



strengthening our faith

by rebuilding our heritage

November 2016

My dear parishioners,

It is a beautiful Sunday afternoon! The Redskins can't lose—they have a bye week. And in two days it will be election day! After all the negative comments, exaggerations, half-truths, and confusing statements, the people will speak. I voted early on Friday so now I'll be watching the results (which we will all know by the time you read this!). **I pray for unity**, that all will work together for peace and a more just society, with a willingness to reach out to the most vulnerable among us. Together, let's look at issues of life from conception to natural death, immigration, the economy, and other challenges facing the American people. As twenty-first century Catholics, we must be informed and educated. **Why not start with the social teachings of the Church?**

A Prayer of Thanksgiving



During this time of the year, we are reminded of our many blessings. As a parish family, we will gather on Thanksgiving Day, **November 24** at 10am for a bilingual (English and Spanish) celebration of the Eucharist—the greatest act of thanksgiving for Christians. We are challenged by the words of Psalm 116, **“What return can I make to the Lord for all that he gives to me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord.”** Let us together take the cup of salvation offered at such great cost, making just return to Him of our very selves! Reach deep! The offertory collection on Thanksgiving Day will benefit the many Social Justice & Community Services Ministries at St. Matthew's.

Seeing the Hopeful Signs

As the first Sunday of Advent quickly approaches, I pray that during the holy seasons of Advent and Christmas you will be free from discouragement and assured that Jesus is always by your side, **showering you with deep and lasting hope**. I want to share the following reflection with you.

A soldier hiding in a cave prayed that he would be saved. A spider weaved a web over the cave opening. As the enemy approached, searching the caves, they skipped his cave, thinking, because of the web, that no one had entered it in quite a while.

Given the challenges and circumstances constantly surrounding us—violence and abuse; war; oppression of the poor; suffering because of natural disasters; selfishness and carelessness in marriages, families, workplaces, and parishes—our first response may be that it is unrealistic to pray a prayer that is as trusting as the soldier's.

...

God comes in compassion. 'You are not alone. I am with you. I am Emmanuel. Nothing is impossible with me.'

Do we do our part? Do we look around and see the hopeful signs in the world? Rather than dwelling on and perpetuating negativity, do we recognize the good that is happening? How are we planting peace and good in place of evil? What are we doing to bring kindness and compassion wherever we are?

—Sr. Janet Schaeffler, O. P., *Wondrous Days of Hope: Everyday Reflection, Practices, and Prayers* (23rd Publications)

Helping St. Matthew's to Give Hope & Help

You, our parishioners, are the key to fulfilling St. Matthew's mission of bringing life to Jesus' command to love one another. Help us to share Christ's love with the hundreds of people who come through our doors. **Your gifts are the lifeline!** **May I ask you to consider a special gift to St. Matthew's this Christmas?** You may mail your Christmas offering to the rectory or drop it in the offertory collection. You also may make your donation online at www.stmatthewscathedral.org. (Choose *Make a Gift* on the website front page, then choose *Donate* under *Make a One-Time Gift*. After providing your address and credit card information, click *Review Donation and Continue*. Choose *Comments* and in the window, type "Christmas.") You also may make a

Christmas offering via Faith Direct (www.faithdirect.net; Church Code: DC284). I assure you that you will be remembered at our Masses during the Christmas season. Thank you so much. Muchas gracias.

Adopt-a-Family: A Special Way to Give Back



The Cathedral will sponsor its very successful Adopt-a-Family Christmas program again this year. We will help 56 families in need, the residents of four homes of the L'Arche Greater Washington community, youth from DC General family shelter, and approximately 90 adults from our Homeless Ministry. All will receive gifts through this communal effort in which members of our parish community and local businesses are invited to "adopt" a family or individual in need. **For more information, call Fr. Rafael Barbieri or Norma Canedo at the Rectory.**

Partake With Us!

On Sunday, **November 20**, the Feast of Christ the King, **come and celebrate a Year of Mercy in music as the Jubilee comes to a close!** Cathedral Organist Paul Hardy will present an Organ Recital at 3:15pm featuring works by J.S. Bach, Maurice Duruflé, and Eugène Gigout and others.

Enclosed you will find our **Advent and Christmas brochure** listing the schedule of liturgies and other events at your Cathedral parish during these holy seasons. Highlights are below.

Saturday, **December 3** from 10am to 3pm – "The Beauty of Faith: Seeing with Advent Hope," Advent Day of Recollection in the Great Hall of the Rectory, presented by **Jem Sullivan, Ph.D.**



Thursday, **December 8** – Masses for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary at 5:30pm (Vigil on **December 7**), 7am, 8am, 11am, 12:10pm, 5:30pm, and 7pm (Spanish)

Sunday, **December 11** at 7:30pm – Lessons and Carols, an *Evening Service of Reflections on the Coming of Christ*, featuring the Schola Cantorum and Festival Singers, followed by Christmas caroling, sweets, eggnog and wassail in the Great Hall of the Rectory

Tuesday, **December 20** at 12:10pm – Advent Communal Penance Service, *Come Home for Christmas*, with many priests, including confessors in American Sign, Spanish, Portuguese and other languages

Christmas Eve – Vigil Mass at 4:30pm (Msgr. Jameson, celebrant) with a musical prelude at 4:00pm; Vigil Mass in Spanish at 6:30pm (Fr. Rafael Barbieri, celebrant); **Solemn Mass of Christmas** at 10pm (**Cardinal Donald Wuerl**, celebrant) (tickets NOT required) with a Christmas Prelude at 9:15pm



Christmas Day – Masses at 8:30, 10 and 11:30am, and 1pm (Spanish)

Did you know that you may purchase Christmas cards featuring the Cathedral's Crèche (in boxed sets of 10 with envelopes) in the rectory? For delivery by mail, contact Pam Erwin at perwin@stmatthewscathedral.org.

Christmas Flowers and Decorating

Our Cathedral always looks beautiful for the Christmas season! If you would like to get into the spirit by helping to decorate it a couple of days before Christmas, **please check the bulletin in early December.** Your financial help also is needed to help defray the cost of the flowers, plants and trees. You may mail your Christmas flower offering to the rectory, drop it in the offertory collection. You also may donate online at www.stmatthewscathedral.org or via Faith Direct at www.faithdirect.net. Together, we can make the Cathedral splendid with beauty this Christmas!

May the Lord Jesus bless you as we enter Advent and prepare for Christmas. I will continue to remember you in my prayers each day. May the birth of Christ be a time of great hope and blessings for you and your family.

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 msgjrjameson (*Follow the leader!*)

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson
Rector