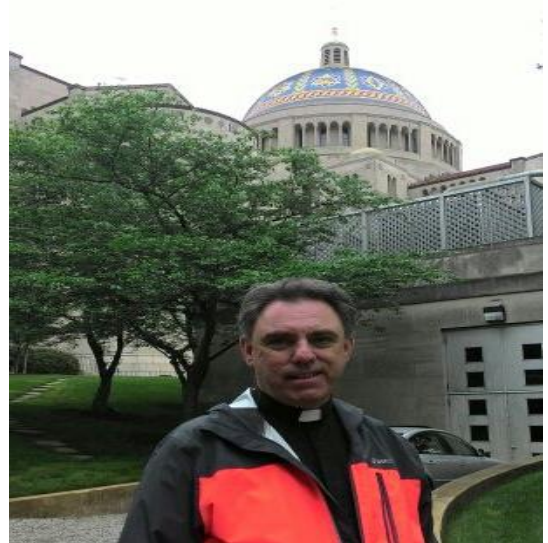


FROM THE PASTOR RESURRECTION CHURCH SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

Dear Parishioners. I write on Mary's Birthday, which follows 9 months after her Immaculate Conception.

ICM church photo



My own Clergy News: The Summer was a busy working one for me, but I have a good part of my strength returned back from last Winter's cancer surgery---and I handled the load. Most of the other clergy and staff got Summer off-time and rest. I had to cover a lot of Masses in that run but it was ok—with new Bishop Gary helping us on two weekends, and then I found a couple of ADW clergy who have finished as pastors and are now able to help us a bit now (2x/month). They'll be doing mostly the 730 and 900 Masses part-time; yet not as frequent as Frs. Beal/ DeSiano's help in the past. (Btw--Fr. DeSiano will visit from NYC and do our 1030 Sunday Mass on Sept. 20. Plus, our in-residents Frs. Pius and Herbert continue on helping here. Deacon Chuck remains on, too, regularly.) ☩ Update. You may recall how during last Spring I was planning for a new parochial vicar to be assigned here to us in July, with the supposed idea that Fr. Virginus Osuagwu could be incardinated to Washington and then be transferred to another parish, or else that his religious order would keep him but move him away from here. I can tell you now in surprise that the lesser possibility #3 happened, resulting in him staying on here as a Salvatorian priest. AOK. (We budget for just one assistant priest to serve with me, so that'll be him for 2026-27) 😊 I hope you had some enjoyable Summer days, or are getting some now. While I stayed local, I got in a few good things in since Memorial Day—like 2 concerts, a few baseball games, a cousins' reunion day, and the Ft. McHenry/Assumption pilgrimage was much fun.

As we head into a new September start of things... I meet with the parish council on Tuesday (9-15), as well as have a staff meeting that day—and the common parish **goal** I share with them (as I've done yearly since 2017) remains for our **building up the number of young family numbers in the parish**. It's why we have the Family Fun Festival again, held on Sept. 20 in 2026. I hope you are supporting it and praying for its success. The Family Mass at 9 a.m. in the hall has kept growing, even during the Summer. I am grateful for our DRE Helene Stever and her helpers who worked an extra Summer catch-up program for families on Sacraments and basic Faith instruction. Last week we also re-started our MOPS (mothers of pre-schoolers) Wednesday program. One regrettable 2026 loss is our closing of the Pre-K program last Spring, due to

dwindling numbers for the *half-day* program we ran. Yet in the positive, September sees our other ministries renew their part here, such as the music program under Annick Kanter Saint Hubert and with musician Grace Cho, along with the Women's Ministry, and the Religious Ed. and Becoming Catholic classes.

(As of today, we still needed some catechists for Mon. night Rel. Ed and we have 3 persons so far in the Becoming Catholic program with me—also known as OCIA—the ongoing Catholic initiation of adults.) Encourage your neighbors and fellow members to participate in these above things.



So the month of September and renewal is here. We hope to see more parish attendance and parish giving go up—for as I reviewed the July 2026 totals of Riderwood/ Resurrection and we were \$37,000 short of normal monthly giving. (Yet the Faith isn't supposed to take a vacation, is it?). ☺ My finance committee was concerned. *(Odd thing—the last time I talked about me possibly adding a parochial vicar on here, also had our giving dip down. 'Huh?')*

2026-27 Theme...I have been drawn to messages and presentations on faith and church art/ architecture, beauty and liturgy—and its interrelationship. I've invited two well-known Catholic persons in those fields to come to our parish in the next 12 months to explore this uplifting area more with you. A local Catholic woman named Dr. Jem Sullivan teaches at CUA and has been teaching on this theme, saying that beauty in the church and sacred liturgy acts as a bridge to move the human heart from seeing physical art to worshipping God. She says: "In the digital culture that surrounds us, now, more than ever, we need to recover the place of beauty and the arts in the Church's evangelization and catechesis today. Why? Because *beauty can save the*



world. This *quote* comes from Fyodor Dostoevsky, the Russian novelist (of the) novel *The Idiot*. Pope Benedict 16 noted that... Dostoevsky was really referring to the beauty of Christ because Jesus reveals the face of God. He reveals divine beauty in the Word made flesh. " Jem explains of that—"we speak of beauty seen in our Catholic faithful as pointing to Christ himself...(So then we realize that) the beauty of art is not simply for entertainment, or a dose of culture, or of an aesthetic uplift. Rather, beauty is really a

A work at Catholic Theological Union—Chicago

path...that can lead us to God." Indeed, Jem. It can lead us to God, Who is the Source of all beauty, the Divine Artist, as it were.

Another artist from this area is named Michael Corsini who explains how he got engaged in Catholic arts. He says: “(I’ve come to realize how) sacred art participates in the Church’s worship and witness...it carries a real responsibility. It should be beautiful, but beauty alone is not enough. It should also be faithful to what the Church believes and attentive to the people it is meant to serve.” He adds: “My work exists in response to that responsibility. I create sacred art that helps make the invisible visible, gives form to the mysteries we celebrate, and opens a space in which a person might more readily encounter the God who loves them.” Michael is a musician and singer and maker of religious artwork; I went and saw a work he did in a parish church. He seems to know God in a beautiful way as to reveal it so in personal ways via these arts. I’ve invited him here to do some visits and talks in sharing his music and seeing his works.”

✠ To complete this Beauty theme for 2026-27, hear what Pope Leo said while blessing the newly completed Tower of Jesus Christ at Barcelona’s Sagrada Familia Basilica. “This crowning spire of the tallest Catholic church in the world urges people to lift their gaze to Christ Who alone reveals to us the truth about God and the truth about ourselves.” In other words, Church art and architecture helps enhance the testimony of her belief in God.

In a related matter, I turn your attention to our parish’s liturgies and how we pray here. Firstly: Is God inspiring you here to give worship to Him? Psalm 95 guides us on this beautiful act we make. “Let us come before Him with a song of praise...For the Lord is the great God... Enter, let us bow down and worship; let us kneel before the Lord Who made us. For He is our God, we are the people He shepherds.” Almost every morning in the Liturgy of the Hours I pray the above.

Secondly, as in beauty and the arts, take note of how we welcome people to meet together and appreciate music via our parish’s *Living Arts* program. In 2026-27 we’ll have such musical guests as The Sean Heele Celtic Band, the Washington Symphonic Brass Band, the Central Md. Chorale, the Olney Big Band, and our in-house Holy Trinity Cameroon Choir and the Resurrection combined choirs, to lead us right into Christmas. It is beauty through the ears and touching the heart or giving us some vitality and soulfulness.

Thirdly, Speaking of Christmas, we have again 700 copies of a new Matthew Kelly book to give out on the holyday, and then for you to read and share. It’s called *The Content Diet*. It concerns what beauty or triviality or toxic things we consume (or focus on) in our daily living—which controls the direction of our life. This book will fit right into our theme of beauty appreciation and Catholic life.

The theme for the 2026-27 parish year: The Beauty of The Lord in His House. It will be on how our faith is related to the appreciation of beauty in one's worship, even as we present ourselves in our house of worship or what we surround or focus on in of our own personhood. We'll see how the arts tell us of God's loveliness or design. We'll see how we can decorate our lives with in manner of God's goodness and beauty..... so did you hear that on the movie screen in local theatres on September 20 and 23 (check listings), you can get a taste of this theme by watching Bishop Barron's documentary on lessons of beauty in Europe's Gothic Cathedrals. Check his website Word on Fire.

Beautiful Giving. Moving on to stewardship, as I do annually around this time—I share



how I was at a parish Mass elsewhere seeing their use of QR cards in the pews (to scan with a phone) and a credit card scan device in a giving basket going around at collection time. I was at still another church where they had what I'll call a Tap and Give machine—people were easily using it. A third parish had a service called Faith Direct of direct bank giving of their parish members, where 45% of the givers in the congregation were using (but the FD company takes

2% -4% away from the parish

collection for the FD service--which is why I have not used it here, while other parishes use it and take the hit because the giving is a higher percentage).

All I know is that these churches were having much better giving going on than us. Is it that we don't offer you these slick options? Our present financial giving opportunities are not that hard to work out. If you give our finance person a call about it, then perhaps that can help out. She is Diane Choi at 301 288-4661.

Pic *Diane Choi of the Finance office with us* ►

Should we be trying these new options for your upping of giving or participation?



Important: About parish records We see that among the 900 plus households here, that we don't have updated emails, phone #'s or addresses on some of you. Check if we have your right contacts. We also should be having a much greater participation with our Flocknote followers. Please do help us to reach you. Make a call or email to our Parish Administrator Anne Brennan 3012365202 abrennan@resurrectionadw.org.

This is year #1 when we don't do a postal mailing. (It costs just too much in postage to send 900 plus letters.) We are handing out the letter at Masses, and posting it here and in a FlockNote message, and we hope it will get the word out to you —ending the postal methods.

Hey, if you're not yet registered with us, then we encourage you to do so, too.



Well—from the looks of it—we are at the end of the line here. In the hand-out letter we did enclose an early All Souls envelope (and more will be in the Commons area table in October), which people can drop the envelope back into the collection from now to November. We pray them all in the month of November.

So recall that all year round, we are Resurrection parish, with a peacock of art greeting you at the front door, saying: Be alive in The Spirit, in the New Life Jesus Christ has for you. Fr. Barry

Btw: Riderwood members—we are glad to have all of you who have joined to Resurrection. We love your prayers, and your unique community there, and we like having your extra help in our finance obligations. While you have no peacock in the worship space, a nice encouraging dove window greets us over the sanctuary.



“Let the resurrection joy lift us from loneliness and weakness and despair to strength and beauty and happiness.” Josh McDowell (a college mentor to me)