

Cardinal Seán's Blog

Cardinal Seán O'Malley shares his reflections & experiences

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'The Seven'

Hello and welcome,

Like the rest of the American public, I was shocked by the terrible shooting that took place earlier this week in Arlington, Virginia, where a group of Republican Congressmen were practicing for a charity baseball game against a team of their Democratic colleagues — just the type of social interaction we need to see more of in our Congress, which has become so polarized and paralyzed by partisan differences.

Tragically, an obviously very disturbed person who was unhappy with the current political situation chose to try to harm those Congressmen as they were innocently practicing. We know that if not for the heroism of the Capitol Police who were present, this tragedy could have been significantly worse.

This event certainly underscores the danger of the violent rhetoric and the atmosphere of polarization and intolerance for others' opinions that can lead people to demonize others and to even commit violence. It calls into question, too, our country's tolerance for making weapons so available to the general population without careful screening and background checks.

We want Congressman Steve Scalise and the three others injured in the attack to know that we are praying for them and their complete and speedy recovery.

Last Friday I went in for a short procedure on my knee at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, where the doctors and nurses were also gracious and provided me with wonderful care.

It was a minor procedure and everything went wonderfully but, unfortunately, it necessitated me staying off my feet for a couple of days. So, I was unable to participate in a number of wonderful archdiocesan events that I was scheduled to attend. However, I followed them as closely as I could and would like to share some of the details of them with you.

The first event was Thursday night, which was the Spring Celebration of our [Planning Office for Urban Affairs](#), led by Lisa Alberghini.





During the evening they honored Anne Finucane of Bank of America. In his keynote, Father Bryan Hehir spoke about Anne's great support of the office and her work for the cause of social justice.



Bishop Uglietto also spoke on my behalf about the important work of our Planning Office. The Planning Office is responsible for promoting the development of affordable and low income housing and is currently involved in a number of initiatives in the area. They are also working in conjunction with St. Francis House and Pine Street Inn, as well as with local government agencies in establishing a safe house for women caught up in the insidious web of human trafficking.

Of course, the evening was an opportunity to honor Anne, but also to highlight the work of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, which is not widely known among the general public.



The staff of the Planning Office

Also on Thursday, there was a dinner sponsored by the [Cardinal Cushing Centers](#) to support the work at their wonderful facility in Hanover that cares for young people with special needs. At the dinner, they honored the Franciscan Sisters who were the founders and the present sponsors of the Cushing Centers, formerly known as the St. Coletta Center.



It was renamed in honor of Cardinal Cushing who was very much involved in the foundation of the center and who had such a special commitment to special needs children. In fact, he is buried on the grounds of the Cushing Centers in a very beautiful replica of the Chapel of the Portiuncula in Assisi.

Saturday, we had the joy of ordaining seven men to the transitional diaconate. Seven, of course, is a very symbolic number because the first deacons to be ordained were "the seven".

