



strengthening our faith

by rebuilding our heritage

July 2017

My dear parishioners,

Please join me, Fr. Hurley, our deacons and the parish staff as we say a grateful farewell to two beloved priests—**Fr. Rafael Barbieri**, Parochial Vicar, and **Fr. Mel Ayala**, priest in residence. Both have been with us for four years. Effective July 12, Fr. Rafael will be the Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Lourdes in Bethesda. Fr. Mel will be pastor of St. Nicholas in Laurel.

We will gather at farewell receptions after all Masses on the weekend of **July 1 – 2, so please plan to stop by** and give our departing priests your personal thanks for their dedicated service to us.



How Can This Be?! Thanks and Farewell. **Fr. Rafael** has been a faithful and willing Parochial Vicar. In addition to bringing the Eucharist, Reconciliation and the other sacraments to our parish family, he has led our Ministerio Hispano in Sunday worship, special liturgies, sacramental and prayer life, and in the celebration of many moments in everyday parish life. He initiated the celebration of the sacrament of Penance following the Sunday Mass in Spanish—much appreciated by the Spanish community. Fr. Rafael also has served as the clergy leader of St. Matthew's Social Justice & Community Services ministry, working many hours with our homeless friends and visitors and with others in need. I hope he will continue to enjoy his guitar, fishing and biking in his new community.



It was a joy to learn that **Fr. Mel** would be coming to reside here at the Cathedral while serving as Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Worship. I had known him when he was at Theological College, my alma mater. You have known Fr. Mel as a regular Mass celebrant on weekday mornings as well as at the Vigil and early Sunday morning Masses. He has continued our tradition of noble simplicity and reverence in our episcopal liturgies here at the Cathedral. He could be counted on to provide detailed scripts for the many liturgies celebrated here by Cardinal Wuerl. Fr. Mel's work was often behind the scenes, with hours of rehearsals in preparation for major liturgical celebrations. I was proud to have him as a successor at the Office of Worship.



Our thanks, prayers and best wishes go with both Fr. Rafael and Fr. Mel. We want them to know that they will always be in our thoughts and prayers, and of course, that **they are always welcome among us here at St. Matthew's.**

Joy of Parishioner Ordination. We also send our prayerful best wishes to **Fr. Andrew Wakefield**, a St. Matthew's parishioner who was ordained a priest by Cardinal Wuerl, along with three other men of the Archdiocese of Washington, on Saturday, June 17. Fr. Andrew celebrated his First Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral that evening at the 5:30pm Vigil Mass, with many friends and extended family members present and a record number of brother priests concelebrating on this joyful occasion! We look forward to Fr. Andrew's future visits home.



Welcome to New Cathedral Clergy! With gratitude, we look forward to welcoming **Fr. Agustin López** as our new Parochial Vicar, and **Fr. Conrad Murphy**, who will be in residence with us as he begins his new position as Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Worship, succeeding Fr. Mel.

Fr. Agustín López, a native of Quito, Ecuador, was ordained to the priesthood in June 2011 by Cardinal Wuerl for the Archdiocese of Washington. He served as Parochial Vicar at St. Raphael Catholic Church in Rockville, MD for three years, and in 2014 was assigned to serve at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church in Waldorf, MD, with a special ministry to the Hispanic community at St. Peter's, also in Waldorf, MD.



Fr. López earned his theology degree at The Catholic University of America and completed his priestly formation at the Archdiocesan Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary in Washington, DC. Before entering the seminary, he earned a master's degree in Industrial Engineering at the San Francisco University of Ecuador, and worked for several national and international companies, including Citibank in Ecuador. During his time at the seminary, he served as a missionary in Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

Fr. López comes from a large Catholic family and has five siblings (four sisters and an older brother). All of his siblings are married, and he has 16 nieces and nephews!

Fr. Conrad Murphy, who will be in residence at St. Matthew's, comes to us from Holy Redeemer Parish in College Park, MD, where he was the Parochial Vicar. In addition to his new responsibilities as Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Worship, Fr. Conrad will assist at the Cathedral as a celebrant of daily and Sunday Mass.



Fr. Conrad grew up primarily just outside of Chicago, the eldest of three children. He moved to Washington, DC in 2005 to attend the George Washington University where he graduated in 2009 with a B.A. in International Politics and the Program in the Liberal Arts. While at GW, Fr. Conrad was very involved with the Knights of Columbus and GW Newman Center. He entered the seminary for the Archdiocese of Washington in 2009. He earned an MA in Philosophical Studies at Mount Saint Mary's University, and an STB in 2014 from the Pontifical North American College in Rome. He was ordained a priest by Cardinal Wuerl in 2015, spending the summer after ordination at St. Pius X in Bowie and then returning to Rome for a final year of studies culminating in an STL in Moral Theology.

On a more personal note, Fr. Conrad is an avid reader, cross country runner, and ultimate Frisbee player.



Gratitude for the Thoughtful Review of our Liturgies. Special thanks to our **Liturgy Evaluation team** led by Tom Stehle, Pastoral Associate for Liturgy and Director of Music Ministries, and Deacon Bart Merella of our Liturgy staff, on completing a **review of the four major parts of the Mass** (Introductory Rite, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist and

Concluding Rite) as celebrated at St. Matthew's. The team not only conducted the reviews, but spent time studying the Church's guidance on how the Mass is to be celebrated. Their evaluation and comments were insightful and helpful, reflecting a desire to make the celebration more meaningful for our entire parish community. Several recommendations have been implemented and others are under review. For this work, I am grateful to Beth Blaufuss, Dan Corrin, Kevin Crouch, Scott Dean, Linden Fry, Sherri Hughes, Kirse Kelly, Anna Maria Larsen, Kristine Maher, Marie Mattingly, Karin Quiroga, Jonathan Smith, David Willis, Betty Sullivan and Steven Yoder.



Building up the Kingdom. Please, pray regularly for the vitality and well-being of our parish. I also **challenge and invite** you to learn more about our ministries and to contribute your talents and ideas to St. Matthew's. The **Social Justice & Community Services Committee** for example, connects people with ways to serve the homeless, support low-income families, advocate for change for the poor, and pray for respect for all human life. You may sign up to receive the committee's monthly e-newsletter at socialjustice@stmatthewscathedral.org.

Faith Formation Outreach. St. Matthew's Cathedral is now an authorized **Landings International** setting. In each 8-week Landings series, we welcome inactive Catholics to rediscover their Catholic faith in a small group, nonjudgmental setting, providing "a safe place to land." Our fall series will meet Sundays from 1 to 2:30pm, **October 1** through **November 19**. **Encourage someone you know and care about to learn more about Landings.**

Interested in sharing your faith? We have **volunteer opportunities** for catechists, substitute catechists and assistants for Sunday **Faith Formation** classes for children in pre-K to Grade 8. Our ongoing **RCIA team** also is on the lookout for volunteer catechists, sponsors, refreshment coordinators and greeters. Contact Theresa Prymuszewski at 202-587-5193.

Our Parish Finances. Our Business Manager, Pam Erwin, has the awesome responsibility of preparing next year's budget for the Finance Council. The staff and I recently completed the process of projecting our needs for **FY 2017-2018**, and the budget was presented to the Finance Council on June 12. On the subject of budgets, perhaps a couple of "did you know?" items might be worth your reflection.

First, while expenses continue to rise, **our income is down this present year in the following categories:** Offertory, building fund, collections at devotions, Christmas Friends outreach, Easter gifts, poor box (slightly), votive candle donations, investment income, and sacramental offerings (weddings, baptisms, funerals).

The expense side of this year's budget includes the following:

- Interpreter at Mass: \$6,500
- Sanctuary candles: \$39,000
- Hosts, wine: \$4,900
- Clergy benefits: \$83,158
- Telephone: \$14,000
- Maintenance Contracts: \$114,000
- Utilities: \$143,000
- Property Insurance: \$92,000
- Archdiocesan Education assessment: \$35,250

Second, regarding our Offertory, **the percentage of parishioner households that have given even a single identifiable gift to the parish thus far this calendar year remains low, at only 34%.** If every household were to make even a nominal weekly contribution – just a dollar or two each week – our projected budgetary shortfall could be avoided. **Please consider participating in the life of your parish through the weekly Offertory.**



Supporting the Mission through Faith Direct. The generosity of *Faith Direct* participants has kept us afloat; costs, however, continue to rise and we need the help of all. **Why not determine what you can afford to donate and sign up for Faith Direct? It is simple and it works.** Need more information? Visit

<http://www.stmatthewscathedral.org/support/egiving>, or call Pam Erwin at 202-587-5150. We want to continue providing the best in liturgy and music, to evangelize our community, to serve the poor, and to teach the gospel message. With your help, St. Matthew's can be a beacon of hope to the central business district. All things are possible with God, working through great people like you.

Please know that **I am so grateful** to you. You are great parishioners. Together, with your generosity, we will make this new budget work. God bless you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson
Rector

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