

**PASTOR'S MEANDERINGS**  
**DIOCESE OF RICHMOND BICENTENNIAL**  
**SECOND SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME**

**18 -19 JANUARY 2020**



**SUNDAY REFLECTION**

When we celebrate the Eucharist we make present upon our altars a past event: the reconciling death of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came into this world out of obedience to His Father's will, so that humankind, created in His own image and likeness, but cut off from God through disobedience, might be restored to friendship and to a right relationship with its Creator. That past event, made present in this sacrament, is a source of hope for the future. Moreover, not only did Jesus Christ give Himself up to death to restore our right relationship with God, He also left us the gift of Himself in the Eucharist as sustenance for body and soul on our journey back to fullness of life with God. May the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

As we share in this Eucharistic Feast we remember the manna in the desert, and the Passover lamb. They pointed forward to the bread of life come down from heaven which we share in the Eucharist, and to the redeeming sacrifice of Christ whose sacrificial communion we now share. Lord, teach us to appreciate the depths of the mystery we celebrate in this sacrament.

It is vanity to wish for a long life if you care little for a good life.  
It is good for us to encounter troubles and adversity from time to time for trouble often  
compels a person to search their own heart.  
We often engage in empty laughter when we should rightly weep.  
We remember small faults in others but overlook greater faults in ourselves.  
Be assured of this, that you must live a dying life.  
Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*

**STEWARDSHIP:** “Here am I, Lord; I come to do Your will.” May I, too, stand ready to offer myself and my gifts in the service of God. As we enter into this anniversary year commemorating a history of 200 years of building and growth of the faith community known as the Diocese of Richmond we acknowledge those who devoted their lives to this achievement; lay, religious and clerical.

## **READINGS FOR THIRD SUNDAY**

**25 – 26 JAN ‘20**

**Is. 8:23-9:3:** This ancient hope-filled prophecy speaks of a miraculous light and peace coming, surprisingly, through the birth of a child. This child – who, in the fullness of time will turn out to be Jesus Himself, born for us in Bethlehem – defeats wars and oppression and fills us with joy.

**1 Cor. 1:10-13, 17:** Unity is part of the Christian call. St. Paul, appealing for unity among His followers, points out that Jesus Himself is the cause of our unity, and so His call is also a call to turn back to Jesus with more and more sincerity.

**Mt. 4:12-23:** Jesus’ identity is to be a bright light who lights up the history of the world. To do this He chooses His first disciples, who remind us that we too are called to cooperate in receiving and handing on His Good News.

## **FLUE SEASON:**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recently issued a warning that this flu season is expected to be especially severe. For us here at St. Stephen, Martyr Parish it is prudent that we take reasonable precautions.

1. You may have noticed that in contrast to the practice in the past we have discontinued performing the initial rinse of the chalices and patens at the credence table (directly behind the presider’s chair) and then I consume the co-mingled fluid. During the flu season the initial rinsing will be conducted in the sacristy and the initial rinse water will be collected and poured along the foundation of the building. The second rinse will be poured down the sacrarium. And then the items will be washed with hot soapy water which in turn is poured down the regular sink.
2. If you are fighting a cold or the flu please refrain from partaking of the cup. If you are concerned about contracting a cold or flu by all means refrain from partaking from the cup. In receiving the host you have received Christ in His entirety of Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. The same point pertains to receiving the Eucharist only from the cup, say for those who are gluten sensitive. Christ has been received in His entirety.
3. In the Exchange of Peace it is not necessary to shaking the hands of everyone surrounding us. It is equally effective to nod (bow) to our neighbor, wave, say the word peace or if absolutely necessary fist bump. This also brings up the Lord’s Prayer and the seeming need to be hooked to everyone else in the church. I have to be honest and admit that it is interesting, very interesting to stand at the altar and watch the contortions that are practiced in this drive for physical linkage. Please note that the deacon do not hold on to each other at this time in the liturgy. The validity of the Lord’s Prayer is not dependent on physical contact but on what is in our minds and hearts as we pray it together as a community. The practice crept into parishes in the “touchy-feely” ‘70s and was never really endorsed by the Church.

## **SACRARIUM A SPECIAL SINK IN THE CHURCH?**

This term was used in the above article and is probably not familiar to most people.

The sacramental species (Body and Blood of Christ) must never in any circumstance go into the main sewer system.

The *sacrarium* is a special sink beside the regular sink in the sacristy whose pipes go into a gravel bed beneath the church, not into the local sewer system.

What is now called a *sacrarium* was once known as a *piscine* – from the Latin word for a reservoir for fish. In fact, some Christians still call it a *piscine* because that word technically refers to the basin of the sink itself, while “*sacrarium*” refers to the drain.

While found today in the sacristy in the Middle Ages it tended to be found on a ledge built into the wall of the church near the altar with a hole that drained the water into the wall and foundation. Sometimes it was simply a removable basin, so that the water in it could later be poured out on the ground.

The *sacrarium* is never used to dispose of consecrated wine, the Blood of Christ. This should be consumed or if that is not possible a hole is dug along the foundation of the church in the gravel bed and this consecrated wine is poured in there where it will not be disturbed or desecrated.

## **LITURGICAL SEASONS**

Last week there was some discussion in the Commons over the fact that the church proper was still decorated as it had been throughout the Christmas Season. The point was that this was not proper since Christmas ended with the Feast of the Epiphany. Uhh, NO

The Christmas Season concludes with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord where in effect we have transitioned from the Incarnation of the Word taking on our flesh as an infant into Jesus' entry into His public ministry beginning with His baptism by John in the Jordan.

So, what is this about a liturgical calendar, a liturgical year comprised of different seasons?

The liturgy, or public worship, of all Christian churches is governed by a yearly calendar that commemorates the main events in salvation history. This liturgical year, or annual cycle of seasons and feasts celebrates the Paschal Mystery (Christ's life, death, Resurrection and Ascension). The unfolding of the entire Christian story makes its power available once again in each retelling. In the Catholic Church, this cycle of public celebrations, prayers, and readings is divided into six seasons, each emphasizing a portion of the life of Jesus Christ. These six seasons are described in the “General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar,” published by the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship in 1969 (after the revision of the liturgical calendar at the time of the promulgation of the *Novus Ordo*). As the General Norms note, “By means of the yearly cycle the Church celebrates the whole mystery of Christ, from His incarnation until the day of Pentecost and the expectation of His coming again.”

The smallest unity of the liturgical year is the liturgical day, made holy through the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. Liturgical days are divided into four degrees of celebration: solemnities, feasts, obligatory memorials, and optional memorials. The source and center of the liturgical year is the Paschal Mystery, which the Church celebrates every day but most

especially on the first day of the week known as the Lord's Day or Sunday, the first of all holy days.

The six seasons of the Church year:

**Advent:** The liturgical year begins on the First Sunday of Advent, the season of preparation for Christ's Birth. The emphasis in the Mass and the daily prayers of this season is on the threefold coming of Christ – the prophecies of His Incarnation and Birth; His coming into our lives through grace and the sacraments, especially the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and His Second Coming at the end of time. Sometimes called a "little Lent," Advent is a period of joyful expectation but also of penance, as the liturgical color of the season – purple, as in Lent – indicates.

**Christmas:** The joyful expectation of Advent finds its culmination in the second season of the liturgical year: Christmas. Traditionally, the Christmas season extended from First Vespers (Evening Prayer) of Christmas (before Midnight Mass) through Candlemas the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (February 2) – a period of 40 days. With the revision of the calendar in 1969, "The Christmas season runs," according to the General Norms, "from evening prayer I of Christmas until the Sunday after Epiphany the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Contrary to popular celebration, the Christmas season does not encompass Advent, nor end with Christmas Day, but begins after Advent ends and extends into the New Year.

**Ordinary Time:** On the Monday after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the longest season of the Liturgical year – Ordinary Time – begins. Depending on the year, it encompasses either 33 or 34 weeks, broken into two distinct portions of the calendar, the first ending on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, and the second beginning on the Monday after Pentecost and running until evening prayer I of the First Sunday of Advent. Ordinary Time takes its name from the fact that the weeks are numbered (ordinal numbers are numbers indicating positions in a series, such as fifth, sixth, and seventh). During both Periods of Ordinary Time, the emphasis in the Mass and the Church's daily prayer is on Christ's teaching and His life among His disciples.

**Lent:** The first season to interrupt Ordinary Time is Lent, the 40 day period of preparation for Easter. In any given year, the length of the first period of Ordinary Time depends on the date of Ash Wednesday, which itself depends on the date of Easter. Lent is a period of fasting, abstinence, prayer, and almsgiving all to prepare ourselves, body and soul, to die with Christ on Good Friday so that we may rise again with Him on Easter Sunday. During Lent, the emphasis in the Mass readings and daily prayers of the Church is on the prophecies and fore-shadowings of Christ found in the Old Testament, and the increasing revelation of the nature of Christ and His mission.

**Easter Triduum:** Like Ordinary Time, the Easter Triduum is a new liturgical season created with the revision of the liturgical calendar in 1969. It has its roots, though, in the reform of the ceremonies of Holy Week in 1956. While Ordinary Time is the longest of the Church's liturgical seasons, the Easter Triduum is the shortest, as the General Norms note, "The Easter Triduum begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper (on Holy Thursday), reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes with evening prayer on Easter Sunday." While the Easter Triduum is liturgically a separate season from Lent, it remains a part of the 40 day Lenten fast, which extends from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, excluding the six Sundays in Lent, which are never days of fasting.

**Easter:** This is the third season to interrupt Ordinary Time. Beginning on Easter Sunday and running to Pentecost Sunday, a period of 50 days, the Easter season is second only to Ordinary Time in length. Easter is the greatest feast in the Christian calendar, for “if Christ is not risen, our faith is in vain.” The resurrection of Christ culminates in His Ascension into Heaven and the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, which inaugurates the mission of the Church to spread the Good News of salvation to the entire world.

**Rogation & Ember Days:** In addition to the six liturgical seasons discussed above, the “General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar” lists a seventh item in its discussion of the yearly liturgical cycle: the Rogation Days and Ember Days. While these days of prayer, both of petition and of thanksgiving, do not constitute a liturgical season of their own, they are some of the oldest annual celebrations in the Catholic Church, celebrated continuously for over 1500 years until the revision of the calendar in 1969. At that point, the celebration of both the Rogation Days and the Ember Days were made optional, with the decision left up to the bishops’ conference of each country. As a result, neither is widely celebrated today.

### **BICENTENNIAL PRAYER**

Father of lights,

the radiance of Your Son has guided the advance of the Gospel  
across the Diocese of Richmond for two centuries,  
strengthening our Church  
from the Eastern Shore to the Cumberland Gap.

Grant that the nearness of Your Son may dispel the darkness of our sins,  
so that as our love increases more and more,  
we may dare more than ever to fearlessly proclaim the word.

Holding fast to the word of life,  
may we shine like stars in the world.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son,  
who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever. Amen

### **PASTOR’S SCHEDULE EVENTS OF THE COMING WEEK**

Monday 20 Jan Holiday Office Closed

8:30 a.m. Mass

Tuesday 21 Jan

8:30 a.m. Mass

10:30 a.m. Mass Georgian Manor

1:00 p.m. Funeral & Burial Matthew Bozman

Wednesday 22 Jan

6:30 a.m. Mass

7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Meeting

8:30 a.m. Mass

2:00 p.m. Meeting of Liturgy and Education Staff

Thursday 23 Jan

8:30 a.m. Mass

4:30 – 6:30 p.m. First Reconciliation Prayer Service

6:30 p.m. Mass

Friday 24 Jan

8:30 a.m. Mass

7:00 p.m. Men of St. Joseph "Courageous"

Saturday 25 Jan

8:30 a.m. Mass

10:00 a.m. – Noon First Reconciliation Prayer Service

1:00 -4:30 p.m. Confessions

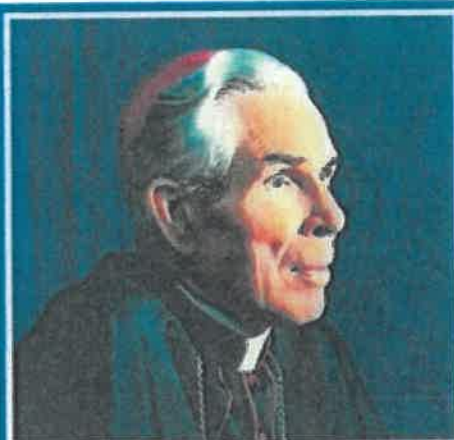
5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Third Sunday Ordinary Time

Sunday 26 Jan Third Sunday of Ordinary Time

7:00 a.m. 8:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. Masses

2:00 p.m. Meeting

**Sunday 2 Feb Presentation of the Lord Blessing of Candles and blessing of Throats**



**"Who is going to save our  
Church?  
Not our bishops,  
not our priests and religious.  
It is up to you, the people.  
You have the minds, the eyes, the  
ears to save the Church.  
Your mission is to see that your  
priests act like priests,  
your bishops like bishops and  
your religious act like religious."**



Office of the Bishop

## Diocese of Richmond

January 18–19, 2020

Dear Faithful of the Diocese of Richmond,

Today we begin the celebration of the bicentennial of our local Church which will last throughout 2020. This Mass commemorates the arrival of the first bishop of Richmond and recognizes the Catholic presence in the Eastern Vicariate of our diocese. I am grateful to be celebrating this historic occasion with you.

The establishment of the Diocese of Richmond took place under difficult circumstances. First, a schism or formal division among believers had arisen in Norfolk over the question of the ownership of Church property and the authority to appoint pastors. Second, the communities of Catholics in Virginia were small, far flung, and mostly poor. These were the challenges that Right Reverend Patrick Kelly faced when he came from Ireland as the first bishop of Richmond.

Although the Norfolk Schism eventually subsided, Bishop Kelly still had no income and supported himself by teaching. He returned to Ireland after just a year and half in Virginia, having never reached Richmond. The diocese, which lacked resources, was placed under the administration of the archbishop of Baltimore for the next nineteen years.

In this historical episode, we sense the perennial need for unity in the Church. That unity flows from the Eucharist, since each celebration of Mass both expresses and strengthens the communion of the Church; that is, the bonds that unite us to God and to one another. Communion is one theme of our diocesan bicentennial.

The readings and prayers for today's Mass focus on the Church's communion. In place of the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, I have asked that a special Mass from the *Roman Missal*, for the Particular or local Church, be celebrated throughout the diocese. These readings and prayers will help unite us in giving thanks to God for the presence of the Catholic Church in Virginia through the centuries.

May this Eucharistic Celebration at the beginning of the diocesan jubilee help us live out the motto of our bicentennial, which echoes the words of St. Paul: "Shine like stars in the world, as you hold fast to the word of life" (Philippians 2:15–16).

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout  
Bishop of Richmond

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF RICHMOND

By Father Anthony E. Marques

Although Catholics have always been a minority in Virginia, their roots in the commonwealth extend back four hundred years. A group of Spanish Jesuits planted the seeds of Christian faith near present-day Williamsburg but were soon killed by local inhabitants (1570–1571). Their martyrdom foreshadowed the struggles of the Catholic Church in this territory. In the following centuries, the Church grew slowly amid religious and secular hostility, geographic isolation, economic deprivation, and a chronic lack of priests.

The first organized Catholic communities in Virginia took shape around 1794. At St. Patrick's in Norfolk, a schism or formal division among believers arose over the question of whether lay persons could own Church property and appoint their own pastors (ca. 1794–1821). In an effort to heal the rift, Pope Pius VII established the Diocese of Richmond on July 11, 1820. Formed from the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Richmond became seventh diocese in the United States.

Parishes were small, far flung, and poor for most of the history of the Richmond Diocese. Developments in transportation (canals, railroads, trolley lines, and automobiles) led to modest growth in the Catholic population. Immigration also contributed to this gradual increase. Various ethnic groups settled in the diocese at different times: French, Irish, Germans, Lebanese (Maronites), Filipinos, Hispanics, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Africans. The Catholic Church experienced growth spurts in northern Virginia and Tidewater as the federal government and military expanded when the United States entered World War I (1917) and World War II (1941), and during the Cold War (1946–1989).

African Americans experienced even greater hardships as Catholics than other members of the Church. The first African slaves in Virginia were likely baptized Catholics (1619). Following the Civil War (1861–1865), the Church took steps to evangelize freed slaves and established separate parishes and schools for black Catholics (ca. 1865–1965). They often endured ridicule from black Protestants and prejudice within the Catholic Church. Most black parishes were closed during the civil rights era to integrate parishes (1961–1970), but many African Americans opposed the loss of their distinctive communities.

The relatively small Catholic population in the Richmond Diocese has been spread out over a territory that remained vast even as its boundaries were altered several times (1850, 1868, 1974). Virginia has long been a mission field, as far back as the official prohibition against Catholicism (1607–1786). Even after religious freedom was established in the commonwealth, many Catholics continued to face bigotry and suspicion. They gradually gained social acceptance by accommodating their religion to Protestant surroundings; by advancing professionally, helped by Catholic education; by fighting in their country's wars; and by carrying out charitable works. The diocese is still missionary country, however, since Catholics are now also a minority that lives in a secular culture with diminished religious practice. The clerical abuse scandal (2002, 2018) has also damaged the Church's credibility.

Thirteen bishops have governed the Church of Richmond over the course of its two-hundred-year history. Today, the diocese includes 200,000 Catholics (who make up five percent of the total population), 191 priests, 161 deacons, 139 parishes, and 30 schools.

The bicentennial of this local Church (1820–2020) is a testament to the perseverance of Catholics in Virginia. Despite adversity and failures, they have practiced their faith and helped to improve their society.

*A more complete narrative of the Richmond Diocese, Sowing Faith in a Catholic Frontier: Condensed History of the Diocese of Richmond, is available at [2020.richmonddioocese.org](http://2020.richmonddioocese.org).*