



strengthening our faith

by rebuilding our heritage

September 2021

My dear parishioners,

On this gorgeous Labor Day, the sun pouring in my windows, I see the end of summer and the beginning of a new parish season. This evening I join the priests of the Archdiocese for our annual Labor Day Picnic, and tomorrow my staff and I meet to begin this new season.

A New Reality

An ending and a new beginning. This is true also of our **New Reality**. A new schedule of Mass, Confessions, and Cathedral hours began on Saturday, **September 11**.

Sunday

- Masses | Saturday 5:30pm (Vigil) (*Cantor & Organ*) & Sunday 7am, 9am (*Quartet*), 11am (*Quartet*), 1pm (Spanish) (*Choir*) & 5:30pm (*Contemporary Choir*)
- Cathedral Hours | 6:30am - 7pm
- Livestreams | The Sunday 11am and 1pm (Spanish) Masses are livestreamed on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/cathedralofstmatthewtheapostle and shared to our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/st.matthews.cathedral>.

Monday through Friday

- Masses | 7:30am, 12:10pm & 5:30pm
- Sacrament of Reconciliation & Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament | 11am - 12 Noon
- Cathedral Hours | 7am – 6:30pm

Saturday

- Masses | 7:30am, 12:10pm & 5:30pm Vigil Mass (Cantor & Organ)
- Sacrament of Reconciliation | 4 - 5pm
- Cathedral Hours | 7am – 7pm

The rectory office is now open to visitors from **9am to 4pm 7 days a week**. With these changes we take a leap of faith. Covid and the delta variant are still with us. We will move cautiously, with masks still required and safe distancing exercised inside the Cathedral, the rectory office, and the conference center.

I hope to welcome many of you **back to Mass**. While for some this will not be possible, I want you to know that we are trying very hard to keep you safe. Many have said that they miss the Eucharist. I hope our new schedule offers convenience with the benefit of more space to spread out due to the additional Mass options.

Hope in Jesus

Our **New Reality** is an occasion for thanking God for his love, comfort and mercy amid the challenges we still face. This step forward renews hope, as we know that even with the continuing uncertainty, **God's sacrificial love for us is unchanged**. As Christians we believe that **Jesus shares his very life with us**; he is our friend, brother, and companion. This is the hope that awakens us each day. This is the power that spurs us on with enthusiasm. This is our hope: **to live in light, in the light of Jesus**.

We Need the Eucharist

We are challenged as a nation. In our deeply divided country there is a great need for civility, dialogue, and peaceful expression of concerns. Respect for one another and a willingness to learn from one another are essential. There is no other way if we are to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are challenged as Catholics. How do we continue as a Church? How do we maintain our faith? We wait, pray, and hope. But we still question. Where is Jesus in all of this? Viewers from both coasts, Canada, Colombia, and Great Britain join our own parishioners in hearing and reflecting on the Sunday Word and listening to the music (God bless livestreaming!). Yet many say that they miss the Eucharist. **Receiving Jesus in the Eucharist is an essential part of our worship.**

We need the Eucharist more than ever.

We need a **renewed personal encounter with Jesus** who IS here, next to us, reaching out with open arms. Jesus is our only real hope. We look to the future, with Jesus. **Strengthened by Word and Eucharist**, we work towards a renewed Church here in our midst. Let us join together in prayer and fellowship, reaching out to those hurting, sick, or in need, survivors, those who feel hopeless or abandoned.

Time to Return?

Our **"Amen"** at Communion affirms not only our faith in the presence of Jesus in the host, but also the reality that we are the Body of Christ, joined with our Lord and brother, Jesus. Together we are sent forth from the Mass to bear his presence to others, wherever we go. Unless restricted by health or other concerns, **we must ask ourselves whether it is time to return and celebrate with our community.**

Patronal Feast

Speaking of celebrations, on Sunday, **September 19 Cardinal Gregory** joins us for a **bilingual celebration of the Solemnity of St. Matthew at the 11am Mass**—one community in Christ (**no 1pm Mass that day**). While we were not able to go forward with our block party after Mass due to the Covid surge, our new year of parish life nevertheless will begin with a wonderful, and safe, parish family gathering.

Another Cathedral note - on Sunday, **October 3**, the 69th Annual Red Mass will be celebrated. Please note the different Mass schedule that day, including the **cancellation of the 9am Mass**: Saturday 5:30pm Vigil Mass & Sunday 7am, 10am (Red Mass), **11:30am (NOT 11am)**, 1pm (Spanish) & 5:30pm.

Stewardship in the New Reality

I have written to you about the financial challenges resulting from decreased overall giving during the pandemic. **Thank God for our FaithDirect participants, whose donations have remained steady, and to the many who have made substantial one-time gifts!!** We survived last year because of you and the PPP government fund.

We face a **new budget year**, and there are **no more PPP funds**. Sunday collections consistently are WAY down. **Will we make it this year?** Staff hours that were cut last year have been restored, but the budget will be re-examined after December 31. Changes may be needed. May I ask you for a favor? **If you do not use FaithDirect, please seriously consider it. Electronic giving is a lifeline for us!** To all who give, I am so very grateful!

To continue bringing and living out the Gospel message, **we need broad support**. If you are among the 2/3 of parishioners who have not given a recognizable gift to the parish this year, will you please begin giving SOMETHING from what you have? **It has been a rough year, but we need ALL our members to help us.** Please, determine what you can give and enroll online in FaithDirect at <https://membership.faithdirect.net/enroll/DC284>, or call Pam Erwin at 202-587-5150. **I am so grateful and sincerely appreciate and continue to count on your support.**

Annual Appeal – Congratulations!

I recently heard from the Archdiocese that St. Matthew's had been very generous to the Annual Appeal – **we have pledged 100.7% of our parish goal!** Fantastic! I am so proud of you. The figure that most impressed me was **444—the number of St. Matthew's donors**. Only a couple of parishes in Montgomery County had more donors!

A Special Request

Especially as we have added Masses, **we greatly need liturgical ministers: lectors, servers, extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, and ministers of hospitality (guides and ushers)**. If you can assist in any of these roles once a month, please email me at rjameson@stmatthewscathedral.org, or call me at the rectory office at 202-347-3215, and someone will be in touch after I send a note as well!

Farewell and Thank You!

I am sorry to announce that **Theresa Prymuszewski** will be leaving us. Theresa has served faithfully as St. Matthew's Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation for the past 7 years. You can read her farewell letter at www.stmatthewscathedral.org/TPFarewell. **Theresa has done an outstanding job throughout her tenure, and especially during the challenging months of the pandemic.** Due to her efforts, we were able to continue to offer excellent faith formation to adults, children's religious education to our youth, and to assist those seeking entrance into the Church. We are all so very grateful. We all offer her our thanks and prayers. **We ask that the Lord continue to give her his many blessings, good health, joy and love. Thank you, Theresa, for everything.** God bless.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson
Rector