



strengthening our faith

by rebuilding our heritage

September 2025

My dear parishioners,

I'm starting this letter mid-August. It's nice and warm outside. My kind of weather! Several staff members are on vacation. It is rather quiet today—in a sense.

In the world around us it is not quiet. There is a war between Russia and Ukraine. There were talks between Trump and Putin. There is the takeover of the D.C. police department. The National Guard is all around us. The encampments of the homeless are being removed. D.C.'s home rule is threatened. Do we want this to continue? I have voiced my concern as a member of the Downtown Cluster of Congregations, and I have spoken with our bishops. Collaboration with Federal agencies must continue, but not in the way it is taking place now. We need your prayers, and our voices must be heard.

In more heartfelt news, **there has been some changes at the Cathedral**—As you read in our eletters during the past couple months, we have hired two new staff members; Lisa Williams has replaced Ana Triaureau as the Assistant to the Rector, and Rosemarie Longley takes over for Mary Ferranti as Director of Communications. Let me say from the beginning how grateful I am to Ana and Mary for all they have done for us. They have been real assets to the parish, and I am so very grateful. Our prayers go with them both. While she may be leaving her position as Director of Communications, I am happy to tell you that Mary will continue in her volunteer role as Parish Archivist.

That being said, I am thrilled to welcome our newest staff members: Lisa and Rosemarie are a delight, and they are anxious to meet you. Lisa brings much patience to her position. She worked for my good friend Fr. Frank DeSiano at Paulist Evangelization Ministries, while also serving at St. Gabriel's Church, both here in Washington. Rosemarie is a recent graduate of Ave Maria University where she majored in Communications. She left her hometown in Florida "to find a new place to discuss faith and experience God." Now she says, "not only did God answer my prayers, but He also gave me more than I could ever ask for!" They both are anxious to get to know the parish. If you have the chance to say 'hello', I know they would be grateful.

As September rolls along, **I also want to mention two staff persons who have been with us for quite a while.** When I arrived here as the new rector I had no real staff. One of the first needs was for someone with a knowledge of bookkeeping and the ability to manage parish finances. Such a person was recommended to me, and **she has been with us for 30 years on September 18.** She has been outstanding. She is not afraid to tell us 'No.' She has a real sense of the needs of the parish, and she keeps the diocese very happy with all its requirements. **Pam Erwin** is known to

many of you. **She keeps us going day in and day out.** Along with the architect and myself, she guided the restoration of the Cathedral and the renovation of the new Parish Offices and Residence for the priests. Her steady hand kept us on budget. As Cardinal Gregory learned very quickly, “if you want to get something done, ask Pam.”

As Pam keeps our financial side moving, there is another staff person who keeps our spiritual side uplifted by magnificent organ music. **Paul Hardy has now been with us for 25 years!** So often Paul lifts our hearts and spirits to praise the Lord with gorgeous music. Of course, Paul can really make the new organ come alive. And oh, how he enjoys it! You should have seen him when he first sat at this new instrument. I thought he had died and gone to heaven. You won’t find a better organist. He is outstanding and we are so fortunate to have him. Just ask all the wedding couples he works with to prepare their music: they will tell you, “Paul is the best.” And we are reminded of that every week. Paul is a humble, quiet professional; he is a saint. He loves his job, and we ‘adore’ him!



On another matter, we hear a lot about “evangelization” in Church circles today. In general, it means reaching out to those in need of Jesus—whether the catechized or uncatechized, the most vulnerable among us, the homeless; evangelization is for all those in need of the Gospel message. **In this regard I want to thank all of those who shared food items for the Mulholland Food Drive.** This was the best response we have ever had. It was great! Thank you, Anthony, and the many parishioners who responded.

I also want to thank those who have volunteered to operate our livestreaming system. During the summer we have upgraded it and we will have training soon. We want to have it up and running for the Feast of St. Matthew (September 21). Stay tuned!

Another aspect of evangelization is ministering to the homebound who because of age or illness cannot get to Mass and would like Communion. In an effort to participate in this aspect of evangelization, **our deacon now visits Thomas House each Sunday.** I also have another residence with some desiring a Mass. If you know of anyone needing Communion just let me know. I have asked Fr. Joe to expand our ministry to the sick, but first we need to know who is out there. Once we see the need, then we can invite people to join the ministry.

A third dimension of evangelization encompasses several areas: reaching out to neighboring hotels, embassies, and several office buildings being converted to apartments. The Longfellow office building immediately next to the Cathedral is being turned into apartments. We need to invite these new residents to join us. We want to be the presence of Jesus to them. I will be asking volunteers to join me in reaching out to these tenants!

Mentioning new parishioner opportunities, **I am looking for new collaborators to work with me on the Parish Finance Council.** The Finance Council is the one collaborative parish body required by Canon Law. We have a fantastic council, but I would like to add a few new members to replace those whose terms may be ending. I am looking for parishioners with a background in finance, budgets, accounting, banking, or simply a good understanding of parish life and needs. Please contact me if you know of someone meeting those qualifications. Also, give me a little background of the person if possible. Thanks so much.

Finally, just a few other items of the month. **The month of September marks the return of our wonderful choirs.** Musical liturgies can be transformative and help the Mass to become the source and summit of our Christian lives. We thank the dozens of volunteer members for the hundreds of hours in rehearsal each year. We are also grateful for the financial help of parishioners that allow us to augment our choirs with some professional members. And we can't forget our generous volunteer cantors who sing throughout the year.

Thank you! Thank you so much to volunteers who donated a lot of time to upgrading our Education Center on N Street. It needed painting, repair work on the floors, and some plaster repair. A lot of work still needs to be done there but our children and the ESL students and teachers will have nice, clean rooms to use this year. Thanks especially to Fr. Isaac who organized this project. To one and all, *muchas gracias!*

Now a special invitation: On Sunday, September 21, we will celebrate the patronal feast of our parish, The Solemnity of St. Matthew the Apostle. We will have our regular schedule of Masses, but the **11am Mass will be bilingual.** I will be the principal celebrant and Fr. Isaac will be the homilist. The wonderful Schola Cantorum will be back for another year of great music. I hope you can join us.

One last tidbit: As you know, I have been the rector of the Cathedral for 30 years. So here are two facts from those years. I have celebrated **1165 baptisms** and **725 weddings**—ones I actually witnessed here. However, I have prepared many more couples who were married by visiting priests or who were married elsewhere (some of which I celebrated).

Thank you! Thank you all for helping to make St. Matthew's a truly vibrant, exciting, caring, and loving parish community.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson
Rector

