Dumfries**

TEST TIME: 8:30am – 12 Noon FEE: contact high school

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS: Any 8th grader attending public school, non-Catholic private schools, or Catholic schools outside the Arlington Diocese (students who attend parish schools in the Diocese take the same test at their school site).

REQUIREMENTS: Students must register on-line on the high school's website. The registration must be completed on-line by the high school's registration deadline.

The testing fee should accompany the registration.

For students who are prevented from taking the test on November 15, there will be an additional testing date on Sat., December 6 at all four high schools (Snow Date – Dec. 13, 2025), from 8:30am to noon.

Walking with Purpose -Women's Bible Study

Come as you are - you are welcome here! Walking with Purpose Women's Bible Study ministry returns October 14 and 16 for a 22 week study. Join us for "Touching the Divine" to explore the qualities of Jesus revealed through the Gospel of John. This study draws us into a deeper relationship with Jesus as we reflect on his life and personality. WWP Bible studies combine personal study with small group discussion, linking our everyday challenges to the solutions given to us through the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church. Make authentic connections with other women!

Separate morning and evening sessions will take place in the Bradican Room. Tuesdays from 9:45-11:30am and Thursdays from 7–8:30pm beginning October 14 and 16, respectively. The book fee is \$25 and the suggested hospitality fee is \$10. Register at https:// stbernadettewwp.wixsite.com/stbwwp

Coffee and donuts are back!

Starting this weekend coffee and donuts will be offered following the 9 and 11am Masses and, once a month, after the 1pm Spanish Mass. All are welcome to join.

If interested, there is a schedule posted in the Lector's Room. This schedule contains the "off" days when coffee an donuts will not be offered.

Generally, "off" days will be three day holiday weekends and specific holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas break, Palm Sunday, Easter and Mothers' and Fathers' Days.

coming

Parish Offertory

September 7: \$35,536 Offertory Catholic University 3.480

Thank you for your faithful support!



Consider using Faith Direct to make your parish contributions through either direct debit to your checking account or through credit cards, the same way you make car or tuition payments. Faith Direct also offers personalized offertory cards to replace your envelopes for the collection basket. You may enroll securely online. Visit www.faithdirect.net or call (866)507-8757. Our parish code is VA70.

find your place

Join one of our choirs!

The choirs on summer break will resume in a few weeks, and all choirs are welcoming new members at this time.

Our Children's Choir, for 1st-6th grade singers, serves at 5pm Saturday Mass once a month. They rehearse every Thursday 5–5:45pm. Our Youth Choir, for 7th-12th grade vocalists and instrumentalists, sings most Saturdays at the 5pm Mass. We have four adult choirs: Sunday Mass at 9am (English), 11am (English), 1pm (Spanish), and third Saturday Filipino Vigil Mass, 7pm.

Please contact David Mathers, Director of Music Ministries, at dmathers@stbernpar.org or (703) 451-8576 x112. Rehearsal days/times, list of instruments that can participate, and guidance on instrumental experience levels can be found at https://www.stbernpar.org/praying/music-ministry or by contacting David Mathers.

Fall CYO sports registration is open!

Cardinal athletes grades 3-8: registration for Saint Bernadette parish CYO fall sports is OPEN! Fall sports include tennis, cross country and track and field. Athletes must be enrolled in Saint Bernadette Catholic School or Religious Education to participate.

Register at: https://reg.sportspilot.com/106541. Registration closes 9/13 for cross county and 9/17 for track.

Questions: Email <u>gvsoriano@gmail.com</u> or <u>catherineeluby@gmail.com</u>.

KofC soccer challenge

On September 27 the Knights of Columbus will be hosting a Soccer Challenge at the soccer field behind the school. It is open to boys and girls from 9-14 years old. Use the QR for information and sign up.

Celebrating 25 or 50 years of marriage this year?

The Office of Marriage, Family, and Respect Life will host the 2025 Mass for Marriage Jubilarians at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More in Arlington on Sunday, October 19 at 2:30pm. The principal celebrant and homilist will be Bishop Burbidge. Commemorative certificates will be given out at the reception in the parish hall following the Mass, where Bishop will be available for pictures with jubilarians.

The deadline for registration is October 3! Contact the parish office for a registration form and staff will help you register. For more information, call the office.



23rd Annual 5K Fun Run and Walk Oct. 4

Registration is open! The Springfield Council Knights of Columbus is sponsoring the 23rd Annual 5K Fun Run and Walk on Saturday, October 4, 2025 at Burke Lake Park. Proceeds from this family-friendly event will be split between the Parish School and KOVAR (a Knights of Columbus charity supporting the intellectually disabled). Sign up at https://runsignup.com/Race/VA/FairfaxStation/SpringfieldKnightsofColumbus5K.



Donations also welcome! Please contact Tom Smith with questions tomsmith6153@ outlook.com, 571-308-4672.



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"The Car Ministry"

If you have a used car to donate, please consider us. We process and repair donated vehicles which are given at no cost to the working poor who have been referred to us by pastors and social workers. It is a tax break for you and people's lives are transformed by new possibilities. Contact Larry Gordon at 703-237-8479.

Coats for Kids

On September 13-21, the Knights of Columbus will be collecting donations for the Coats for Kids program. Donate your coats to support the goal that every child in need gets a coat to keep them warm. See one of the Knights for any questions https://uknight.org/ CouncilSite/?CNO=6153

ECHO clothing program

ECHO needs adult and child-sized sneakers in good condition. We hope that families who are currently buying new winter coats and back-to-school clothing and sneakers will consider giving their old attire a "second life" with a local family whose children are now growing into new sizes. Find details at www.echo-inc.org.

ECHO uses its Clothing Program to ease the financial burden on families who are facing economic challenges. Once sorted and quality checked, the clothing moves to the client room which is set up like a small store. Clients come in by appointment to choose what they need for members of their families.

Clients may make as many as three clothing appointments a year and may choose up to five outfits per family member at each visit. Volunteers help clients find what they need by reviewing, bagging their choices, and ensuring the number of outfits is compatible with the size of their families. No client pays for any kind of assistance from ECHO.

ECHO is averaging slightly more than 82 appointments per month for clothing assistance.

John Paul the Great High School open house

Save-the-date! John Paul the Great's Fall Open House will be held on Sunday, November 2 from 1-4pm. This year's Open House will be fun for the whole family! Learn more about our rigorous collegepreparatory curriculum, competitive athletics, inspiring visual and performing arts, and abundant extracurricular opportunities! We look forward to introducing you to our unique Bioethics program as well as our beloved House System and robust Special Services! Meet students, faculty, and coaches to learn more. RSVP Today! Use the following link to RSVP: https://jpthegreat.fsenrollment. com/portal/new inquiry

The need for food continues to grow and never diminish every month since the beginning of the pandemic. Food aid has presented an enormous challenge. Every can, every box, every bar of soap helps us meet the challenge. Join us in our commitment to end local hunger!

find your place





true catholic stewardship is built on four pillars:

(1) hospitality, (2) prayer, (3) formation, (4) service.

hospitality

We are all longing to be welcomed home.

"When I was a stranger, you welcomed me." (Mt. 25-35) Jesus Christ teaches that whenever we welcome one of the least of our sisters and brothers, we welcome Christ himself. Parishioners of a discipleship parish seek to see the face of Christ in one another. With special vigilance, we must seek out and welcome new members to the parish family. A discipleship parish is a welcoming parish regardless of the parish demographics: large or small – urban, suburban or rural.

We are all prodigal children longing to be welcomed home. In a hospitable parish, parishioners and guests feel they belong and are appreciated. This is especially true if we were ever absent from church. Hospitality leads



to a sense of "belonging." When we experience a warm and sincere welcome, we in turn become open to give ourselves to others. God is love and gives his love to each one of us. As God loves us. he calls us to love one another. This Divine Love flows through the heart of the faithful disciple to love others. When we are recipients of such love from others, we are attracted to follow this example. When others

welcome us, we are open to welcoming others. This desire to welcome others is yet another gift of God. The most vibrant discipleship parishes are those in which parishioners know they are welcomed, which fosters a sense of ownership and personal involvement in lived discipleship to the parish family.

prayer

Personal and Communal.

Prayer is essential to the Christian life. It is a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God and is the lifeblood of our faith. Without prayer, our faith will die. A discipleship parish strives to nourish the soul through prayer. "Prayer is as necessary to our souls as food is to our bodies." Prayer and the sacraments dispose a soul to receive God's abundant graces, which are necessary to grow in holiness. It is through prayer that we nurture

our personal relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

While we find great fulfillment in giving ourselves to parish life, prayer purifies and intensifies the intention of the disciple. Prayer increases our yearning to receive the source and summit of our Catholic faith, the Eucharist. As a parish family, we gather together to worship and praise God in the Mass. Nourished by the Word of God and the Eucharist, we are strengthened as a parish family to go to serve the Lord. Discipleship is a lived response of the disciple to follow this command.

There is a deep connection between the Eucharistic celebration and discipleship. In one of the prefaces of the Eucharistic Prayers it says, "Lord our desire to thank you is itself your gift." The third Eucharistic Prayer states, "All life, all holiness comes from you through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by the working of the Holy Spirit... And so Father, we bring you these gifts. We ask you to make them holy by the power of your Spirit, that they will become the body and blood of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose command we celebrate this Eucharist."

All we are and seek to become is strengthened

WAYS TO PRAY

- In a quiet room, read a short Scripture passage and then ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand it and apply it to your life.
- ► Turn daily actions into a prayer. For example, pray for your child as you fold her clothes, thank God for his gifts as you prepare dinner, praise God for creation when you take a walk.
- ► Revisit familiar Catholic devotions such as the rosary, novenas, the Stations of the Cross, and times of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Ancient prayers have endured for a reason: they are meaningful and effective.



COMBINING PRAYER AND ACTION

Pray about your current involvement in our parish. Ask God to show you your personal gifts and how best to use them.

- ► Do I pray for our ministries, our parish leaders, and all parishioners? Holy Spirit, guide our parish community!
- In whatever ministry or group I am involved with, do I always begin and end meetings or activities with a prayer?

Remember the ancient adage of the Church: to grow in the knowledge of God is to grow in holiness. Find a way to learn something new about God every day.

and becomes more perfect through the Eucharist. It is the Eucharist where we again recognize our total dependence upon God for everything. All that is good is a gift from him. It is not that we have loved him, but that he first has loved us by giving us his Son.

In both our personal and communal prayer, we turn toward God to discern properly our talents and gifts. In a disciple's response, we place those gifts at the service of God and one another. At the heart of the disciple's prayer is the petition, "Thy will be done."



A life-long journey of conversion.

As the disciple grows in the life of prayer, God reveals himself more intimately in this personal relationship. The disciple also sees that the gifts received from God are to be shared and not buried. The disciple remains deeply rooted in humility, recognizing that the gifts one has been given come

not from self, but from God. Those gifts are to be shared with others. Here lies the heart of the disciple's personal response as a disciple – to share what one has received and to share with a generous, grateful and loving heart.

This formation of each individual becomes part of the formation of the parish community. As members of the Body of Christ, we recognize that we have a call from God to give. Inherent within each of us is

the need to give; to move from selfishness to selflessness. This formation is a life-long journey of conversion. The discipleship parish journeys constantly in this formation of conversion. As one grows more deeply in this formation to a life of discipleship, the more deeply one loves as God loves us. This is true for the individual disciple and for the discipleship parish.

Such formation is a formidable task, involving





education of the mind and conversion of the heart. To know the "discipleship way of life" does not make one live a "discipleship way of life." Formation includes quality education, but the knowledge itself is not enough. Ongoing Catholic education, (for children and adults), is important if we are to grow in our lives as disciples. This formation should include a proper knowledge and understanding of discipleship since it is a primary means to lead the faithful to holiness. Catholic schools, Religious Education, youth ministry programs, adult education offerings and parish discipleship committees

are wonderful and essential places where this faith formation begins. Yet, they are not the only parish organizations responsible for this faith formation of parishioners to grow.

Every parish organization has a role to play in nurturing the faith formation of the parishioners. It is in this collective parish effort and grace of God at work through our sincere efforts that faith formation thrives. The meaning of faithful discipleship and how to live this way of life is at the core of the disciple's response to the gift of faith we freely receive from our loving God.

service

To love as Christ loves, to serve as Christ serves.

Members of a discipleship parish are ready to minister to the varied needs of their own parish family as well as the needs of the wider community and Church. Just as members of a family come to help one of their own, a discipleship parish family serves those who are hurting or in need, doubting or seeking salvation. The parish family also comes together to celebrate, thank and to return God's gifts - all are needs of parishioners.

PRAYING ABOUT YOUR GIFT

Pray about how much of yourself you give to the parish.

- **▶** Does the amount of my gift reflect that God is a priority in my life?
- **▶** Does my spending on selfish pursuits prevent me from living as much as I should in the parish? Do I allow secular convention to make my priorities for me?

We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.



authentic discipleship has three expressions: (1) time, (2) talent,(3) treasure.

In their Pastoral Letter on Stewardship, a Disciple's Response, the U.S. bishops state:

"The Christian steward is one who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord."

Stewardship involves all of life.

People often speak of stewardship in terms of Time, Talent and Treasure, but the truth is that stewardship involves all of life body, mind and spirit, our material possessions, friendships, all we have. All we are and have is a gift from our Creator for us to use wisely and unselfishly to build up God's kingdom here on earth. Sharing our precious time, our energies and abilities, and our material resources must include the Christian virtues of prayerfulness, sacrifice and mercy. Although there is no law about tithing, it remains a rich tradition that is suggested by many Church leaders to help us establish a guide and a personal goal of how we plan to share our goods. Consider not only the idea

of a financial tithe – what would it look like if we were to take what "free" time we have and commit a certain percentage of it to do works of mercy, or prayer?

If we were to speak more in terms of *prayer*, *sacrifice* and mercy perhaps we would recognize these as more than just a pressing need in our lives. Actually they are duties, and performing them is joyful for every true disciple and follower of Jesus Christ, whose own prayerful suffering and death on the Cross redeemed the world in love.

Virtues are good habits, disciplines, which order our desires and help us to practice a healthy self-denial in all aspects of our lives. Disciples intentionally embrace spiritual and physical disciplines such

as fasting and almsgiving, and generosity and loving kindness in order to make Jesus visible in our everyday world. They are also beneficial to us, personally: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5:7). The practice of mercy involves offering our time and talents to those in spiritual or physical need, as well as giving alms and supporting the programs that advance the mission of mercy of the Church.

One priest pioneer in Wichita, Kansas, said once in a Catholic stewardship conference, "Even if our parish had no financial need of a Sunday offering, we would take it up anyway and find somewhere else to give it. Why? Because you can't be a follower of Christ and not be one who gives."





time

Time may be the most precious gift of all.

Most of us feel we don't have enough time for all the things we want to do. Everyone is given the same amount of time: 24 hours each day, 168 hours each week. When it's gone, it's gone. The question is: How do we choose to use our time?

Intentionality helps us order our use of time, to be certain that we will have time for God, for our loved ones, for our community, and for those in need.

Consider making a concrete time commitment for the coming year:

- ► Time for prayer
- **►** Time for relationships
- ► Time for service

talent

God doesn't make people without talents.

All of us are blessed with talents. We may not be aware of them, or they may not be developed. There might not be enough time to develop them all. We need to develop some of them wisely to bless our Saint Bernadette community with the presence of Jesus.

Also, God calls us to serve according to the gifts he has given us in baptism. Use our catalog to read about opportunities, and make a plan to get involved in at least one way.

What activities do I feel "bring me to life?" ► How can I apply them in the life of the Church? Consider responding generously.

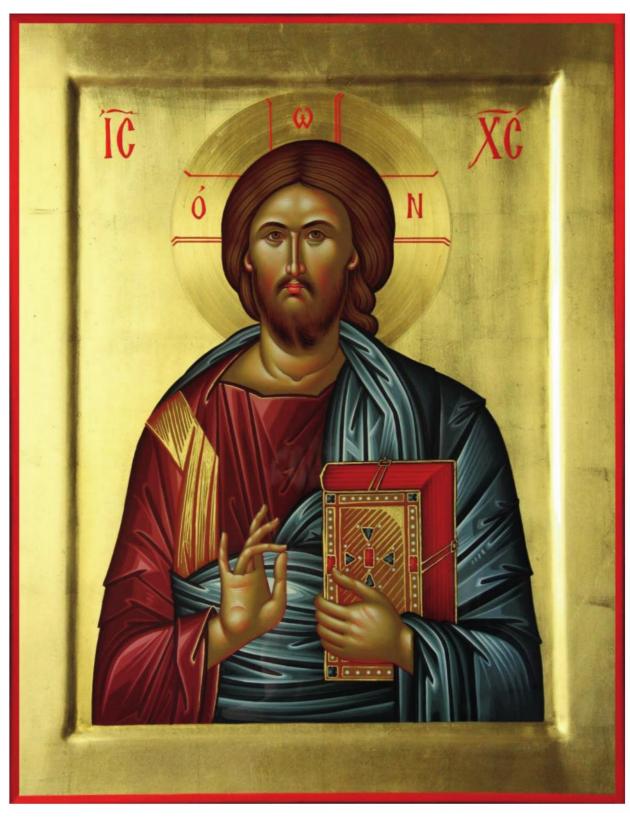
treasure

What we have can draw us nearer to God.

or it can cause us to fall away. Do we own things or do they own us? A person with a gift of giving, instead of asking "How much should I give?" might ask "How much do I really need to keep?"

The mission of the Church literally depends upon your giving. Again, giving needs to be intentional, not just random. Consider naming a goal for giving, some percentage of wealth which might be set aside for others.

How can I prayerfully set a goal for my giving? Am I able to give my first fruits to God, rather than just what may be left over?



Icon "Christ the Teacher"

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how to use your stewardship renewal handbook and ministry catalog

All members of our parish are asked to complete a stewardship Commitment Card.

Many of you are already involved in ministries and also faithfully contribute each week or month. If you are one of these parishioners, we thank you, because the Church can only accomplish her work if people support it! Please pray about whether there is something different you would like to do. Please fill out the card and let us know how you plan to continue.

If you are not currently involved in our parish, or if you feel that God may be calling you to do more, this is a great opportunity to become a more active member. Ask the Lord to help you spend more time in prayer. Talk to your spouse or your children about which groups or ministries you might like to join. Try to budget a consistent weekly gift. A ten dollar weekly donation today is equivalent to a five dollar weekly donation five years ago.

> Filling out your Commitment Card is the way to take a step forward.



Before the weekend of September 13-14:

Review these pages and the Parish Renewal Handbook, Ministry Catalog and Annual Report, and spend some time in reflection: How might I best serve God with who I am and what I have?

Parish Life Weekend is September 13-14.

Visit with representatives of all parish ministries and groups under the tents at our Saint Bernadette Ministry Fair outside the church before and after Masses. Come with guestions. There will not be sign-ups this weekend; fill out your commitment card and we will collect them as an offering at Masses next weekend.

Commitment Sunday is September 20-21.

Bring your Commitment Card and make an honest, actual commitment to what you hope to achieve this year: spiritually in prayer, charitably in service, and responsibly in your financial commitment to Saint Bernadette Parish. Place your card, as an offering, at the second collection at all Masses.

If you are unable to come this weekend, please use the enclosed reply envelope to send your Commitment to us.

Daily Mass Intentions and Readings

Please call the office also if you would like to request a Mass sooner, that is not announced.

September

15 MONDAY

7am † Joseph Byrnes 9am* Thanh Dao 1 Tm 2:1-8 (443)/Jn 19:25-27

16 TUESDAY

7am † Jay Jenc 9am* † Peter Ho Minh Tuan 1 Tm 3:1-13/Lk 7:11-17

17 WEDNESDAY

7am Fr. Don Rooney 9am* † John Francis Jenc 1 Tm 3:14-16/Lk 7:31-35

18 THURSDAY

7am † Stanley Pokornicki, Jr. 9am* The Tolentino Family 1 Tm 4:12-16/Lk 7:36-50

19 FRIDAY

7am † Jay Jenc 9am* † Victor Hugo Arevalo 10am** † 1 Tm 6:2c-12/Lk 8:1-3

20 SATURDAY

8am Rebecca Mugno 1 Tm 6:13-16/Lk 8:4-15 5pm* Dung Hoang

21 SUNDAY

7am † J. Chris Flentz
9am* † Ana Gloria Pineda
11am* For the parish
1pm † Edward Vargas
5pm Matthew & Becky Waalkes
Am 8:4-7/1 Tm 2:1-8/Lk 16:1-13

Masses next weekend

Sept 20 5pm Fr. Don
Sept 21 7am Fr. Cedric
9am Fr. Jeb
11am Fr. Don
1pm Fr. Jeb
5pm Fr. James

Parish Prayer List

Jessica Curtis, Sean Duffy, Paul Flapper, Mark Fortin, Shamsun Nahur, Kamden Harriet, Alisa Squatrito, Jerome Furlow, Joanne DeAngelis, Jim Gribschaw, Pierre DesLauriers, Frank Caponegro, Helena Larsen, Cristy Perez Ayala, Amy Greenlee, Larry Lawrence, Thomas Fitzgerald, Adrian Vincente, Evan Robish, Kathryn Yeager, Scott Kendrick, Heather Lynch, Ron and Karen Dietz, Ted Musialkiewicz, Kathleen Maxwell, Alan Curtis, Glendora Spinelli, Alora Lopez, Ana Maria Carrillo, Ron and Jo-Anne Plavchan, Erika Vargas

Pro-Life Witness

The Saint Bernadette Pro-Life Committee invites you to pray the rosary on Tuesday or Saturday mornings in front of the abortion facility at 2616 Sherwood Hall Lane in Alexandria (ample free parking across the street). We legally, peacefully, and respectfully gather for an hour starting at 10am; no sign-up or commitment required. Questions? Email Tom Palumbo at tompalumbo@outlook.com.

Planned giving: make a gift of appreciated assets

Consider a gift of stock or any other appreciated asset as a donation to Saint Bernadette Catholic Church and School. In exchange for a gift of a long-term appreciated asset, you can receive an income tax deduction for the current market value and avoid capital gains taxes on that appreciation. Your gift will support the Church, School, or the parish hall Capital Campaign. For more information, please contact Rick Caporali at <a href="mailto:reappreciation-reappreciated asset, you can receive an income tax deduction for the current market value and avoid capital gains taxes on that appreciation. Your gift will support the Church, School, or the parish hall capital Campaign. For more information, please contact Rick Caporali at <a href="mailto:reappreciation-rea

Remember us in your will or trust

The next time you review your will or trust with your attorney consider adding a provision to donate a portion of your assets to Saint Bernadette Church and School. Your gift will be greatly appreciated. For more information, please contact Rick Caporali at rcaporali@stbernpar.org or call the office.

Mary's Comfort update

A big thank you to all who helped and attended the Back to School Tea! What a wonderful afternoon for the children and parents to dress up and spend the after-

noon together all while supporting Mary's Comfort. If you'd like to be more involved in our ministry, we have volunteer opportunities available -- Facilities Manager, Shelter Director and Fundraising Coordinator. The commitment of time can be flexible and we'll work with what experience you bring! For more information, visit: https://www.maryscomfortva.org/ and email us at maryscomfortva@gmail.com. hank you for your prayerful support as we strive to shelter and support expecting mothers in crisis.

Catholic speed dating

St. Timothy Catholic Church is hosting an in-person speed dating event open to all Catholic singles ages 20–39 in the DMV area on Saturday, October 25 at 7pm in the School Cafeteria and Gym. This is an RSVP-only event and registration closes on October 11. To register, go to https://shenandoahspeeddating.blogspot.com/p/upcoming-events.html. Questions or more info? Contact Joshua at https://shenandoapspot.com/p/upcoming-events.html. Questions

Hearing devices at Mass

Our sound system transmits sound to hearing devices. You can purchase your own device at Amazon for about \$15. Program the FM frequency to 72.3mh. The link and model are provided here for your convenience. Retekess PR13 Portable FM Radio, Pocket FM Radio Receiver, AAA Battery Powered Personal Mini Stereo Radio with Earphone and Lock Key

27th annual Christ the King men's retreat

Titled "Die Catholic and in the State of Grace and You Win: How to make the last battle of your life a victory," this retreat directed by Fr. Francis de Rosa will be held on Sat. Oct. 25 from 8:30am—12:15pm at St. Raymond of Peñafort Catholic Church, 8750 Pohick Rd., Springfield VA 22153. There is no charge for this event, but you must register before Oct. 22 to attend. Donations gratefully accepted. To register go to www.waywomen.com/mensretreat For more information, contact Robin Maas at rmvlmaas@gmail.com.



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^{*} live-streamed Masses

^{**} Mass at Greenspring Chapel



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