



I received an email from someone who attended Mass at one of the parishes of our cluster. It's not important which parish, because I believe the comments made are relevant to all our parishes. The person who wrote the letter seemed to enjoy attending the Mass, but was disturbed by the amount of conversation going on in the church before Mass started. The conversation was loud and not about the church. The person who wrote this enjoys coming to Mass early to spend some quiet time in prayer and found this very difficult because of the distracting conversations going on in the church.

I wrote last week how the pope's words on this subject were better than anything I have had to say, so I'd like to share some of what he said during his November 17 general audience. "To pray, as every true dialogue, is also to be able to remain in silence, — in dialogues there are moments of silence —, in silence together with Jesus. And when we go to Mass, perhaps we arrive five minutes early and we begin to chat with the one who is next to us. However, it's not the moment to chat: it's the moment of silence to prepare oneself to dialogue. It's the moment to recollect oneself in the heart to prepare oneself for the encounter with Jesus".

I do not write this with the intention of chastising anyone for their behavior in the church. This is an invitation for all of us to take the pope's words to heart and ask ourselves what we can each do to better experience the encounter with Christ that takes place during the Mass. This is a great weekend to reflect on this. This is not only the first Sunday of Advent, it is the first weekend of the new liturgical year. It is an opportunity for us to make a resolution for the new liturgical year to reflect on ways we can quiet our hearts as we prepare for the Mass so that we may enter more fully into that encounter with the Lord.

Fr. Chris

ADVENT RECONCILIATION TIMES

(These times are in addition to the regular hours at all three Churches)

Sacred Heart: (Tuesdays)

December 5th: 7:00pm-8:00pm

December 12th: 5:00pm-6:00pm (English & Spanish)

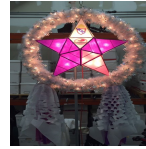
December 19th: 5:00pm-6:00pm (English) and
7:00pm-8:00pm (English & Spanish)

St James: (Wednesdays)

December 6th: 5:00pm-6:00pm

December 13th: 5:00pm-6:00pm

December 20th: 5:00pm-6:00pm



Please join us to celebrate

“SIMBANG GABI”

Sponsored by the Office of Asian Ministry
of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond

Church of the Sacred Heart

9300 Community Lane

South Prince George, VA

Saturday, December 16, 2017 at 7:00 PM

St. James the Greater

510 W. Poythress Street

Hopewell, VA 23860

Monday, December 18, 2017 at 7:00 PM

Reception to follow after Mass in the Parish Hall. Please bring a dish to share!

The “Simbang Gabi” is a long treasured Philippine tradition originally a series of “dawn masses” for nine consecutive days before Christmas Day. Its liturgical significance emanates from the Season of Advent, being the time of spiritual preparation and purification to worthily welcome and receive the Child Jesus in our midst. The Mass at Dawn, Simbang Gabi, is a nine-day novena to the Blessed Mother. It starts every December 16th and is one of the longest and most important religious celebrations in the Philippines that has lasted over 600 years.



CLUSTER PRAYER LIST

Those who bear the burden of years and those who have asked for our prayers:

Sacred Heart: Deborah Hanzlik, Janet Beudet, Sharla Kirk, Anh Cao, Binh Cao, Phyllis Gagne, Donna Sarver, Thomas Bird, Carl Hall, John Mertz, Helen Tres, Evelyn Rivera, Kathy Marr, Debbie Stidfole Agurwal, Nancy Clemons, Anna Liszeski, David Paden, Eileen Mozucha, Barbara Kirk, Deacon Bob Baker, Jerry Chambers, Raul Rosa Viera, Emily Chudoba, Thelma Herrera Lara, Sam Mikulcik, Carlos Rivera, Mike O'Hare, Susan MacLaughlin, Kathy Sansom, Delores Keith, Janice Walsh, John Visconti

St. James: Catherine Romig, Anne & Sam Richeson, Crista Cole, Jimmy Carter, Mary Kain, Audrey Keith, Anita Anthony, Wayne Whitehead, Bill Brown, Casey McQuillan, Glenn Toenniges, Tomas Rose, Jimmy Clark, John Seckora, Robert McGough

St. Johns: Dick Clark, John Stech, Ernest & Sheree Cerny, Dorothy Kohout, Etna Traylor, Steve Kofron, Joan Lonnemann, Matt MacLaughlin, Patsy Stech, Joe Stech, Santi Santos, Stuart Reynolds, Bill Kaspar, Judy Newsome, Michael (MJ) Schofield, Frank Stech, Deborah Ryan, Candence Andusko, Donet Poindexter,



First Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2017

“O LORD, you are our father...we are all the work of your hands...” How is God trying to mold you? Is it to be of service to Him as a priest? Call Father Michael Boehling at (804) 359-5661, or write: mboehling@richmonddioocese.org.



MEETINGS THIS WEEK:

Church of the Sacred Heart

- Sunday, 3rd 8:00am Monthly Breakfast
9:15am Christian Formation (all grades)
9:15am Adult Faith Formation
- Tuesday, 5th 7:00pm Journey through the Bible
- Wednesday, 6th 10:30am Bible Study
6:00pm Dance
6:30pm Spanish Choir Practice
7:30pm EMOC Training
- Thursday, 7th 7:00pm English Choir Practice
- Saturday, 9th 9:00am Care A Van
12:00pm Bingo/Lunch—Parish Hall
2:00pm Kessler Eagle Scout Court of Honor (church)
Youth Cookie Sale after all Masses
- Sunday, 10th 9:15am Christian Formation (all grades)
9:15am Adult Faith Formation
10:45am Confirmation Class
3:00pm Choir Practice

Saint James Church

- Sunday, 3rd 9:30am Religious Formation for all ages
- Monday, 4th 6:00pm Hopewell community meal @ Parish Hall
- Wednesday, 6th 5:30pm Reconciliation & Holy Hour
6:30pm Mass
7:00pm Choir Practice
- Thursday, 7th 11:00am Adult Bible Study
12:00pm Mass
6:30pm All Ministry Meeting
- Friday, 8th 12:00pm Mass—Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation)
- Sunday, 10th 9:30am Religious Formation (all ages)
12:30-2pm Confirmation class @ Sacred Heart

Saint Johns Church

- Wednesday, 6th 6:00pm Adoration –All are invited

Sponsor of the Week

We would like to thank
“**McKay True Value Hardware**”
this week for sponsoring an ad in our weekly bulletin.

MASS INTENTIONS

Church of the Sacred Heart

- Saturday, 2nd 5:00pm In honor of Barbara Kirk req by Bertie Eddy
7:00pm Spanish Holy Hour
- Sunday, 3rd 8:00am Lorenzo Rayel req by Deacon Bob & Luz Straub
11:00am Joe Wharton and in honor of Donna Sarver req by Virginia Wharton
1:00pm Members of the Parish
- Monday, 4th 6:30pm Holy Hour & Benediction
- Tuesday, 5th 5:00pm Confessions (English)
6:30pm Peter So Van Cao req by Sang Cessna
- Wednesday, 6th 10:00am Dick Beudet req by Janet Beudet
- Friday, 8th 10:00am Armand Gagne req by Phyllis Gagne
5:30pm Rosary
7:30pm Estrella Sadueste req by Deacon Bob & Luz Straub
- Saturday, 9th 5:00pm Art & Joyce Rakers req by Their Family
7:00pm Spanish Prayer
- Sunday, 10th 8:00am Members of the Parish
11:00am Dick Beudet req by Janet Beudet
1:00pm Members of the Parish

Saint James Church

- Saturday, 2nd 5:30pm Michael Kump
- Sunday, 3rd 11:00am George Kump
- Friday, 8th 12:00pm Immaculate Conception
- Sunday, 10th 11:00am Peter & Julia Kain

Saint Johns Church

- Saturday, 2nd 4:00pm Maia Mirro req by Elizabeth Mirro
- Tuesday, 5th 9:00am Stephen Zamenick (birthday) req by Regina Zamenick
- Thursday, 7th 7:00pm Vigil of Immaculate Conception
- Friday, 8th 9:00am Immaculate Conception for Anne Zamenick (birthday) req by Regina Zamenick
- Saturday, 9th 4:00pm Norma Lonnemann (healing) req by Regina Zamenick



“Yet, O LORD, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands.” As we begin the waiting of advent, let us strive to become the work of his hands by enjoying a **Worldwide Marriage Encounter (WWME)** weekend with our spouse. The next weekends are: Feb 2-4, 2018 in Clemmons, NC and Mar 2-4, 2018 in Herndon, VA. Early sign up is recommended. For more information visit our website at: <https://renewmarriage-vasouth.org/> or contact us at applications@renewmarriage-vasouth.org or 757-690-1369.

Looking for the Longest Married Couple in 2018
Worldwide Marriage Encounter is searching for the longest married couple. One national winner and winners from each of the 50 states are recognized each year. This project is held to honor the commitment of married couples and to give hope and inspiration to younger couples that they too can have long and lasting marriages. Nominations must be received by January 10th, 2018. To nominate a couple you know, please visit us at <http://www.earnedmedia.org/wwme1009.htm> or contact us directly at 405-850-4274.

EVANGELIZATION

Three Parishes – One God

“All are called, few will respond!”



REMINDER!!!

If you are interested in attending the upcoming ALPHA Series get your RSVP completed and returned to the church or emailed to Galen W. Potter @ gwjipotter@comcast.net. Thank you to those who have already sent in their RSVP, it going to be fun and enlightening.

If you are interested in being a part of the ALPHA Team, we are still looking for individuals, couples or families that are interested in helping. We are in need of individuals who are willing to help in many areas; welcome team, tech support, set up and clean up, MC, administration, food team and host and helpers. If you feel called to any of these positions, please join us on December 11, 2017.

Your Unified Parish Evangelization Team is continuing preparations for our upcoming sessions of ALPHA. This series will begin on Tuesday evening, January 2, 2018, at Church of the Sacred Heart in Prince George, in the Parish Center following Mass.

ALPHA is an opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment. No pressure. No follow-up. No charge. It does not matter if you attend church every Sunday or have never been to church, ALPHA is for you. If you know individuals who are curious about Christianity or would just like to know more, invite them to attend. We are open to all. This series is eleven weeks on Tuesdays with one Saturday session. Life happens, and you may not be available for all sessions but come to as many as you can.

If you are a member of the ALPHA Team or would like to be, we will be holding an organizational meeting on Monday, December 11, 2017 @7PM.

If you or someone you know is interested in attending ALPHA, please complete the below RSVP and return it no later than December 11, 2017 to your church office or email to gwjipotter@comcast.net.

Alpha

Name: _____ Male Female

Age Group:

Under 20 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

Would you like to join us for Alpha next week?

Yes I will be there!* Not sure yet No sorry, I will not be attending

Spiritually speaking, I identify most with:

Searching Undecided Skeptical Spiritual, but no religious affiliation Christian Other

Group Preferences:

Please put me in the same group as: _____

Dietary Needs:

Do you have dietary needs? No Yes _____

Please list any food allergies: _____

Thank you for coming!



**Unified Pastoral Council Minutes
21 November 2017, Sacred Heart, 7-8 Pm**

- I. **Call to Order/Opening Prayer:** - The meeting was called to order at 715 PM followed by the opening prayer given by Ron Franzyszen.
- II. **Roll Call and Quorum Status:-** The following members were present: Father Chris, Alberto DelRosario, (Sacred Heart); Ron Franzyszen, (St. John); Sam Jones (St. James); Absent: Bob Amirault, Steve McDonough (Sacred Heart), Father Buena (Parochial Vicar) .
- III. **Approval of 25 October 2017 Minutes:** Approved.
- IV. **Father Hess Report:** - The Christmas schedule has been determined and will be published in upcoming bulletins.
- V. **Old Business/Follow-up actions:-**
- 1) At the October meeting, Steve volunteered to provide each member a three ring binder notebook to help members retain and organize parish council minutes and other important documents. He also wanted to see a summary of achievements or progress made in the goals we established with each of our five priorities.
 - 2) Sam said he would compile a summary of the last 2 years of meetings to add as an insert to the binders. Future minutes and other documents will be provided to Steve to have adequate copies printed for members at each meeting.
 - 3) A summary was given to the parish council members. Steve was unable to attend and will bring the binders to the January 2018 meeting.
- VI. **New Business:-**
- 1) Sam asked for suggestions on what the council should focus on beginning in January 2018. He suggested the council continue in its role of pastoral planning which envisions, addresses, and evaluates the needs and goals of the parish community in light of church teaching; and strive to promote communication, understanding, collaboration and cooperation among the three parishes.
 - 2) Father Chris would like to see discussions and ideas on *fostering more cooperation and community among the three unified parishes*. He said there are many valuable resources which could be combined to make our united parishes stronger.
 - 3) Sam recommended that father's idea should be our focus starting with the January 2018 meeting. He asked council parish members to spend time talking to parishioners over the next few weeks to solicit their ideas.
- VII. **Next Unified Parish Council Meeting:** - Sacred Heart, 7-8 PM, 23 January 2018. No December meeting. (Meetings are always open to parishioners)
- VIII. **Closing Prayer/Adjournment:** - Father Chris gave the closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 745PM.



Holiday Anxiety and Stress

The holidays offer plenty of reasons to be stressed out and anxious—the gifts you haven't wrapped, the pile of cookie exchange invites, the office parties. But for many, the biggest source of holiday stress is family—the family dinner, the obligations, and the burden of family tradition. And if you're fighting clinical depression, or have had depression in the past, the holiday stress can be a trigger for more serious problems.

There's this idea that holiday gatherings with family are supposed to be joyful and stress-free. That's not the case. Family relationships are complicated. But that doesn't mean the solution is to skip the holidays entirely. With holiday family reunions looming in your calendar, what are some ways that you can prepare yourself and cope better this season? We turn to the experts for some tips on beating holiday stress and anxiety.

What Causes Holiday Stress?

First, ask yourself this: What about the holidays gets you down? Once you cut through the vague sense of dread about family gatherings and identify specific problems, you can deal with them directly. For many people, holiday stress is triggered by:

- **Unhappy memories.** Going home for the holidays naturally makes people remember old times, but for you the memories may be more bitter than sweet. "During the holidays, a lot of childhood memories come back," says Duckworth, who is also an assistant professor at Harvard University Medical School. "You may find yourself dwelling on what was inadequate about your childhood and what was missing." If you associate the holidays with a bad time in your life -- the loss of a loved one, a previous [depression](#) -- this time of year will naturally bring those memories back.
- **Toxic relatives.** Holidays can put you in the same room with relatives you avoid the rest of the year. People struggling with [depression](#) may face stigma, too. "Some relatives don't really believe you're depressed," says Gloria Pope, director of advocacy and public policy at the [Depression](#) and [Bipolar](#) Support Alliance in Chicago. "They think you're just lazy, or that it's all in your head. It can be really hurtful."
- **What's changed?** The holidays can highlight everything that's changed in your lives -- a divorce, a death in the family, a son who's making his first trip back home after starting college. Any of these can really unsettle a gathering and add holiday stress.
- **What's stayed the same?** For others, it's the monotonous sameness of family holiday gatherings that depresses them -- the same faces, the same jokes, and the same food on the same china plates.

Lowered defenses. During the holiday season, you're more likely to be stressed out by obligations and errands. It's [cold and flu](#) season and your immune system is under assault. It's getting dark earlier each day. You're eating worse, sleeping less, and drinking more. By the time the family gathering rolls around, you're worn out, tense, and fragile. The holiday stress makes it harder to cope with your family than it might be at other times of the year.