



Parish Times

Senior Services Guide
Pull-Out Section S1-S16

DECEMBER 2018

Living the Faith Together

FREE

Enduring Legacies

Nearly thirty years ago, a deeply Catholic layman with a remarkable vision for a vibrant local Catholic community rooted in service and fellowship imagined and founded *Our Parish Times* newspaper.



Chuck Short

Paul Zurkowski's faith-inspired vision was uncomplicated, merging Christ's call to love God and neighbor with the principles of civic responsibility and social justice. Paul founded OPT as an independent paper to assist Montgomery County parishes to labor collectively in Christ's vineyards through better understanding each other's ministries and parish objectives. Paul's vision was a local, independent paper, produced by volunteer parish editors and published professionally. And so it is.

After founding OPT, Paul's vision of Catholic engagement turned to the role Catholic businesses could play in local Catholic activism. He convened a few like-minded Catholic business leaders and they established the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County (CBN-MC), the first organization of its kind in the area and

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Grandparents are the Roots of the Tree of Life

I love being a grandmother. I love seeing my own children comforting, carrying, loving, and even struggling with their own children. I like being the Nana who slips M&M's into my grandchildren's pockets as they leave my house. I love reading books to them and telling them stories. I love the fact that I can enjoy my grandchildren without worrying about the day-to-day discipline and direction that children need. I have spent most of my life with children, and they have taught me not to take myself or my hardships quite so seriously - what a gift they have been in my life!

Pope Francis describes grandparents as the "roots" of the tree of life. He reminds us that without strong roots no tree can flower. As a champion of the essential nature of the relationship between children and their grandparents, Pope Francis tells us that each generation "picks up from the teachings of their predecessors." A child's frame of refer-



Patricia McGann

Continued on page 27



After delivering their donations, eighth-grade students share a moment with one of the Little Sisters.

Thanksgiving, A Time to Act Like a Saint

By Justin Chan-Degroot, eighth grader

On Monday, November 19, Our Lady of Lourdes' eighth-grade class and Mrs. Stallsmith traveled to the Jeanne Jugan Residence and Saint Joseph's Villa. This is where The Little Sisters of the Poor support a non-profit organization that serves the poor and the neediest elderly people in Washington D.C.

The 8th graders brought donations such as coffee, paper cups, canned food, turkeys and hams. These goods were all donated by generous Lourdes families. After unloading the bus, the students visited some of the residents and also sang songs for them. Some of the residents even joined in the singing! Two of the songs that the students sang were "The National Anthem," and "What A Wonderful World." A few of the residents that the eighth

graders met were also longtime parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The motto of Our Lady of Lourdes is Faith, Excellence, and Service. Our Lady of Lourdes School encourages the students to put others before themselves. Visiting The Little Sisters of The Poor gave them the opportunity to live the motto. The students

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"Four Courageous Conversations" Helps St. Francis of Assisi Parishioners Speak Their Truth amid Sexual Abuse Crisis

By Melissa Egan

While alternately describing themselves as feeling betrayed, hurt, angry and heartbroken by the clergy sexual abuse scandal that has roiled the Catholic Church in recent months, St. Francis parishioners attending a parish listening session and discussion held Oct. 18 in the Parish Center received some hopeful news from the event's facilitator.

"The questions, the hopes and the doubts - we're bringing them into the room. And they need to be in the room," said Dr. Greg "Dobie" Moser, executive director of the youth and young adult ministry and the Catholic Youth Organization for the Diocese of Cleveland (OH).

"We are owning our baptismal role in the church," he said.

The 36 St. Francis parishioners took part in a facilitated discussion called "Four Courageous Conversations" that Dr. Moser helped develop and leads at parishes upon request. Earlier on Oct. 18, Dr. Moser led a discussion for five members of the St. Francis staff and clergy, so they could articulate their thoughts on the sexual abuse crisis, as well.

At St. Francis' listening session for parishioners, attendees were seated at tables of five to six people, with a recorder facilitating the discussion and capturing responses. Few people held back, as they responded to four questions built into a discussion framework. These included what their feelings were on the Catholic Church's sexual abuse crisis; what are

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God Speaking Through Us

No, I didn't get fired! And I certainly didn't lose my interest in writing for *Our Parish Times*. I missed the last couple of issues, but I am thrilled to be back at one of my favorite times of the year.

We just celebrated Thanksgiving, and what a joyous time it was for most of us as we gathered with family and friends to enjoy the bounty of God's love. I absolutely love the day. It is less commercialized and doesn't carry the extra expectations of Christmas. It allows us to just say thank you to God for so many blessings and gifts to us throughout the year.

I was again pleased to see so many people



Fr. John Enzler

Continued on page 14

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Witness to Life

Witnesses to the sanctity of human life November 12 in front of the Wildwood Medical Center where LeRoy Carhart's late-term abortion center is located: Left to right: Cecilia Ouyang, Champa Soyza, Jill Perry, Patrick Durkin, Judy Pangborn, Lisa Tennant, Ed Tennant, Edward Tennant and Lawrence

Tennant. Photo by Gus Alzona.

For more information about witnessing for life, contact Carol Ramirez, St. Jane de Chantal Pastoral Council, at 301-938-8364 or carolnramirez@gmail.com.

OPT

Surgite!

Join the Catholic Advocacy Network

Maryland's General Assembly meets in regular session for 90 calendar days each year beginning the second Wednesday in January to act on more than 2500 pieces of legislation and the State's annual capital and operating budgets. The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is encouraging anyone who

wants to stay informed about or to get involved on important Catholic issues to sign up for the Catholic Advocacy Network.

The General Assembly will reconvene Wednesday, January 9, 2019. A constitutional amendment of abortion will be introduced, as well as other important bills on physician-assisted suicide, fetal homi-

cide, immigration, human trafficking, and education funding. MCC's Catholic Advocacy Network uses email and a simple online system to alert you when action is needed and give you the tools to quickly and easily send a message directly to your legislators.

To join, visit: www.mdccathcon.org/joincan

OPT

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Kathleen &
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Parish Community Services, Inc.
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OurParishTimes@gmail.com

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Volunteers needed

Christmas Dinner for Those in Need

The Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception will provide meals for hundreds of poor, homeless, elderly, and needy individuals living in the District of Columbia and surrounding areas on Christmas Day. More than one thousand Christmas dinners are served each year in the National Shrine cafeteria and another thousand are delivered to shut-in.

Volunteers are needed to fill many different positions. If you are able to help out, either at the Basilica or by delivering meals, visit www.nationalshrine.com/christmasdinner for a link to online registration. If you have questions, before the event email visitorservices@bsnc.org or call 202-526-8300, ext. 111.

OPT

**It pays to
advertise in
Our Parish Times**

Another good reason to send children to Catholic schools!

Montgomery County School Board Votes to Undermine Morality

By Paul Schilling

In September 2018, the Montgomery County School Board voted unanimously to make condoms immediately available to students at Montgomery County (MC) public high schools and, according to press reports, to MC middle school students next year. The Board's decision is an assertion that sexual relations outside of marriage by school-age boys and girls is acceptable and moral. In effect, the Board fashioned its own morality and substituted it for that of its fellow citizens. We as citizens and Catholics should not hesitate to make our feelings about this policy known to the Board.

The Board's action will deprive students of the joy, long-term happiness and fulfillment enjoyed by men and women who reserve sexual relations for marriage and of the benefits that flow to children, families and the community from that decision. The Board's action will not benefit students but will adversely impact them and the community, by:

- Increasing pressure on young girls to submit to demands by male students for sexual relations
- Increasing the chances that these boys and girls will go on to have multiple sexual partners
- Increasing the chances that these boys and girls will not marry but will instead cohabit and bear children out of wedlock, and
- Increasing the chances that children born in these circumstances will be reared in a single-parent household and raised in poverty

- What is needed instead is a strong and sound education in abstinence and how that choice is a beneficial and positive one. It appears, however, that the Board did not take this into account in making its decision.

The Board attempts to justify its decision on public health grounds, asserting that the transmission of sexually transmitted infections is rapidly increasing in Montgomery County among individuals between the ages of 15 and 29 and at a more rapid rate than in the State as a whole. The Board claims to recognize the concerns that making condoms available may appear to promote sexual activity among students. The Board, however, asserts that the relationship between condom availability and sexual behavior has been extensively studied over the last few decades and the overwhelming majority of data suggest the opposite is true. It isn't clear what studies the Board relied on and the degree to which it considered opposing views. Whatever the studies may have been, they run contrary to thousands of years of the Western moral tradition on which the happiness of countless men and women is and has been based and upon which our country was founded and has prospered.

All of this raises the question as to whether the Board's decision should be reconsidered. We as Catholics must not be afraid to weigh in on the public debate here. In America, we acknowledge a public morality, a natural sense of right and wrong shared by all regardless of their faith. Our Founders recognized this and relied upon it as a founding principle in forming our country. We as Catholics play

Continued on page 15



Justice and Advocacy Council

*The first night of winter, the longest night of the year
December 21 is Homeless Persons' Memorial Day
Please take a moment and pray for those who passed away
while experiencing homelessness.*

Homelessness & Our Catholic Moral Obligation

By Brian Dorsey

With Christmas coming up soon, many of us consider, more than at other times of the year, the less fortunate. Chief among those are individuals experiencing homelessness. While we may occasionally see some who appear homeless around us, we may not recognize the breadth and depth of this ongoing crisis. This is a long-standing concern of the Justice and Advocacy Council (J&A).

Homelessness is a substantial issue affecting many individuals. The U.S. Department of Housing and Human Development (HUD) reports that in 2017, there were 553,742 individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night. In 2018, in

the Washington metropolitan area, 10,480 individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night.

A recent report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine indicates that individuals experiencing homelessness are at greater risk of serious traumatic injuries, drug overdoses, violence, infectious diseases, death due to chronic alcoholism, and death due to exposure to extreme cold or health.

The same report mentions that people experiencing homelessness "have longer hospitalizations for the same illnesses as housed persons, often because it is simply neither safe nor humane to discharge them to the street when they are still recuperating."

Continued on page 15

February 1-3

Men's Discernment Retreat Weekend

The Archdiocese of Washington invites young men (college age through 40s) who are considering a call to the priesthood to attend a discernment retreat led by priests and seminarians of the Archdiocese. The retreat will be held Friday, February 1 – Sunday, February 3, at the Washington Retreat House and the St. John Paul II Seminary (145 Taylor St. NE).

The retreat will offer time away from your daily routine and provide an opportunity for prayer and reflection to examine God's will. Advance registration is required. To register, visit: https://dcpriest.formstack.com/forms/mds_2019. Questions, contact the archdiocesan Office of Priest Vocations at vocations@adw.org or 202-636-9020.

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Christmas Party with Singer-Songwriter Marie Miller

Theology on Tap, December 11

All young professionals (21-late 30s) are invited to our monthly DCCatholic Theology on Tap at Buffalo Billiards in Dupont Circle to explore the role of faith in our daily lives. Grab a drink and hear straight talk and honest answers to your questions about faith, love, work and other real life experiences. All are welcome, Catholic or not! Bring your friends and meet other young professionals for Happy Hour specials from 6-7pm with a talk and Q/A to

follow from 7-8pm. #totdc

Must have a valid 21+ ID to enter.

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To prepare for the upcoming holiday sales season, several students gathered at school on Monday, November 19 (a day off) for a manufacturing party. They prepared Joe's Wingman sauces and dry rubs that are now available for sale at joeswingman.com.

Building Entrepreneurial Skills One Hot Sauce at a Time

Head of School Joe Powers moderates The Woods Business Development Team, a group of seventh and eighth-grade students that run and operate Joe's Wingman – joeswingman.com. This club guides young entrepreneurs as they learn the ins and outs of building a company and develop business skills.

This is Mr. Powers second year running the club which experienced some great initial success last year. Their goal this year is to build on the brand and the impact it can make as a "wingman" in the community. Mr. Powers has been working with several eighth-grade

students to brainstorm ways in which these Woods students can have a positive social impact on the school and the greater community. This school year, the profits of Joe's Wingman will go towards developing a new civics and civility curriculum that will be shared at The Woods Academy and hopefully beyond. Mr. Powers is proud of the energy the kids have for this important work and is glad that Joe's Wingman can be the vehicle to provide the resources they need to do it. They live the school's mission through the brand and learn a great deal in the process.

OPT

Lower School Students Celebrate World Kindness Day

Tuesday, November 13 marked the celebration of World Kindness Day and the students and teachers in Grades 1-4 wanted to make sure everyone knew about it. Not only did students take time to write quotes about being kind to hang in the hallways, they also brainstormed random acts that they could do to help spread kindness in the community. They also made special compliment hearts that they shared with each classmate.

Andrei R. in Grade 3 wanted everyone to know that kindness comes in all sizes. So, he shared the Aesop quote, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." His classmate Mel B. thinks we should be kind to everyone. So, she wrote, "Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for kindness," by Lucius Annaeus Seneca.

OPT



Third-grade Students Mel B. and Andrei R. share the quotes they put on display to celebrate World Kindness Day on November 13.



On Monday, November 26, Chairman of Special Olympics Tim Shriver (pictured here with his niece Emma S., Grade 8, and Sixth-grade Teacher Sam Firstenberg) visited The Woods. During his Monday Morning Chapel talk, Shriver encouraged the students to welcome everyone and be inclusive.

November is Candy Time in The Woods Montessori Preschool

Meaningful holiday activities engage interest, appeal to senses, offer active participation, and encourage curiosity. After celebrating Halloween, our Montessori Preschool students collect candy. This candy will ultimately be donated, but not before the students spend time counting, sorting, organizing, and packaging it all.

Each student brought some candy from Halloween trick-or-treating to add to the collection. Then the students got busy sorting the candy. Is this chocolate? Is this chewy? Decisions, decisions! They counted lots of chocolate bars.

Next, they created gift bags. When packing

a bag for a gift, be sure to include a variety! Think: What would you like to receive? And, don't forget a lollipop! The students filled many gift bags and hope everyone enjoys a sweet treat!

Some of the bags of candy will be delivered to


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Preschool Student Emma M. selects the perfect piece of chocolate for the gift bag she makes for Gift of Peace House.

THE WOODS ACADEMY

Open House



January 14 9:00-10:30AM

Register at
woodsacademy.org/open-house

The Woods Academy

6801 Greentree Road
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301-365-3080

Head of School
Joseph E. Powers

OPT Editor
Jodie Shoemaker
Director of Marketing, Communications, &
Alumni Relations
www.woodsacademy.org



Washington Redskin Ryan Kerrigan Visits Our Lady of Lourdes

By Deirdre Walsh

Washington Redskins star lineman, Ryan Kerrigan, paid a visit to Our Lady of Lourdes on October 30. Fans both young and old sported Redskins gear and could barely contain themselves as they awaited his arrival. Mr. Kerrigan was greeted with a lively rendition of the Redskins fight song, "Hail to the Redskins." We were all so thrilled to have a local sports hero visiting our school. The visit was made possible by the auction win donation of the father of Kindergarten teacher Miss Kristen Addison.

Mr. Kerrigan spoke about his start in football and how he came to be a professional player. Early on in life, he realized that God had given him athletic talent and it was up to him not to waste that gift. He began playing flag football at the age of five and as a young man he worked hard to give his very best as a student and athlete. One student asked, "What was the greatest moment of your life?" Mr. Kerrigan replied, "When I married my wife." He made sure we knew that his main focus is God and family, and although he loves football, his fans, and all the excitement



Ryan Kerrigan with Kindergarten students and their teachers, Chelsey Hipp and Kristin Addison.



Ryan Kerrigan reading to Kindergarten students.

that fame brings, there are more important things in life; such as, the arrival of his first child in March of 2019. Mr. Kerrigan patiently answered many more questions, and we learned that his favorite sport is actually golf and although his height might make you believe otherwise, he was not that great at basketball. He said the Washington Redskins drafted him in 2011 and he has been with them for his entire NFL career.

From the gym we moved outside to the playing field where we were able to witness his talents up close. Many of the children had an opportunity to play an impromptu football game with Mr. Kerrigan while the rest of the students cheered them on. At the end of the game, our pastor, Msgr Filardi, bestowed a blessing and then we prayed the Hail Mary together with Mr. Kerrigan. Before leaving Our Lady

Continued on page 38

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
7500 Pearl Street
Bethesda, MD
Msgr. Edward Filardi,
Pastor
301-654-1287
Ms. Amy Moore
Principal
301-654-5376



What pumpkin will I choose?

The Fabulous Fall Festival

By Chelsey Hipp

On Saturday, October 27, Our Lady of Lourdes hosted the first annual Fall Festival to support the "Sow the Seed" Annual Fund Drive. The day of fun began with a beautiful Mass in the school gym celebrated by Monsignor Filardi. The school choir beautifully led us in song with the help of Mrs. Maricar Parcon. It was a wonderful and unique opportunity to celebrate Mass in the school.

After mass, students, parents, teachers, and community members all enjoyed the amazing activities and food. The children had a wonderful time on the moon bounce, searching



First grade students are pleased with their pumpkins.

Continued on page 38

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School

A 2015 National Blue Ribbon School

OPEN HOUSE DATES

January 29, 2019 & March 26, 2019
~ 9:30-11:30 AM & 1:00-2:30 PM

2018 FALL TOUR DAYS - just 1 left!
December 5

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Holy Cross School students, faculty, and staff wore pink on October 18 to raise money and awareness for breast cancer. Photos by Christine Zalewski

Pretty in Pink

In support of October's Awareness for Breast Cancer, Holy

Cross School's Student Council hosted a "Wear Pink Dress Down Day" on October 18. Their efforts, and the contributions of our school community, raised about \$300 which was donated to the American Cancer Foundation.

"At Holy Cross, we emphasize that our faith is lived in service to others, and I am so proud of our Student Council for their work," explained school Principal, Mrs. Lisa Kane. "On October 18, the color pink was a solemn tribute to those who have confronted a ruthless adversary, but it was also a joyful reminder that we can unite in hope."

OPT

My Confirmation Retreat Experience

By Riley Betmarik

The following is a reflection written by Riley Betmarik, who attends the Religious Education Program of Holy Cross. Riley is an eighth-grade student preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation this May.

I was expecting the confirmation retreat to be boring. I thought all we were going to do was listen to speakers and do worksheets. Once the retreat got underway, I realized it was so much more fun than I had expected! We started off with an ice-breaker game to get to know each other better. Then, we listened to speeches from college students that attend the Catholic University of America. The speeches were about personal experiences with God. The first speech was about standing in the physical world but keeping your body in the spiritual world. I learned that you shouldn't be completely in the physical world, because then you are not close to God. Most of yourself should be in the spiritual world. The second speech was about a girl that traveled to China. She was very scared because she knew she could get arrested for going to



The Campus Ministry of CUA facilitated the Confirmation Retreat of Holy Cross on November 3. In this photo, the Confirmation Students form a circle for the opening ice breaker activity in Lewis Hall.

Mass in China. Once she returned from her trip, she went straight to mass and couldn't stop staring at the Eucharist because she was reunited with God. All of the speeches were so interesting, they really opened my eyes to God's presence and strengthened my faith.

During the retreat all the 8th graders split into small groups to talk about what the speakers talked about. We reflected, and talked about what we heard, in the same groups after every speech. I enjoyed hearing everyone's different opinions and thoughts about what the speakers

had said.

Next, we participated in the silent hour. For the silent hour we could walk anywhere we wanted, but we had to be quiet, so we could reflect and pray. We were asked to reflect on the speeches we had just heard, or the booklets of the Seven Sacraments that were passed out. I did not expect to like the silent hour, because it is hard to stay silent for an hour, but it ended up being super fun! First, I went to the church to read the book of the Seven Sacraments. I also spent some time looking at sacred art in the

Continued on page 7

More Holy Cross News on Page 14



OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, January 27, 2019

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

4900 Strathmore Avenue
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www.hcross.org • 301-949-1699

Pastor: Rev. Robert Buchmeier

Principal: Lisa M. Kane

Holy Cross School

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St. Bernadette School has launched our 2018-2019 Annual Fund with this year's appeal "STEM for All" an integration and interdisciplinary instructional approach of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics as we continuously strive to provide the best programming to develop skills necessary for ready and mindful global thinkers and leaders empowered to thrive.



As part of our school-wide social outreach initiative called Greater Love, we dedicated the month of October to serving our neighbors. We partnered with our local Silver Spring-based service organization A Wider Circle. We held a bake sale and a tag day raising \$900 to support the purchase of six new mattresses for families moving into stable housing. We collected 40 bottles of laundry detergent as that household essential is expensive and always in need. Lastly, on October 28, 40 of our SBS parents and students volunteered at A Wider Circle's warehouse to help restock the shelves for families to furnish their new homes.

St. Bernadette's Tuesday Club Fall Happenings

By Mary Ann Fitzgerald

Our senior club has been busy with some day trips this fall. We had a lovely tea at Simplici-Tea in Sykesville, Md. in August. It is a very small charming town in Carroll County with the main street lined with unusual and antique gift shops. Budget Travel rated it the "Coolest Small Town in America." Founded in the mid-1850s, it's only about 1.5 square miles with a population of about 4,000.

In September, we loaded up a motor coach to Avenue, Md., and had a fulfilling gorge-a-thon at the Holy Angels Church's seafood buffet, in St. Mary's County in Southern Maryland. Those folks at the church worked very hard and put out a fantastic spread. In October, the club had a fabulous presentation by the Montgomery County police about "Keeping Seniors Safe." Officer Mike Conrad spoke to us for about an hour about personal safety, safe shopping habits, ATM

safety, parking lot safety, frauds and scams, identification theft, and who to call for emergencies and when. This excellent program was highly informative, provided us with valuable information, and his presentation kept us riveted. We would suggest that anybody who has a senior group and would like to learn about the KSS program in Montgomery County should call the Volunteer Resources Section of MCPD at 240-773-5625. It's no charge and they come to your facility and bring handouts.

November will find us heading to Fredericksburg, Va., for a live stage presentation of "Beauty and the Beast" at the Riverside Dinner Theater. We have been there a few times and have been very pleased with the professional performances and the very nice luncheons. The Tuesday Club is always open to new members. Please contact the rectory for more information on how to join. All are welcome.

OPT

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... AND GOOD FOR YOUR BUSINESS

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Rev. Msgr. K.
Bartholomew Smith
Pastor

301-593-0357

St. Bernadette School
Mr. Ted Ewanciw, Principal
301-593-5611

Kate Doyle Rodgers, OPT Editor
301-593-5611



CONFIRMATION

Con't from page 6

church, like the Stations of the Cross.

After the silent hour, we played a couple more games, and then ended the day with our families at mass, and I was a gift bearer. Overall, my favorite part of the retreat was making new friends and the silent hour. I truly loved the 2018 confirmation retreat!

OPT

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The St. Jane de Chantal Parish Pastoral Council advises and assists the Pastor, Fr. Samuel Giese (right), in achieving the goals of the Parish. Photo Courtesy of James Caulfield

Pastoral Council Supports the Mission and Overall Good of the Parish

The Parish Pastoral Council is an essential part of the St. Jane de Chantal community

life. It is a consulting body that the Pastor relies on for advice and assistance in serving the needs of the entire community. Fr. Samuel Giese, the Pastor, has expressed admiration and gratitude to the people serving in this role. At a special ceremony that took place at the 10 AM mass on Sunday, November 18th, Fr. Giese said, "The members of the Parish Council sacrifice themselves to come to monthly meetings, to be patient, charitable and truthful. Together we try to see what is best for the whole of the Parish, and we truly rely on your

prayers and cooperation to make these hopes and ideals come true. Therefore, at the beginning of this new year of service it is appropriate that we come before you to seek God's blessing and to ask for your prayers."

All those chosen to serve the St. Jane de Chantal Parish community as members of the Parish Council were invited to the mass for a commissioning ceremony. Members were called to the altar where they were presented with a cross and ribbon to signify their

Continued on page 21

St. Jane de Chantal Parish

9601 Old Georgetown Road
Bethesda, MD

Fr. Samuel C. Giese
Pastor

301-530-1550

St. Jane de Chantal School

Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton

301-530-1221

Susana and Mario Cerritelli,
OPT Editors

St. Jane de Chantal Thanks Volunteers for their Time and Talent

With praise and gratitude, Reverend Samuel Giese cordially invited

all volunteers and their guests to attend the biennial St. Jane de Chantal Volunteer Appreciation

Dinner, which took place on October 13 at the Bethesda Marriott, Pooks Hill. About 200 attendees were treated to a lovely evening of cocktails, sit-down dinner, a special presentation, and dancing. Following a cocktail and *hors d'oeuvre* reception and dinner, Fr. Giese thanked the volunteers for their time and talent. He highlighted the important work they do and how without their service and assistance the Parish and school could not



Christina Park delivered an original dance piece entitled, "Hail Mary - Gentle Woman", which she developed and performed in Traditional Korean Dress and Fan Dance style.

Continued on page 21

More St. Jane de Chantal News on Page 21



St. Jane Frances de Chantal School

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Tour Classrooms, Meet Teachers and Parents

Tis the Season to be Giving

Throughout the second quarter, our school focuses on the virtue of compassion. We here at Holy Redeemer are so blessed and it is important to remember those who are in need, especially during the holidays.

Once again, our school and our families will be participating in the Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive. This year we've added an element of competition to this worthwhile service project! Holy Redeemer and Blessed Sacrament will both be doing a school collection the week leading up to December 3 – the



Students fill crates with canned food items for the upcoming Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive.



Families love collecting cans each year!

big event.

This year the school will compete to see who can bring in the most canned food items. The winner will receive an official Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive trophy and the principal of the school who brings in the least amount of food will have to wear the winning school's sweatshirt for a week. Holy Redeemer is never

Continued on page 22



Eighth-graders enjoyed their retreat experience

Eighth-Grade Retreat

Planting the Seeds of Our Faith

Holy Redeemer's eighth-grade class enjoyed an overnight retreat on November 1st and 2nd at the Bishop Claggett Retreat Center in Buckeystown, Md. The "All Things are Possible with God" retreat was led by Matt Avery, who has served as Youth Leadership Team Adult Coordinator for the Archdiocese of Washington Office of Youth Ministry and a volunteer youth minister at his parish, St. Gabriel. Mr. Avery's experience as a youth minister and his zeal for the Lord make him a wonderful retreat leader. The students loved all of his games, his songs, and most importantly, his talks.

The eighth graders, along with HR principal Colleen Ryan and faculty members Ms. Danielle Trotta, Ms. Deb Roby, and Mr. Michael Stephenson, explored their faith in a series of spiritual talks and team-building exercises

such as an Emmaus Walk, a trust walk, an anointing of hands, and journaling, all led by Mr. Avery with the assistance of HR faculty present on retreat.

Later in the evening of the

first day, the group enjoyed a bonfire with singing and s'mores, after going to Adoration and Confession with Fr. Ryan Pineda, parochial vicar at Holy Redeemer,

Continued on page 22



Mr. Avery leads the eighth grade in a special prayer service.

Let's Go to a Show!

Holy Redeemer Grandparents Enjoy Musical Tribute

By Ann Enkiri

The Tuesday before Thanksgiving found the Holy Redeemer campus abuzz with the annual excitement of Grandparents Day. As the special teachers bundled up to guide our very special guests to parking spaces, parent volunteers set up a welcoming reception in the Herb Young Auditorium. Grandparents made their way to Kensington, eager to share Mass, coffee hour refreshments, and classroom visits with their grandchildren. Grandparents and students alike really look forward to the musical performance that closes the morning. With

Continued on page 22

Holy Redeemer Parish

9705 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD

Rev. Mark Hughes
Pastor

301-942-2333

Holy Redeemer School

Mrs. Colleen Ryan,
Principal

301-942-3701

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Members of St. Elizabeth Class of 2019 visit St. John the Divine on their trip to New York City.



Our 8th grade class enjoyed their final Halloween Parade and went out in style!



So many Comfort Cases donated by our incredible St. Elizabeth Family to the youth in foster care in our area.



We had a record number of Grandparents and Special People come to enjoy our students' special performances.



Some of our St. Elizabeth School alumni played in our Annual Golf Classic at Argyle Country Club. Thanks for your support!



Our Kindergartners had the most imaginative costumes on Halloween day.

St. Elizabeth Parish
917 Montrose Road Rockville, MD

Msgr. J. Wilfrid Parent, Pastor
301-881-1380

St. Elizabeth School Principal, Vincent P. Spadoni
301-881-1824

Gerry Moore, OPT Editor
202-887-6475

St. Bartholomew makes a big impact on needy communities

A hugely successful Thanksgiving food drive capped a fall season of giving at St. Bartholomew School and Parish. In partnership with the Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive, St. Bart's collected enough donations to provide 50 families at its sister parish

with three full boxes of food each. Families at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart received the necessities for a Thanksgiving dinner, a gift card for a turkey, and two weeks' worth of non-perishable food. An additional 45 bags and boxes of "overflow" food went to Sacred Heart's food



St. Bartholomew eighth graders Julieta Vesperoni and Tyler Neal sort cans for the St. Bartholomew Canned Food Drive in partnership with the Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive.



Volunteers packed almost 200 boxes and bags of food

pantry.

Before the November food drive, St. Bart's "Socktober" campaign rallied its community to collect more than 1000 pairs of new winter socks for DC's homeless population. The socks went to the Adam's Place Shelter in Northeast just before cold weather gripped the area. Some people are surprised to learn that socks are the most requested items at homeless shelters. Unlike articles of clothing such as shirts and pants, socks are

typically worn until they are threadbare and, as a result, they are rarely donated. In early October, a Penny Wars competition within Saint Bartholomew School brought in almost \$1500 for Catholic Charities Office of the Mission. The school's tradition of giving continues full throttle in December when each class is adopting a needy family and providing a full complement of gifts to make for a memorable Christmas morning.

OPT

St. Bartholomew Parish

6900 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20816

Rev. Mark Knestout

Pastor

301-229-7933

St. Bartholomew School

Frank English, Principal

301-229-5586

Frank Maguire, OPT Editor

202-512-8226



tudents perform a scene from the novel, *Wonder*, as part of their Wonder Day celebration.

Wonder Day highlights the value of kindness at St. Bartholomew School

Fifth and sixth graders at St. Bart's recently took a day off from academics to focus on a concept that is equally important: choose kind. It is the central theme in R. J. Palacio's book, *Wonder*, which tells the story of a 10-year-old boy with a craniofacial deformity who leaves the security of homeschooling to attend school for the first time. The novel is part of the fifth-grade curriculum, and it inspired fifth-grade teacher Ellie Tehan and sixth-grade teacher Christopher Hughes to create Wonder Day. "Students really

see how kindness has an impact on people as they read the novel, but we wanted the students to feel enabled and empowered to choose kind every day by making a day all about practicing kindness," says Ms. Tehan.

Fifth and sixth graders began the day by studying the real-life story of the boy who inspired the novel. Then students participated in activities that challenged them to work together to increase understanding, empathy, and kindness. Events included a school-wide scavenger

Continued on page 23

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New NJHS Members Inducted

On Friday, November 16, seven new students were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society. Students submitted an application to be considered for the NJHS and were chosen based on their academic performance, their character, their commitment to service and their leadership skills.

All Members of the NJHS represent the four pillars of this honor society; Academics, Character, Service, and Leadership. Commitment to Academics shows how hard students work on homework, tests, and quizzes. Character represents the kind of person you are. Choosing kindness shows you are a model for others.



St. Mary's National Junior Honor Society inductees.

Service represents the work you do to help people who are hurt, poor, or needy. Last, but not least, leadership represents making good choices and striving to take a lead in making a difference.

Led by middle school teacher, Mr. Deegan, these students are continuing the tradition of giving to our local community by taking the lead on the collection of toys at St. Mary's School and Parish for the City of Rockville Holiday Toy Drive and working on collecting canned goods for our Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive on December 1.

OPT

St. Mary's Parish

520 Veirs Mill Road Rockville, MD

Msgr. Robert Amey, Pastor
301-424-5550

St. Mary's School

Mrs. Debby Eisel, Principal
301-762-4179

Mrs. Debby Eisel, Parish Editor
301-762-4179



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St. Mary's parishioners support the St. Ann's Home for Women and Children Elizabeth McCormick, Karen Gilroy, Sister Mary Bader (CEO of St. Ann's Home for Women and Children), Allison Farris (Miss DC), Nancy Keefe, and Kristy Sullivan at St. Ann's Fall "Friendraiser" at the Irish Inn at Glen Echo on Wednesday, September 26.



St. Mary's School Loves the Sunrise Seniors

Each week, seventh grade and Kindergarten students walk from school over to Sunrise Assisted Living to spend time with the senior residents. Sunrise is an elderly home and is located right next to St. Mary's School. Before students arrive they say a pray and then greet the residents. Everyone is very welcoming at Sunrise. Fun activities are planned to help the students and the residents learn more about each other. The year culminates in a celebration where the residents and students can share what they have learned from each other through the year.

It is not only our Kindergarten and seventh grade students who love the Sunrise residents. Our entire school is happy to celebrate Halloween each fall with the residents of Sunrise. When the weather is nice, the residents sit outside while the students from preschool through eighth grade bring the Halloween parade to Sunrise. There are smiles everywhere as the students show off their costumes and the residents pass out candy.



St. Mary's School students in their Halloween costumes visit their neighbors at Sunrise Senior Living.

St. Mary's Parishioner, Youth Honoree at this Year's Jingle Bell Run

This December 8, St. Mary's youth group member, Moira Kaluzienski, will lead a team of St. Mary's parishioners, at the Arthritis Foundation's original Jingle Bell Run. Family and friends plan to get decked out in festive gear and race with Moira to raise funds and awareness to cure America's #1 cause of disability.

At 15 years old, Moira was diagnosed ankylosing spondylitis, an auto-inflammatory disease that causes inflammation of the spinal joints and can lead to chronic pain



Moira Kaluzienski

and fusion of vertebrae. While some days are better than others, Moira perseveres through the ups and downs of this disease. With determination, Moira is currently captain of her varsity basketball team. This year the Arthritis Foundation has made Moira one of their Youth Honorees.

There is still time to join Moira's team or make a donation. More information can be found at: www.events.arthritis.org. Insert "Moira's Merry Miles" in the search bar.

OPT

Getting a Jump on Holiday Shopping

The SJE Parish Bazaar began Friday evening, November 9th, with an adults-only shopping experience from 6 to 9pm. Babysitting was available so that parents could enjoy dinner and drinks while perusing the vendors' wares. Everyone raved about the crab cakes that were available for dinner as well as the lovely crafts and specialty items on display.

On Saturday the Christmas festival and craft fair was open for the entire family from 9am to 4pm. In addition to the lovely items available for purchase from the vendors, shoppers could also visit the Books and Treasure Trove to find "second-hand" bargains. Many attendees purchased raffle tickets in hopes of winning one of the themed class baskets or baskets of cheer. Others pinned their hopes on the 50/50 raffle. Children also had a chance to purchase gifts in the Secret Santa Shop though many of the older kids seemed more interested in winning soda bottles in the game room. A special science show was presented mid-day and face-painting and a photo booth were also available. Thanks to the many volunteers, both adults and students, who made all this possible.

OPT



Above, Father Calis and the talented team responsible for a marvelous dinner selection.



At left, children enthusiastically respond during the science show at the Bazaar.



Above, colorful vendor displays catch the attention of shoppers eager to find the right gift.

Who knew that serving lunch, at right, could be so much fun?



Grazie to our own local Italian chefs, Nick and Randy, for preparing over 280 authentic spaghetti dinners.

CYO Spaghetti Dinner

The CYO Spaghetti dinner is a SJE fall tradition. This year's feast took place on Sunday, October 28 in the school auditorium. The menu included a salad bar, bread and spaghetti with homemade meatballs and sauce. The meal was topped off with Italian Ice for dessert. The dinner was sold out again this year with over 280 people served. Take home meals ordered in advance were a big hit for those who could not make the actual dinner. The evening was a wonderful community-building event and a successful fundraiser for our CYO program.

OPT

St. John the Evangelist Parish
10103 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD
301-681-7663

Rev. Joseph Calis
Pastor

St. John the Evangelist School
Mrs. Margaret Durney,
Principal
301-681-7656

Monica M. Bradford, OPT Editor
bradfordsm2@comcast.net

More St. John the Evangelist News on Page 39

Harvesting Support for our Parish and School

Our biannual Gala & Auction was held on Saturday, 6 October at the Rosensteel Knights of Columbus Hall. The Gala was a fun evening with great food, adult beverages, and a chance to catch up with other parishioners. The refurbished Knights of Columbus Hall combined with autumn harvest decorations provided a special ambience for the evening. The Winner's Choice raffle was a big draw as the prize was a trip and the winner able to select among five different destinations.

The Fund-an-Item this year was for "Seats of Learning" and raised



Mike Audet and his tablemates enjoy each other's company as they wait for the bidding to begin.



Fr. Calis welcomes everyone to the Autumn Harvest Gala and Auction.

funds to purchase new desks and chairs for our parish school. The existing 60-year old desks need to be replaced with 21st century furniture that will more easily and effectively accommodate the skills of collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving, and help create a school environment that supports student success. We have a good start on this project thanks to the generosity of Gala attendees. Many thanks to all who supported the Gala as volunteers, donors, sponsors, advertisers, and participants.

OPT



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Preschool students Andrew R., George B., Bella B., and Emmett S. carefully sort candy in preparation for creating gift bags for Gift of Peace House.

PRESCHOOL

Con't from page 4

Gift of Peace House in DC, a nursing home run by the Missionaries of Charity. This holiday activity and tradition of giving is more than

a decade old now. We know the sisters appreciate the children's generosity, and even more importantly, they appreciate the love and care each child put into packing the gift bags.

ENZLER

Con't from page 1

come to church on Thanksgiving morning at my parish, St. Bart's. Eucharist means thanksgiving. Looking out over all those coming to Mass awakens my faith and sense of gratitude. They come not out of obligation but because they are truly thankful for all of God's gifts.

I know how difficult the last five months have been for us here in Washington with Cardinal Wuerl's resignation being accepted by Pope Francis and the allegations against Cardinal McCarrick. I am especially grateful for the strength of the faithful in your parish and throughout our area. We have such a strong laity and vibrant parishes where we continue to pray, lift our hearts to God and enjoy the gifts that God gives. Let's use this season of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas to redouble our efforts to recognize our many blessings, even amid the difficulties.

We now enter the great season of Advent in preparation for Christmas. This is also joyous time as we ready ourselves for Jesus coming anew into our own lives and reflect upon the wonder of God's great gift to us. God chose to send his Son that all of us who believe in Jesus might share eternal life.

We hear once again the stories of Bethlehem, the manger and the shepherds coming to visit, and we think about how we can better live the life Jesus came to give us. We are caught up in the Christmas spirit, a spirit that reminds us how we are called to share our blessings with those in need.

In our work at Catholic Charities, we see those in need every day and try to respond quickly and readily to all who come our way. Having a job that is also a ministry allows us to do the work of Jesus each day. It is a

blessing that makes Christmas come alive for us all throughout the year as we try our best to become the gift of Jesus to all who need our help.

At this time of year, we join with you in our Angel Tree program to provide gifts to children who may otherwise not receive any. It is similar to what your parish may have, just on more of a regional level. Many of our volunteers work diligently to make sure that every child we know about receives a gift, and your support is overwhelming. We collect over one thousand gifts every year!

We are also blessed to receive many end-of-year gifts to Catholic Charities. I am moved every year to see thousands of people take their hard-earned money and give back to those less fortunate. The amount of those gifts is also inspiring, and we couldn't be more grateful. You put us in good shape for the tough winter months and for the year ahead. Our staff and volunteers, who work as hard as anybody anywhere, stand ready to help more and more people in your name.

Thank you to all who support Catholic Charities and continue to find ways to help with our Angel Tree program, our Cup of Joe program, St. Maria's Meals, our annual coat drive and our many other efforts to take care of our neighbors. Every time you participate and help your family do the same, you allow the poor to see Jesus in you. In fact, I think you also see Jesus in each other.

May Advent be a blessing to all of us as we prepare for the great gift of Christmas. May we allow God to speak directly to us through those we meet every day, particularly those who are poor, vulnerable and hurting, who respond so gratefully when they are cared for by their brothers and sisters in God's family.

OPT

Holy Cross

Greg Gannon's Cans of Hope Food Drive

This year, Holy Cross School and Parish joined the efforts of many other communities to participate in the Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive.

According to its website, the Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive was started in 1987 with "one idea, one man" and his desire to live his faith by collecting non-perishable food for those in need. That man was Greg Gannon who brought the idea to his home parish, Blessed Sacrament. It was simple – distribute brown paper bags with a request to fill them with canned goods.

Mr. Gannon passed away in 2006, but his "spirit and legacy live on through the GGCFD, now under the loving leadership of his brother, Rick Gannon." Today, more than seventy-five organizations are



On Collection Day, volunteers from the school and parish helped to load recipient vehicles with our donations.

recipients of the collected food.

Holy Cross School and Parish is honored to be one of the groups that participate in this yearly food drive. For several weeks through November 17, brown grocery bags lined the school hallways and the perimeter of Lewis Hall, as donations poured in.

An 8:30 a.m. prayer service at Holy Cross Church 8:30 a.m. kicked-off the November 17th Collection Day, followed by volunteer efforts to transfer donations to recipient vehicles in the back parking lot. Our contributions were slated for the Southern Maryland Food Bank which serves over a dozen food pantries, shelters, and emergency food organizations in Southern Maryland.

OPT



In advance of Collection Day on November 17th, the Holy Cross Eighth Grade class gathered all of the donations which had been lining the school hallways and assembled them in Lewis Hall.

The Saints Came Marching In

Holy Cross School celebrated All Saints' Day with a school mass and a visit by a procession of classroom saints. It is one of a series of events planned through the school year that reminds us that we are each called to be saints.

Students in Kindergarten through Eighth Grade participated by selecting two student representatives, one to dress as their class saint and one to present a reading about the saint.

Before the closing hymn, our saints and readers processed down the center aisle for the presentation.

The classroom readers gave us a glimpse into the lives of Saints Anne, Patrick, Therese the Little Flower – represented as a young girl and when she was older – Anthony, Elizabeth Ann Seton, John the Apostle, Francis of Assisi, Francis De Sales, and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. They are each a testament to how one person living a God-centered life can make



Saints from Kindergarten through Eighth Grade came marching in to conclude the 8:30 a.m. All Saints' Day Mass at Holy Cross on Thursday, November 1st.

a difference. Their lives should be an inspiration to each of us to listen for and respond to God's voice in our own lives.

And the Closing Hymn? A resounding rendition of *When the Saints Go Marching In*, of course. Oh, we want to be in that number!

OPT

HOMELESSNESS

Con't from page 3

ing from the condition that caused them to be hospitalized, even if they are no longer acutely ill." Taken together, homelessness may have serious health effects on those individuals directly impacted by it.

Where did this issue emerge? The term "homelessness" was first used in the United States in the 1870s to describe workers traveling in search of work. In the modern era of homelessness, from the early 1980s to the present, homelessness has been characterized by several influences: gentrification in cities, high unemployment rates, and deinstitutionalization of those with mental health disorders.

Also impacting the situation is the rise of HIV/AIDS, an insufficient supply of affordable housing options, and deep budget cuts to social services and HUD as a response to the nation's recession in the 1980s (National Academies of Science, 2018).

How has the nation responded to this crisis? The United States has responded differently in each time period. Generally, two responses are required – jobs with adequate wages and more affordable housing. For instance, as a response to the Great Depression, the federal government passed the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933. This used federal funding to clear slums, construct subsistence homesteads, and construct low-cost housing (National Academies of

Science, 2018).

Today, from 1990 to 2016, Montgomery County, MD has seen a 64.3% increase in poverty. Additionally, the housing wage in Montgomery County, or the wage required to afford rent at 30% of a workers' income, is the highest in Maryland at \$33.58/hour in 2017. We must adequately respond to the crisis of homelessness today.

The Catholic Response. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) states that safe, affordable, decent housing is a human right. Catholic social teaching recognizes that while individuals have a right to private property, governments and communities have an obligation to ensure that all housing needs are met, especially

for vulnerable and poor people and families. Catholic social teaching also recognizes that housing security is important at a time when many workers' wages are stagnant, with rising homelessness and rising living expenses.

In 2011, the USCCB wrote in *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, "The lack of safe, affordable housing requires a renewed commitment to increase the supply of quality housing and to preserve, maintain, and improve existing housing through public/private partnerships, especially with religious groups and community organizations."

As Catholics, this should guide our moral obligation and collective response to those experienc-

ing homelessness. Thus, the J&A Council continues to work to prioritize the needs of the poor and vulnerable, including ending homelessness. This means supporting adequate wages and permanent, supportive affordable housing, especially with a new County Executive and many new County Council members.

Homeless Persons' Memorial Day. December 21 is Homeless Persons' Memorial Day. On the longest night of the year, it is a day to remember those who passed away while experiencing homelessness. As we approach what should be a joyous and hopeful time of the year, the J&A Council urges all county Catholics and residents to take a moment on December 21 to pray

for those who passed away while experiencing homelessness.

Let us keep in mind: "And the king answering will say to them 'Truly, I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me'" (Matthew 25:40).

We invite you to join us at our next Justice and Advocacy Council meeting on Wednesday, January 23 at Holy Redeemer Church, Kensington.

OPT

Brian Dorsey is a member of the Montgomery County Justice and Advocacy council and of St. Paul's Parish, Damascus.



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MORALITY

Con't from page 3

a role in upholding that morality and we should not be afraid to do so. We must not fear the charge that by doing so we are somehow forcing our religion upon others. We oppose robbery based upon our moral sense that robbery is wrong but ultimately upon our belief in the Seventh Commandment. By supporting laws against robbery, though, we are not forcing our faith upon others. Similarly, when we oppose a public policy that sexual relations between unmarried school children is acceptable and moral, we do so out of our sense of public morality. While our belief in the Sixth and Ninth Commandments underlies our opposition, we are not forcing our faith on others by virtue of that opposition. We are, instead, advocating for the benefits that flow to all from the promotion and protection of our public morality.

OPT

Editor's Note: Mr. Schilling is a parishioner at Holy Redeemer Parish (Kensington). A retired federal government attorney, former CCD teacher and former St. Anselm's Abbey School teacher, he is currently a Professor at the Institute of World Politics in Washington, D.C.

Adventure on the Chesapeake Bay

Teamwork was the focus of Mercy's sixth-grade outdoor education adventure. Camped on the side of the upper Chesapeake Bay in platform tents at the Echo Hill Outdoor School, the trip was a time of discovery, adventure, independence, faith, and great fun. Father Stephen joined the students to celebrate Mass on the beach. This unique opportunity demon-

strated that God isn't found only in Mercy's church; He is everywhere, always with us, providing and caring. The students always show a reverence at these Masses that just seem to flow naturally with the environment. As the sixth grade Mercy class of 2021 continues their middle school years, their valuable lesson in teambuilding and bonding is sure to stay with them.

OPT

New Art Curriculum at Mercy

Creativity is a gift from God. Mercy's new art teacher, Caitrin Waites, is helping students to explore their gifts and the world of visual arts in all of its fascinating forms. Using her own creative talents and undergraduate degree in fashion design, Miss Waites has developed a new art curriculum for Mercy that has the students producing beautiful works of art created through book studies, imagination, cultural exploration, appreciation of art history, and much more.

Students in grades Pre-K through second are learning the basics of art: materials and techniques. Grades

three through five have embarked on a study of international art including South American molas, African art, and drawing St. Basil's Cathedral in Russia. The middle school is studying the masters and various periods of art: Monet, symbolism and gold leaf collages, and Andy Warhol's pop art style.

In the middle school Electives Program, Miss Waites has students exploring their own interests through individual projects in pottery, cartoons, animal studies through one, two, and three dimensional drawing, jewelry making, clay in three dimensional scenery, and collage.

OPT

Inclusion Team Attends National Conference

Earlier this fall, Ms. Beatley, Director of Inclusion and Mrs. Gibeson Mercy's School Counselor attended The Mustard Seed Project conference run by the Andrew M. Greeley Center for Catholic Education at Loyola University Chicago. The Mustard Seed Project is a conference that explores the important topic of serving students with disabilities

within the Catholic school setting.

This year's theme was "Moving from Inclusion to Belonging: A celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Pastoral letter on persons with disabilities." It was an exciting opportunity for both of them to attend workshops and hear speakers from across the country on best practices, and topics surrounding Inclusion.

OPT

Mercy Runners Compete at Nationals Championship

Our Lady of Mercy had three Cross Country athletes continue their training into the post season in order to compete in the 2018 Cross Country Coaches Nationals Youth Championships in Louisville, Kentucky on Saturday, November 17. Mercy athletes came up big competing against some of the best runners in the country.

Congratulations to Mercy Students Clara Aschenbach, Bryce Coffey and Owen Heilman on all their success over the entire Cross Country Season! Second-grader Clara Aschenbach placed 6th overall in the Girls 7 year-old age group and third-grader Owen Heilman placed fifth in the Boys 9 year-old age group.

OPT

New MPTO Events Build Community

Mercy parents have always worked hard to plan special events and activities for students and fellow parents, and this year is no different! In addition to the annual favorites such Friday Night Lights, Welcome Back Coffee, and Cookies with Mrs. Claus, the MPTO has added several new events including a Father-Daughter Dinner & Dance, a Mother-Son Event, a Mercy Moms Cookie and Ornament Exchange, and the Mercy Pride Walk-a-thon.

OPT

Our Lady of Mercy Parish

9200 Kentsdale Drive
Potomac, MD

Fr. William Byrne, Pastor
301-365-1415

Our Lady of Mercy School
Ms. Deborah Thomas, Principal
301-365-4477

Gerry Burgess, OPT Editor
301-330-5676

2018 Langley Park Coat Drive at Our Lady of Mercy

By Sister Pat Mensing SSJ

On Sunday, November 5, 183 men, women, and children from the Catholic Community of Langley Park received warm winter coats and accessories, thanks to the donations from the parishes of Our Lady of Mercy, St. Elizabeth and St. Camillus.

Drawing on their experience from previous years, Mercy volunteers searched for ways to not only make the coat drive flow more efficiently but also to give the people of Langley Park a better way to find the right coat for themselves and their children. Anne Walker, Director of Religious Education, said that hanging coats on racks provided a more dignified way of choosing their coats, as well as helping to keep piles of clothing at a minimum.

Many parish groups and individuals helped to make the coat



Adult and youth volunteers worked to provide a warmer winter for many in Langley Park Catholic Community

drive a success. Donations were collected at the Masses on the weekend of November 3 and 4 from the school and religious edu-

cation families, as well as the parish. After the Sunday evening

Continued on page 28



Mercy Drama Club Presents Once Upon a Mattress (aka Princess and the Pea)!

Starting in mid-September, Mercy middle school students spent more than 30 hours planning and rehearsing for this year's show. Their hard work and dedication was evident during all three November performances. Spectators were engaged and entertained by an incredibly talented group of performers. Bravo!



Mercy Student Council ran their first-ever pumpkin carving contest.

More Our Lady of Mercy News on Page 28



St. Raphael School's Angels on the Run promotes fitness, friendship, and fun. Photo by Tom Carrington

Angels Going the Distance

On a crisp October morning, about 300 St. Raphael School and Nursery School Angels, their families, and supporting community, gathered beneath a monumental green and white arch for the start of Angels on the Run. A heartfelt rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner," sung by seventh-grader Tatum Francois, kicked off the races,

which included a cherub dash, a 1-mile run, and a 5K.

Under the leadership and energy of event co-chairs Allen Francois and Roger Pardo, myriad participants, volunteers, and sponsors contributed to the success of the event and raised funds for our school. The striking inflatable arch, purchased through a grant from Capital One, could not

be missed and added to the excitement of the morning. Through a program in which the bank offers grants to charities important to its employees, SRS was awarded funding that went toward the arch as well as a portion of new chairs for our Music Room. Thank you to Capital One and Sabrina Colaianni, SRS parent and bank employee!

OPT

Remembering Our Loved Ones

During the month of November, when we pray especially for our departed loved ones, our "Wall of Remembrance" photo shrine displayed the faces of those we have lost in our school and extended school family, including teachers, clergy, siblings, parents, grandparents, and other relatives.

This year, we also remembered the founding pastor of St. Raphael Parish, Msgr. Thomas Duffy (Sept. 11, 1926–Oct. 15, 2018). When Msgr. Duffy became the pastor of St. Raphael's in 1966, the grassy hill where the new church and parish office settled had sparse surroundings. Today, amid a lively neighborhood, this space is now also home to SRS, SRNS, and Raphael House senior residence. Originally from Attleboro, Mass., Msgr. Duffy was ordained as a priest for the

Archdiocese of Washington in 1953 and served as pastor at St. Raphael from 1966 to 1977.

During his 65 years as a priest, Msgr. Duffy also served as assistant pastor at St. Thomas Apostle Parish and St. Stephen Martyr, chaplain to the Catholic student group at George Washington University, pastor-in-residence at the North American College in Rome, secretary for priest personnel for the archdiocese, pastor of the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, and retired priest at Our Lady of Victory Parish. He also ministered at Sibley Memorial Hospital. At St. Raphael's, the Duffy Community Center, an open gathering space and SRNS lunch area, is named in Msgr. Duffy's honor for his service in the Lord as our founding pastor.

OPT

What's Ahead this Winter

Dec. 11: Mother Teresa Luncheon welcomes the less fortunate for Mass and a home-cooked meal.

Dec. 17-19: SRS and SRNS Christmas pageants celebrate the joy of the season.

Jan. 14: SRS and SRNS double open house invites interested parents to learn more about our schools and tour our campus. SRNS (3's, 4's, 4-Plus) is at 9:15 a.m., and SRS (K-8) is at 10:45 a.m.

Jan. 27-Feb. 1: Catholic Schools Week recognizes the value of Catholic education and those who make it possible.

For details about these events and more, visit www.straphaelschool-md.org.

OPT

St. Raphael Parish St. Raphael School

1513 Dunster Road
Rockville, MD

Rev. Michael Salah, Pastor

Teri Dwyer, Principal

**MJ Zafis-Garcia,
OPT Editor**

301-762-2143

www.straphaels.org
www.straphaelschoolmd.org

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram:
@SRSRockville

Sodality Prayer, Outreach, and Fellowship

St. Raphael's Sodality is well into a busy year of prayer and service and is blessed to have inspirational speakers at our monthly events. Gina Witt, St. Raphael's parishioner, spoke to the Sodality in October and encouraged us to consider Mary as our loving Mother. In November, we heard from Chuck Smith, a parishioner from St. Martin's of Tours, who spoke to us of the ministry of his parish's Food Pantry. Chuck was recently awarded The Andrus Award for Community Service by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) for his nearly 20



Gina Witt

years of service to the Food Pantry where he coordinates donations, volunteer services, and food distribution. Every week the pantry distributes about four tons of food, toiletries, baby formula and diapers to approximately 200 people. He is challenged weekly to distribute all the perishable food while ensuring everyone receives some. After his talk, the attending Sodality members

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Giving Thanks



At the annual SRS Thanksgiving Feast, students and staff give thanks for their many blessings. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia / St. Raphael School

With gratitude to God for His many blessings, SRS students and staff came together for a school Mass and simple meal to celebrate Thanksgiving. The younger grades wore handmade headdresses for the occasion, which added to the spirit of the festivities. As an expression of our grateful hearts, baskets overflowing with traditional holiday foods were shared with our dedicated maintenance staff—invaluable

Continued on page 23

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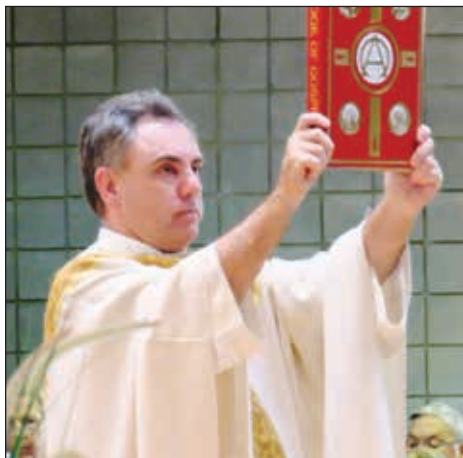
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CCD Students Participate in the Installation of Fr. Barry

By Ana Maria P. de Jesus

On October 21, the Sunday school students were thrilled to participate in a much-awaited event in the parish. They looked forward to it not because they will have Sunday classes off that day, but because they had known Fr. John Barry well already to have a youthful connection with him. During the previous school-year, as the parish waited for the canonical decision on the departure of its last pastor, Fr. Barry acted as parish administrator. During that transition period, he related to the kids in so many ways foremost of which was by visiting them in Sunday and preschool classes. To the young parishioners, being greeted with the family after Sunday mass gives them a sense of importance.

At the installation, the Religious Education students played a memorably inspiring part in the Liturgy. Understandably, the church was packed with students and with members of different parish organizations in attendance. At the offertory, seventy-two students processed from the foyer to the altar carrying candles symbolic of the first seventy-two disciples commissioned by the Lord to spread the good news of our salvation. The colorfully lit glass housing the flame expressed the diversity of the young candle-bearers as they lay down before the altar the hope of continu-



Above, Fr. Barry celebrates his first Mass as the Pastor. Photo by Ana Maria P. de Jesus
At right, old and young members of Resurrection share candles to light Fr. Barry's way. Photo by Ana Maria P. de Jesus



ing the mission of the early disciples. Upon approaching the altar, each student passed on the lighted candle to a parish council member who then lay the candle at the altar. Evocative of the dominance-submission ritual of the passing of the torch, the passing of the lighted candle suggested the generational cooperation of the young and the old to assist the

designated pastor in the accomplishment of his mission in the parish.

The second graders designed and composed a special prayer card for the Pastor-to-Be. At the end of the mass, with the pastor at the center, all religious education students recited a beautifully composed prayer for the pastor. While the prayer was being recited, two high school catechist assistants, Angela

Blow and Abraham Ndour, approached the altar and presented to Fr. Barry the purple stoles, which were the gift of the Religious Education catechists and teachers. The gift symbolized service to the Lord and was designated for use in the performance of the sacraments. The Church of Resurrection is looking forward to its bright future with Fr. Barry.

OPT

Winterfest Quilt

By Susan Ahearn

Winterfest is a tradition at the Church of the Resurrection in Burtonsville, and so is raffling off a handmade quilt. The quilt is made each year by a group of dedicated volunteers, and can take eight or nine months to complete. This year's quilt was made by Sally DeSavage, Suzanne Esparza, Ivora Tyler and Pam Carrigan. Other quilters in the group include Barbara Fowler, Nancy Schrider, Margaret Pratt, Constanza Cardozo-Schultz and Francie Parrack. "The quilting group is very compatible," says Pam Carrigan, "And that helps as they work together to choose fabric and create new quilts every year for Winterfest."

The quilting group starts working on a quilt for Winterfest between January and March, selecting the pattern they will use, and starting their quilting. "They meet each week for two hours in a classroom in the Parish Life Center to work on the quilt," reports Sally DeSavage.



Four out of nine quilters show off their beautiful quilt. Photo by Susan Ahearn

Pam Corrigan adds, "It takes until mid to late summer to finish cutting, sewing and piecing together the quilt." The cost of the fabric for the quilt can run as high as \$500, and that doesn't include the labor provided by the quilters. The quilt is then sent to a professional quilter to be pressed and returned to the group for finishing touches. "They use the same two cutters and two sewers," states Ivora Tyler, "so that the look of the quilt will be uniform when it is put together."

The women, many of whom are retired, work together as a group on the quilt. They enjoy the camaraderie that comes with creating a quilt. The quilt is usually displayed in the back of the church at

Resurrection before it is raffled off. The Resurrection quilting group also has a table at Winterfest, featuring items they have made individually that are available for sale, such as table runners, tree skirts, purses and things for babies.

Over the years, the quilters say the type of quilts they have made have changed a little. "The quilts have evolved from being very traditional to using lighter colors and a more modern style," says Suzanne Esparza.

This year, Winterfest took place on Friday, November 30, and Saturday, December 1.

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On October 7, the middle school Confirmation class served a delicious lunch for Riderwood residents in the Amadeo Room. Community service is a part of their Confirmation requirements and through community service, the students learn that service is doing the Lord's work. Photos by Emily Kranking



Church of the Resurrection Parish

3315 Greencastle Road
Burtonsville, MD

Rev. John M. Barry
Parish Administrator
301-288-4662

Parish Editors
Emily Kranking
240-595-3269

Susan Ahearn
240-205-3195

Annual Race for Scholars Event is a Success

Mary of Nazareth held one of its most beloved events again this October. Mary of Nazareth's annual Race for Scholars drew the whole community out for several miles of course running, walking, jogging, and everything in between. Older students ran with their counterparts in younger grades to ensure that every student completed the course. Some teachers ran the course encouraging students to move faster or just keep the pace. This running was not without purpose. In the week leading up to



Students enjoy a post-race snack after running the Mary of Nazareth Race for Scholars.

the event, students and faculty gathered over 700 pairs of new or lightly used shoes for the needy. Local businesses sponsored the event and were featured on the sporty red t-shirt participants could purchase to further raise funds. As students and faculty poured back in after an exciting day, satisfied exhaustion seeped through the school as it dismissed with an eye towards next year's event.

OPT



Mary of Nazareth Roman Catholic School

14131 Seneca Road, Darnestown,
Maryland 20874

Principal: Mr. Michael J. Friel

Assistant Principal:
Mrs. Rosemary Adams
301-869-0940 (tel)
301-869-0942 (fax)

Mary of Nazareth
OPT Editor: William Antonetti,
wantonettti@maryofnazareth.org

Website:

www.maryofnazareth.org

Affiliated with the following parishes:
Mother Seton, Germantown; St. John
Neumann, Gaithersburg; St. Mary's Shrine,
Barnesville; St. Rose of Lima, Gaithersburg;
St. Paul, Damascus; Our Lady of the
Presentation, Poolesville; Our Lady of the
Visitation, Darnestown.

Box of Joy

Mary of Nazareth completed a fantastic fundraiser aimed at bringing joy one box at a time. Mary of Nazareth's Box of Joy drive was geared towards ensuring children in other countries could have a box full of new toys at Christmas time. There was a relatively modest initial goal, which was surpassed, then a stretch

Continued on page 28



T.J. Albero (sixth grade) was our first student to bring in items for our Box of Joy service project.

A Lifetime of Service

Father Matthew of Our Lady of the Visitation Parish in Darnestown has retired. On October 4, he celebrated his last school Mass at Mary of Nazareth before retiring. The theme of simplicity was one seen throughout the day as the entrance him used the melody of "Simple Gifts" which would again be featured during the meditation after Holy Communion. Father Matthew's homily focused on Saint Francis of Assisi and all he gave up in order to serve God and live simply. He discussed Francis's

call to "Rebuild My Church" and how all of us are called to build up God's Church on Earth. He discussed our unity as "brothers and sisters with all creation." and left students with a mission to work to steward creation and build the Church.

Following Mass, students and faculty surprised Father Matthew with a singing of Happy Birthday and a parting gift of a Mary of Nazareth sweater vest for him to take with him as he returns to India to enjoy his retirement.

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Catholic Underground Maryland at MSP

By Dominique Seraphin

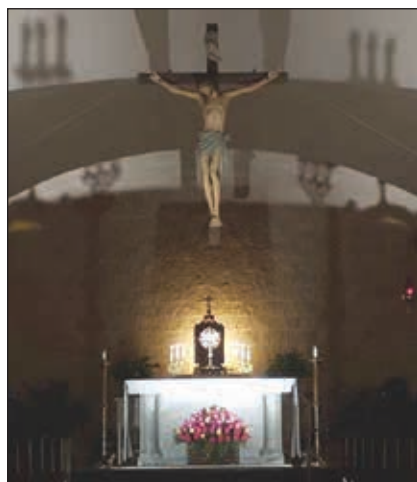
Catholic Underground is an apostolate started in New York City by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. Catholic Underground Maryland was officially launched at Mother Seton Parish in Germantown on October 14. Catholic Underground is a direct response to a call that began with St. Pope John Paul II and continued by Popes Benedict XVI and Francis. St. John Paul II said that because the Gospel lives in conversation with culture, we must be fearless in crossing the cultural threshold of the communication and information revolution now taking place.

The first part of the evening started with Eucharistic adoration, and it began with Vespers (Evening Prayer). The Liturgy of the Hours is the universal prayer of the Church - prayed by the Catholics throughout the world in every time zone and in every language. After Vespers, there is a time of simple praise and worship. This provides a window for each person to personally encounter Jesus



Connie Marie performs at Catholic Underground Maryland

Christ. The beauty of the darkened Church illuminated by candles helped us enter into the mystery of our Lord's presence in the Eucharist. The holy hour ended with solemn Benediction.



Eucharistic adoration at Mother Seton Parish

The second part showcases Catholic artists. Here we experience the "new evangelization." The Underground includes music, poetry, visual art, dancers, film, drama, etc. Our featured artist was Corrie Marie, who shared

her gifts of music with us. We ended our evening with Compline (night prayer), a simple and beautiful prayer of the Church, and a hymn to Our Lady.

I wanted to bring Catholic Underground to Maryland and specifically Mother Seton Parish to create a community where people can pray together freely before the Eucharist pouring their hearts out to the Lord. But also partake in the sacrament of reconciliation which makes us whole again and repairs our relationship with the Lord. Lastly, I wanted to use this event to create community and fellowship amongst young adults by having a coffee house like atmosphere where local artists can have a platform to express their God given talents while people get to build authentic friendships. My hope is that Catholic Underground will be a springboard to dive deeper with Christ and our surrounding community. If Catholic Underground goes well our hope is to eventually meet monthly. Please join us for our next Catholic Underground on December 14.

OPT



Middle School Youth Group at MSP



Visiting saints from around the world

New Middle School Youth Group

By Cathy McTighe

On November 4, 83 seventh and eighth graders gathered at the Msgr. Thomas M. Wells Parish Center for Mother Seton Parish's first Middle School Youth Group night. In celebration of All Saints Day, the teens "visited" eight saints from eight differ-

ent countries. The group explored our universal call to holiness and sought inspiration in the holy and amazing lives of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Saints Perpetua and Felicity, Saint Therese of Lisieux, Saint Josephine Bakhita, Saint Jose Sanchez Del Rio, Saint Ignatius Loyola, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, and Saint Anthony of Padua.

The Middle School youth group is being developed as a supplement to the traditional faith formation classes for seventh and eighth graders preparing for Confirmation. The group will meet five times this year on the first Sunday of each month. A team of catechists, parents, and other volunteers helped make the night a success. In particular, Mother Seton Parish thanks parent Jennifer Lucas for graciously planning and preparing a delicious meal for the hungry teens.

OPT



India, Winners of Best Country Display!

All Saints International Festival

By Juliana Ordoñez

Mother Seton Parish celebrated its fourth Annual All Saints International Festival on November 4. There were representatives from twenty-two different countries who shared their faith, food, and culture, on a beautiful, sunny Sunday. The celebration started with an All Saints International Mass celebrated by the Fr. Benjamin Garcia, where children and adults participated while dressed up in their native dresses. After the Mass, parishioners attended the festival and cel-



Children from India dance performance



Tanzamerican Troupe dancers

brated their unity in Jesus Christ, coming together as one Church. Children and adults enjoyed walking around the room with their "passports," having them stamped at each "country" while sampling food and learning a little about other cultures. The

Festival was blessed with dance performances by children from Tanzania and India.

The All Saints International Festival Committee wants to thank all who participated in the festival by sharing their faith, food, cultures, and talents with us!!! Congratulations to India for winning the best country display. It was such a beautiful afternoon to celebrate the rich diversity of our Parish. The success of this festival was made possible by our Parish coming together as One Family in Faith.

OPT

Mother Seton Parish

19951 Fr. Hurley Boulevard
Germantown, MD

Fr. Lee Fangmeyer
Pastor

301-924-3838

Brenda Rosado
OPT Editor

Bulletin@Mothersetonparish.org

St. Jane de Chantal



St. Jane's Third Mass and Procession in Celebration of Life

Following the third "Witness to Life" Mass offered at St. Jane de Chantal Church on October 21, Mary Forr, Director of Life Issues, Archdiocese of Washington, led a Rosary Procession from the church to the late-term abortion clinic in the Wildwood Medical Center located approximately one mile away. On the public sidewalk near the entrance to the clinic, Fr. Giese, Pastor of St. Jane de Chantal Church, led a celebration of life with prayer and song.

Welcoming Prospective Families at St. Jane's Open House

Enrollment and Admissions Director Mrs. Catherine Tomscheck, along with parent volunteers, greeted prospective parents and students, along with current families, at the St. Jane de Chantal School's Open House on Veteran's Day morning. St. Jane showed off all the reasons why the Parish community loves being part of this incredible school. The Principal, Mrs. Betsy Hamilton, teachers, staff and volunteers were on hand to answer any questions the prospective families may have had, and all the classrooms were open to visitors that morning.



Another Successful St. Jane Environmental Committee Event

Many members of the St. Jane de Chantal Parish and surrounding community were happy to take advantage of the paper shredding event in the church's parking lot on November 17. This event, sponsored by the St. Jane de Chantal Environmental Committee in joint sponsorship with Scott Matejik and Chris Ryan, allowed participants to drive their cars up to the drop-off point where they were greeted by committee members and volunteers. Four students from the eighth grade were on hand to cheerily assist taking papers from the cars. It was a very successful drive-by event, which provided an opportunity to dispose of important papers in a secure and environmental fashion – at no charge! Report and photo courtesy of Maureen Wilkerson



VOLUNTEERS

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function.

As a special treat during dessert, Ms. Christina Park shared her

devotion to Our Lady by performing an original dance piece entitled, "Hail Mary - Gentle Woman," which was developed and delivered in Traditional Korean Dress and Fan Dance style. The music of the Marian hymn "Gentle Woman"

inspired Ms. Park to create a dance related to the natural cycle of butterflies. Everyone had a great time talking, dancing, and enjoying the music of a DJ until late into the evening.

OPT

COUNCIL

Con't from page 8

commitment to the Parish. Council members expressed gratitude for the trust placed in them and publicly accepted the ministry and to serve with joy, love and enthusiasm. They pledged to help build the life of the Christian community in the Parish and Archdiocese. They will try to be conscious of the needs of all Parishioners and to make Christ present for everyone following his example as one who served.

The Pastoral Council consists

of 15 members, five of whom are elected each year for three-year terms. It also includes the Pastor, School Principal, the Director of Faith Formation, and the heads or representatives of the Sodality, Finance Council, Home and School Association, School Board, and CYO. Through a process of reflecting, praying and planning, the Council assists all individuals, staff and organizations in the Parish. Committees established and supported by the Parish Pastoral Council include the Liturgy and Music Committee, the Education Committee, the Social

Justice Committee, the Vocations Committee, the Youth Committee, Parish Life Committee, the Communications Committee, the Evangelization Committee, and the Young Adult Fellowship. Matters in which the Pastoral Council are involved include assisting in social justice initiatives, enhancing communication of parish activities and needs through a variety of outlets, planning for parish celebrations (such as the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner - see story this issue), and supporting supplemental youth ministry programs.

OPT

SHORT

Con't from page 1

one of the first in the nation. Its mission is to engage Montgomery County Catholic business leaders in support of Catholic education and youth activities. CBN members help Catholic youth activities as advisors, funders, and advocates. They are a reliable corps of leaders to which Catholic schools and parishes can turn for assistance in many practical ways.

This year the CBN held its twenty-fifth annual Gala on November 30. The Galas have raised more than one million dollars for its work. Providing great fun for attendees, the Galas celebrate the generosity and important roles Catholic business leaders play in the Catholic community. Each year CBN recognizes an exemplary Catholic Business leader. This year CBN honors James V Reyes. Mr. Reyes, the director of Reyes Holdings, volunteers to support Catholic education and several organizations which assist people in need. He generously shares his time and talents to help local Catholic causes. Also recognized were Sr. Kathy Weber, Community Leader Award; Jose Andres, Humanitarian Award; and Rob Scanlon, the Founder's Award. Let's reflect upon and be grateful for the enduring goodness of CBN, its founders, members and recognized leaders.

The legacy of *Our Parish Times* and The Catholic Business Network, indeed Paul Zurkowski's legacy, is a more united, informed and active Catholic community in Montgomery County. We are closer to achieving the ideal community envisioned by Christ when He spoke of "the city on the hill that cannot be hidden."

Speaking of the city on the hill, twenty-five years of service and legacies, let's also acknowledge and thank recently retired County Executive Ike Leggett for his twenty-five years of public service to the people of Montgomery County. Mr. Leggett is an effective politician, respected government leader and, for me, inspiring boss and dear friend. Ike's many achievements include being the first African American elected to the County Council and as County Executive; steering the County through the worst recession in its history and maintaining its triple A bond rating; responding to unprecedented population growth especially in the public schools and among diverse communities; constructing scores of new public facilities including schools, libraries, police and fire stations; and actually lowering the proportional tax burden on Montgomery County residents. Today, the County's fiscal condition is better than ever.

While these accomplishments are significant, I suggest OPT readers

reflect upon what many consider Mr. Leggett's greatest legacy, his leadership in moving Montgomery County closer toward becoming the city on the hill. As law professor, Leggett understands the separation of state and religion. As a spiritual man, he understands the call by all major religions to care for one's neighbor. As a wise civic leader, he knew how to aptly unite these two fundamental principles to form a more compassionate and just county. He often refers to the late Vice President Hubert Humphrey's view that the goodness of a community is measured by how it cares for its members in the dawn of life (children), those in the dusk of life (elderly), and those in the shadows of life (the vulnerable and excluded). His just and caring policies, budgets, and practices were so admired by community and faith leaders that they came to be known as The Montgomery Way. The Leggett inspired Montgomery Way is more than a logo. It is an underpinning civic faith. Its tenets include: respecting the dignity of each person; sustaining welcoming and inclusive communities; compassionately caring for the vulnerable and poor; and promoting social, economic and religious opportunities for all. Not quite a religious vision, yet not a secular one either and certainly one which advances the county toward the city on the hill.

Leggett often consulted with the Justice and Advocacy Council and Catholic Charities President, Msgr. Enzler. Here are a few fruits of the Montgomery Way which engaged Catholic related organizations as partners: 77,000 new or preserved affordable housing units (Victory Housing); homelessness among veterans was eliminated and significantly reduced among families (Catholic Charities); 40,000 uninsured people received health care in nonprofit health clinics (Spanish Catholic Center and Mercy Clinic); additional community based respite care, recreation, employment and residential services were added for people with developmental differences (Potomac and Upper County Community Resources, Kennedy Institute, Rosario Communities); Reduced hunger, (St Camillus and St Martin's parishes); expanded health care for poor children and a new hospital in Germantown, (Holy Cross Hospital); greatly expanded legal and immigration assistance to immigrants, especially youth, (Catholic Charities).

In uniting people of good will from diverse faiths and backgrounds to work together in service, justice and compassion, Paul Zurchowski and Ike Leggett have given the best possible gift.

Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year
Chuck Short

It pays to advertise in
Our Parish Times

St. Patrick Sponsors Holy Land Pilgrimage



St. Patrick Pilgrimage Group following Mass in the Boat Chapel at the Duc in Altum Spiritual Center in Magdala.

Recently, St. Patrick Parish in Rockville sponsored a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Thirty pilgrims, from St. Patrick and parishes as far away as Florida and Ohio walked in the footsteps of Jesus and his disciples led by St. Patrick's Director of Adult Faith Formation, Melanie Baker and its Parochial Vicar, Fr. Martino Choi. Several pilgrims reported experiencing spiritual awakening and renewal as the group visited many holy sites around Galilee and in and around Jerusalem.

The pilgrims spent four days around the Sea of Galilee, visiting the sites of Jesus' upbringing and early ministry, including Nazareth and Magdala. On a beautiful Sunday morning, the group cruised on the Sea of Galilee where Fr. Choi celebrated Mass and one could imagine Jesus preaching from a boat to the masses on the shore and walking across the water. A highlight of this portion of the journey was a visit to Cana where eight couples renewed their marriage vows at the traditional site of Jesus first miracle.

Following Galilee, the pilgrims went to Jerusalem, their base for the remainder of the pilgrimage, which included visits to many holy sites in and around Jerusalem. Surrounding sites included the traditional sites of Jesus' birth and baptism, in Bethlehem and at the River Jordan. The group also visited the Church of the Visitation in Ein Karem, believed to be the home of the parents of John the Baptist, and

the place where the pregnant Virgin Mary came to visit her pregnant cousin, Elizabeth and where the words of the Hail Mary and the Magnificat were first spoken.

Sepulcher, in the tiny chapel built above the traditional site of Jesus entombment and resurrection and in the Crusader chapel, and they prayed the stations of the cross in



Father Choi celebrating Mass in the chapel at the Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center, photo by Charles Bidinger.

In Jerusalem, the pilgrims visited many sites, including Gethsemane, where they venerated the Eucharist with singing and silent prayer at the site where the Gospels state Jesus came to pray and agonize following his last supper with his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion. The group also visited the Mount of Olives and the "upper room" a more recent structure built on the traditional site of the last supper and institution of the priesthood. The centerpiece of the visit was the time spent in the old city. There, the Pilgrims celebrated Mass twice in the Church of the Holy

the very places where the Gospels state Christ carried his cross to Calvary.

Members of the group expressed that visiting the places of the Gospels gave them a new relevance and presence and that they would never hear them in quite the same way again. Fr. Choi reflected that "The Holy Land is a privileged place to encounter the fully human Jesus, where He becomes more than just stories. May we continue to meet this Jesus active in our daily lives."

SEEDS

Con't from page 9

who also attended the retreat. Many of the students commented on what a big impact Adoration had on them and how they felt so much closer to God while on retreat.

The retreat ended the next morning with Mass celebrated by Fr. Pineda and a commissioning ceremony where each eighth grader was presented with a wooden cross on a leather cord, complete with calligraphy by HR faculty member Mary Ruth Clark.

Holy Redeemer loves this tradition of the eighth-grade retreat. Taking the students out of the area to a beautiful rural setting frees them from the distractions they face at home and at school. They are more open to getting to know each other better, to all the retreat talks and activities. We strongly believe that we are planting seeds of faith in each of our eighth graders praying that they take root so that they may always count on their faith to get them through the remainder of their time with us at HR, high school, and beyond.

OPT

GIVING

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one to shy away from any competition! Even though the enrollment is a bit smaller than Blessed Sacrament, we are confident that the competitive spirit of our community will prevail. Holy Redeemer brought the trophy home in 2016 and Blessed

Sacrament brought the trophy home on 2017.

Mrs. Ryan is so motivated to win, that she has agreed to allow her students to duct tape her to the wall if HR brings the GGCFD Trophy back to HR this year. You'll have to follow us on Twitter (@HRPrincipal1) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/HRCardinals/) to find out who won!

OPT

TRIBUTE

Con't from page 9

multiple components, this special school event honoring our students' grandparents involved the hard work and organization of teachers Sharon Bretting (PreK4), Colleen Boyd (fourth) Meredith Eib (Music), Mary Harper (Middle School Religion) and Pamela Hurley (Kindergarten) along with HR Music Minister, Joe Ryan, and parent volunteers under the leadership of Kate Morin and Sue Rufe.

At Mass, concelebrated by Father Mark Hughes and Father Ryan Pineda, grandparents experienced Holy Redeemer's rich tradition of student participation in the liturgy. Students reverently served as lectors, petitioners, and gift-bearers, as well as altar servers. The Holy Redeemer Choir, led by Ms. Eib and accompanied by Mr. Ryan, "prayed twice" by leading the congregation in song. Father Hughes warmly welcomed the grandparents and, in his homily, recognized the very important role that grandparents play by helping to inform their grandchildren's life choices and by living as models of faith.

Mrs. Colleen Ryan, HR principal, also thanked the grandparents and described the children's excitement at their visit.

All of the special guests received a warm welcome at the school's Herb Young Auditorium. Here, PreK3 students gave their own performance of poems and songs for their grandparents. These youngest HR students sang their beautiful anthem, "Deep inside my heart, I've got this EVERLASTING love." After Mass, guests gathered in the Herb Young Auditorium for a reception organized before visiting grandchildren's classrooms. Homeroom teachers welcomed the guests as the students shared activities with their visitors.

This year's much-anticipated tribute to grandparents featured songs

from musicals, carefully selected by music teacher, Ms. Meredith Eib. "It's important that the kids know that by learning music their grandparents will appreciate and enjoy, they are finding a way to connect with and honor their grandparents," Eib explained when announcing this year's Grandparents' Day theme. "Let's Go to a Show!" featured songs from musicals dating from 1920 through 2016. Each grade, from PreK4 through eighth, performed a song that targeted learning skills in their music curriculum and gave the students a chance to shine. Holy Redeemer's Music Minister, Mr. Joe Ryan, provided invaluable technical expertise with sound and also served as an accompanist.

Ms. Eib demonstrated keen rapport with her students as she elicited the very best from each of them and also showed her professional skills as an accompanist and choral conductor.

This year, several students had solos and took their moment in the spotlight beautifully: Leisl Polich and Kate Dildine (fourth); Alicia Alborno and Kande St. Louis (fifth); Beks Ryan, Shane David and Mary Gormly (sixth) together with trio singers, Abby Rufe, Eliza D'Albora and Katie Worch (sixth); Michela Terminello and Anna Giacomini (seventh); and Annie Dildine (eighth). The show's poignant finale featured the HR Choir performing "You Will Be Found" with soloists: Bridget Ellis, Cara Fischer, Indiana Jones, Claire Slight, Kathleen Brown and Maggie Foxman. The loving and approving audience found many reasons to compliment each grade's performance – memorization of lyrics, diction, melody, rhythm, harmony and volume.

Thanks to everyone's caring support, Holy Redeemer's Grandparents Day gathering quickly becomes a treasured family tradition and a wonderful way to begin the Thanksgiving holiday.

OPT

St. Patrick's Parish

4101 Norbeck Road
Rockville, MD

Rev. Msgr. Charles J. Parry
Pastor

301-924-2284

St. Patrick's School
Ms. Christie Anne Short,
Principal

301-929-9672

Parish Editor

New Volunteer Needed
Contact rectory to apply

Baltimore Catholic Charities Award

By Katie Holland, OPT parish editor,
accompanied by Stephen Rosenthal

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Baltimore honored Dr. M. Carmel Deckelman with its Mission in Action Award on October 30, 2018. Carmel, a board-certified child and adolescent psychiatrist, has worked for Catholic Charities for the past seven years in the

Family Services Division. The Award recognizes her consistent honor and respect for the dignity of every child and family she serves, her compassion and humility with each person, her capacity to reach out to others in a spirit of collaboration and her ability to serve with excellence and integrity.

Carmel is the daughter of Christ the King parishioners, Sue

and Frank Deckelman. Christ the King being the parish in which she was raised. She is a graduate of the Connelly School of the Holy Child (high school in Potomac), Princeton University, and the University of Maryland Medical School. She and her husband, Dr. Geoffrey Rosenthal, are the parents of three (very proud) adult children and two grandchildren.

OPT



(l to r) Archbishop William Lori, Dr. Carmel Deckelman and Bill McCarthy Executive Director Catholic Charities of Baltimore. Photographed by awardee-husband, Dr. Geoffrey Rosenthal

On the Feast of Christ the King

By Katie Holland,
OPT parish editor

The Great Feast Day of Christ the King was held again this year in the Church. That Sunday the two English-language (8:30 and 10:30am) Masses were combined into one beginning at 9:30am with Auxiliary Bishop Michael Fisher celebrating. At the 12:30pm Spanish-language Mass (time retained) the main Celebrant was Auxiliary Bishop Mario D'Orsonville.

In preparation of the parish feast day, Christ the King parish held its vibrant annual Thanksgiving Day Mass at 9am in English followed by Mass in Spanish at 10:30am, November 22. At both Masses parishioners brought a food item to donate to the parish pantry (for those in need) or to go to Catholic Charities, and then enjoyed the reception held in the vestibule, annually coordinated by Sue Deckelman. The following Saturday November 24, the parish gathered in a day of Evangelization. It began at noon with lunch and an



Christ the King's Feast Day Mass, at the altar, (l to r) Deacon Stephen Mitchell, Bishop Michael Fisher, Fr. Stephen Carter with the Choir in the background. Photographed by parishioner, Suzanne Y. Sigüenza

orientation, after which, they went out into the neighborhoods to invite people to come and meet us as a missionary church. The day ended roughly around 4pm.

Each of the feast-celebratory Masses Sunday November 25, 2018, was followed with a breakfast held, gathering parishioners in a wonderful occasion of praise and glory for the Son who has redeemed and saved us.

OPT

Advent at Christ the King

By Katie Holland, OPT parish editor

Christ the King has welcomed Advent with the initiation of a four-week, four session work-shop on Prayer, to learn to pray. Our Parish Administrator, Fr. Stephen Carter, proposed this because, "many of us do not know how to pray correctly". The workshop began on November 28,

2018 and will continue every Wednesday at 7:30pm until the 19th of December in the Christ the King Religious Education Building.

An Advent Retreat for Young Adults will be sponsored by Christ the King in coordination with the Office of Youth and Evangelization in the Archdiocese of Washington, DC

on Saturday December 15 with the invitation extended to all in the lower Montgomery County are. Fr Paul Dressler, OFM. Cap., Chaplain of Archbishop Carroll High School, director of Capuchin Theological Formation, and frequent Celebrant at Christ the King, will be one of the speakers at the Retreat.

OPT

WONDER DAY

Con't from page 11

hunt and kindness challenge where students learned the joy of doing something unexpectedly nice. In addition, students participated in a reader's theater workshop to read, act, and share their favorite scenes from the novel. The day culminated in a reflection of ways to "choose kind" on a daily basis. "One of the special things about St. Bart's is the relationships students form across grade levels," says Ms. Tehan. "The sixth graders read the novel last year and experienced the value of teamwork, relationships, and kindness on Wonder Day, so they were ready to lead this year's fifth grade. Students often can have an even larger impact

on each other than teachers do, so allowing the sixth graders to mentor the fifth graders not only fosters their relationships, but also sets the example of kindness."

St. Bart's launched Wonder Day in 2017, and it is now an annual event. "Wonder Day is a special rite of passage for our fifth and sixth-graders," says Mr. Hughes. "Next year, the current fifth grade will take a greater leadership role as they mentor the new middle school Bobcats. We want our students to be proud of their individuality, to practice self-discipline, and to remain accountable for their words and actions. Wonder Day is a unique St. Bart's tradition and just another great step in the greater learning process."

OPT

THANKS

Con't from page 17

able angels in our midst—who make daily operations and events run smoothly and efficiently across the school and parish facilities. SRNS also participated in a Thanksgiving prayer service and filled baskets of fruit before the altar.

These baskets were donated to Stepping Stones Shelter, an organization that supports homeless families with children in their transition to a stable home environment. With a 50-year nursery school history and flourishing K-8 school, we have so much to be grateful for!

OPT

A True Volunteer

By Katie Holland, OPT parish editor

Christ the King's Office of Religious Education appeals in each parish Bulletin for items needed both by the Parish Youth Group and the overall education program. Very quietly in the background, a fairly new parishioner, Donna Butler, went out on her own and solicited from area stores specific items from the published list! In November, Donna went to the Rectory, explained her actions and received the necessary letters to present to the stores which had promised to donate.

Donna is new to Christ the King. She became a widow last year, and, in going through the long and somewhat tedious process of what needed to be done, she gained a knowledge and a confidence to call government offices, to plan gatherings following the funeral, to make arrangements and to finish the financial burdens and paperwork. A friend suggested to her that she might want, in her retirement, to help others get through these same processes. Her friend was suggesting that she begin her own small business, which she now does, helping new widows who may not wish to "sit on hold" waiting for the needed answer, who may overlook this item or that. And it was with this new-found confidence that it occurred to Donna she could do



Donna Butler

the same for the parish in its call for donations! Every parish should have a volunteer like Donna Butler! We are delighted!

OPT

Christ the King

2301 Colston Drive
Silver Spring, MD
301-495-2306

Fr. Stephen Carter, OFM, Cap.,
Parochial Administrator

Katie Holland,
OPT Editor

kh7@georgetown.edu



Michaelmas Feast Day celebration begins with a Service program: "From Tolerance, Understanding and Appreciation to Celebration"

Parish celebrates Michaelmas, Highlights Diversity

By Cecilia Flores

The fall season at St. Michael the Archangel parish was filled with many activities ranging from religious to educational to festival. On September 29 we celebrated the annual par-

ish feast day *Michaelmas* with a program entitled, "From Tolerance, Understanding, Acceptance and Appreciation, to Celebration." It was an impressive display of the diversity of our parish. Ms. Charlene Howard, the guest speaker, spoke about building intercul-

tural competency. Also, parishioners from the African, Caribbean, European, Central American, and Filipino communities participated in a panel a discussion in which they shared how their heritage impacted their worship as Catholics

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St. Michael the Archangel's Sodality attended "America Needs Fatima" on October 13, 2018. They also led a prayer and Rosary every Monday throughout October to pray for the healing of victims who suffered clergy abuse and for the renewal of the Church.

There will be always an excuse to visit Rome!

By Benjamin de Leon

Our pilgrimage began in the city of Assisi. We visited the Basilica of Saint Francis of

Assisi, the house of Saint Francis of Assisi, the church of Saint Clare, among other very beautiful places. It is incredible to think about having the opportunity to be there and to witness the call that God made to Saint Francis of Assisi, "Rebuild my church."

Our pilgrimage continued, and we visited where one of his last great confessors, Holy Father Pio, lived. It is amazing to see the incorrupt body of Father Pio; the church very contrasting to the Basilica of San Francisco of Assisi. In both places we had the opportunity to

participate in Holy Mass.

But it was necessary to arrive in Rome and participate in the canonization not only of the Holy Father Pope Paul VI, but also of six new Saints, including one who lived in the country that bears the name of El Salvador "The Savior"; our dear and beloved Bishop and Martyr Saint Oscar Romero. We arrived very early on Sunday October 14 at the square of Saint Peter. My surprise was hearing Salvadorans, arriving from all parts of the world; even Salvadorans living in Italy,

Continued on page 30



Pack 23 Scouts and Color Guard prepare for Opening Ceremony of Spaghetti Dinner

Boy Scout Pack 23 Honors Military Veterans

By Tim Miller

The St. Michael Boy Scout Pack 23 members have been very active living their oath and motto by demonstrated service to the community. This has been possible through the dedication of their scout leaders and the support of their families. Pack 23 hosted its annual fall spaghetti dinner fundraiser to help finance upcoming trips, activities and camping gear. During the Veterans Day weekend, the scouts, family and leaders of Pack 23 support-

ed the St. Michael Knights of Columbus Rosensteel Council and made bag lunches for "Cup of Joe." Those bagged lunches were delivered by the Knights of Columbus to homeless shelters within the D.C metropolitan area. Pack 23 also celebrated its annual Veterans Day observance with a flag and wreath laying ceremony at the Takoma Park Veterans Memorial Park in honor of all military veterans, past, present and future for their great service and sacrifice.

OPT



Pack 23 and Knights of Columbus Wreath Laying Ceremony celebrating all Veterans, past, present and future.

St. Michael's Marriage Ministry Programs

In recent months, the Marriage Ministry at St. Michael the Archangel Parish, located in the heart of Silver Spring, has offered multiple programs to support Catholic marriage and family life. In September, the ministry organized a workshop on "Raising Our Children in the Catholic Faith." This workshop, which was co-sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington Office of Family Life, featured Dr. Lisa Klewicki as guest speaker and drew participation from multiple parishes in the Archdiocese. Attendees gained valuable insights into best prac-

tices they can adopt in their homes to share their Catholic faith with their children.

In October, the St. Michael's Marriage Ministry completed its second Marriage Preparation Class of 2018. Offered in partnership with the Archdiocese of Washington Office of Family Life, these classes use the Transformed in Love (www.transformedinlove.com) program to help prepare engaged couples for the Sacrament of Matrimony. The ministry prepared eight engaged couples for

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St. Michael's Parish

805 Wayne Avenue
Silver Spring, MD

Rev. Msgr. Eddie Tolentino,
Pastor

301-589-1155

Edwin Méndez,
OPT Editor

301-589-1155

More St. Michael News on Page 30

The Journey to Confirmation

St. Mary's two-year intensive preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation begins in seventh grade.

Our young candidates begin the year with a retreat – Saints by My Side – at the Church of the Annunciation. Retreat facilitator, Ms. Morace and her staff lead the candidates through an enriching morning as they encountered the Saints.

Early in October the candidates from both seventh and eighth grade stand before the congregation to profess their intentions at a



The Rite of Commitment

Rite of Commitment. The candidates may attend either of two masses for the Rite.

Candidates are immersed in parish life. They participate as readers of The Word during Youth Sunday Masses, usher, and provide volunteer assistance to special parish events.

St. Mary's is blessed to have such a dedicated and committed group of

young candidates.

OPT



Knights' Special Olympics Halloween Party "Best Costume" Finalists

Fatima's Knights Host Huge Halloween Party for Maryland's Special Olympians

Our Lady of Fatima Council (#6901) hosted a huge Halloween Party on November 3 for forty-five Special Olympics athletes and their friends and families. Arriving as "Mr. Incredible," the "Joker," and "Captain Hook" – only to name a few – Maryland's Special Olympians entered the festive Father Reid Pavilion at St. Mary's parish in Barnesville, where guests dined and danced to the howling tunes of Past Grand Knight Dan Dean.

Planning for the successful event, honoring our local Special Olympians, began in late summer with Past Grand Knight John Phipps, extensively coordinating the Halloween Party with local leaders of the Special Olympics community. Once the date was established, an enthusiastic team of Knights contributed over a hundred hours of time to plan and pull-off the event, decorating, cooking, and entertaining. "Not only was this terrific event for the athletes, but this was truly a blessed event for the Knights, as we clearly saw the wonderful impact of our charitable efforts on the athletes' faces, expressing radiant joy and happiness, as they laughed and danced in fellowship with their loved ones," said Grand Knight James Abernethy.

Toward late evening, the Knights were hard-pressed to recognize the five best costumes, as there were so many exceptionally attired athletes. Nonetheless, a determined team of judges finally awarded prizes to six Special Olympians with "Captain Hook" ultimately taking top honors as the Knight's "Best Costume."

If you are interested in learning more about local Special Olympics programs, the following points

of contact are for Frederick and Montgomery counties: Special Olympics in Frederick County is Ms. Ruth Vickers, phone: 240-409-3643, website: <https://www.somd-fc.org/>; and Special Olympics in Montgomery County is Ms. Shelly



Sir Knight Tim Flynn entertains a local Special Olympics Athlete

89th Annual Ham & Turkey Dinner

Visitors from near and far joined St. Mary's parishioners and their Barnesville neighbors for the parish's 89th Annual Ham & Turkey Dinner on October 27. Everyone enjoyed St. Mary's country hospitality and the beautiful fall season in the shadow of Sugarloaf Mountain – not to mention the sumptuous family-style feast. Turkey, Ham, Stuffing, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Sauerkraut, rolls and more were available for only \$16.00.

There was plenty of time for a stroll to the prayer garden and a ride on the hay wagon and there was a peaceful lull

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At left, guests enjoy the Ham & Turkey Dinner in Barnesville

At right, Trish Dunn checks out the Christmas Shop



At left, Terrill Meyer and Madeleine Wojciechowski were kept busy dishing it up.

Below, youth decorate pumpkins in preparation for the dinner.



At left, workers enjoy the meal at the end of the day.



St. Mary's Parish
18230 Barnesville Road
Barnesville, MD 20838
Rev. Kevin O'Reilly,
Pastor
(301) 972-8660
www.stmaryonline.com

OPT

St. Martin's Chuck Smith Receives AARP's Most Prestigious Volunteer Award

By Anne Gemunder

St. Martin's parishioner, Chuck Smith, was awarded the AARP Maryland 2018 Andrus Award for Community Service this past September. This is AARP's most-prestigious volunteer tribute and recognizes outstanding individuals who are sharing their experience, talents and skills to enrich the lives of others. Every Monday morning for the past 20 years, approximately 200 disadvantaged families have come to the Gaithersburg Food Pantry to pick up the free groceries and items they will need simply to get by. At this modest location across from church, volunteers collect and distribute four tons of food, toiletries, baby formula and diapers each week, guided by the leadership and vision of Chuck Smith.

Parish and school volunteer, Lisa Schuler, nominated Chuck for this award. She has been involved with



Chuck Smith, who runs St. Martin's Food Pantry, recently won the AARP Maryland 2018 Andrus Award for Community Service. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's Parish

the pantry for the past 20 years and has watched Chuck do everything from spearheading the building renovation project to making the facil-

ity handicapped-accessible to leading area food drives that help fill the shelves to writing grants to supplement the budget when food dona-

tions run low. In Lisa's nomination, she said, "He has been tireless in his commitment to recruiting volunteers, getting food donations and ensuring the distribution process is fair, equitable and allows those receiving to do so with dignity." When she received the call from Herb Greenberg of AARP, he said of the many entries they received, Chuck was the unanimous winner. In presenting the award, he said, "Chuck Smith exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism and the important contributions volunteers make to their communities, neighbors, and the programs they serve."

Retired after decades traveling the world with the U.S. State Department, Smith never intended a second career in community service. But when St. Martin's needed an interim volunteer to help run the food pantry in the 1990s, Smith stepped up to help "for a few weeks." He hasn't stopped since.

"This is a lifetime commitment, until the good Lord retires me."

Chuck Smith believes that everyone should be able to age and live with dignity and fulfill their goals and dreams. Chuck makes this happen each week in the way he has set up the distribution of food to those in need. Chuck runs the pantry as a trust-based operation where anyone in need can come in on Monday morning year-round to pick up the essential groceries and personal items needed to survive for the week – no questions asked.

He has been the catalyst for positive social change in our community and inspired others to start similar programs. Never one to preach, Chuck teaches through information sharing, advocacy and encouraging others to serve. Often those he has helped become volunteers themselves; he engenders that sort of loyalty and desire to give back.

OPT

Catholic Business Network Volunteers of the Year Make Huge Impact

By Anne Gemunder

St. Martin's School parents, Walter and Valeria Peralta were named Volunteers of the Year for the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County. They received this award at their



Walter and Valeria Peralta, who were named Volunteers of the Year by the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County, for their tireless dedication to St. Martin School's largest fundraising effort. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School

for this prestigious honor for their exceptional efforts. The school community is grateful for their outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in service to St. Martin's.

Through their extraordinary volunteer efforts, parents Walter and Valeria Peralta have raised over \$1 million for St. Martin's in the past ten years. These funds have contributed to our ability in keeping tuition affordable year after year. Walter and Valeria accomplished this fundraising feat by being the tireless guiding force of our weekly Bingo game held in the church basement. They manage every aspect of this year-round event. They greet players and recruit and instruct callers, cashiers, kitchen helpers, and "rip" sellers. Over the years, they have increased the number of weekly players thanks to the improvements they have made in the player experience, such as adding more opportunities

to win. They have organized parent and parishioner volunteers into teams, which improves efficiency and adds to the comradery. When asked why volunteering is important to them, Walter said, "The way we feel is that when we get involved and give time and effort to serve our church and community, good things will come back to us in unexpected ways." In addition, they have graciously supported many other school events in the ten years their son Joseph has attended St. Martin's. This selfless devotion is why they were nominated for Volunteers of the Year.

St. Martin's extends heartfelt gratitude to the Peraltas and to all supporters and friends who so generously donate their time, talent, and treasure every day.

OPT



St. Martin's students prepare for the All Saints Day mass. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.

St. Martin's Recognizes Truck'n America as Business Partner of the Year

By Anne Gemunder

Mark Little, owner of Truck'n America and parent to Ella in second grade, exemplifies the quiet but generous heart God calls for. Truck'n America consistently sponsors our annual auction and other school events.

Mark has a leadership role on our School Board and focuses on what is best for all students and teachers. He heads up our facilities

committee, placing an emphasis on building safety and modernization. Mark helps organize our parish picnic, while strengthening bonds between our church and school. From sponsoring staff lunches to donating a popcorn machine to our Aftercare Program, he treats our SMS family well. Name the event, from Back to School Barbeque, to Dunk Tank Day, to Field Day, Mark is there from set up to clean up. His positive energy, knowledge, and

expertise, help guide our school and continue our mission.

When asked why he contributes so generously, he replied, "St. Martin's School is an expression of our faith and a gift, both to our children and to ourselves as a community." We are grateful and thank Mark Little and Truck'n America for being our Business Partner of the Year. Supporters like Mark are the lifeblood of our wonderful school community.

OPT



St. Martin's pre-Kinergarten students collect fall leaves. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.

St. Martin of Tours Parish

201 South Frederick Ave.
Gaithersburg, MD

Fr. Richard Gancayco, Pastor
301-990-3203

St. Martin School
Stephen Lamont, Principal
301-990-2441

Catherine Cooksey
Parish Editor
240-477-8706
www.smsmd.org

Fr. Boxie Addresses Topic of Racism during Parishwide Event

By Christine King and Melissa Egan

Talking about racism is a little like spying a chip in a glass dish someone just gave you – its presence hanging in the air, but not necessarily a conversation you want to bridge. On Nov. 17, Fr. Robert Boxie, III challenged that notion to raise consciousness about this societal ill that pervades American culture and discuss his own experiences with racist attitudes before a group of 30 parishioners at St. Francis of Assisi Church.

In his discussion, “Reflections on the Catholic Church and the Challenges of Racism,” Fr. Boxie, parochial vicar of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Largo, MD, approached the topic of racism from the vantage points of Scripture, church documents and pastoral letters. A native of south Louisiana, Fr. Boxie sought to help attendees begin the conversation on racism, a complex topic that few people think about unless they are directly impacted by it.

“[The sin of] racism persists in the United States in all walks of life, from our history starting with slavery,” Fr. Boxie said. “It diminishes the oneness and unity of our Catholic family when we don’t honor the special dignity of each person as a human being.”



Fr. Robert Boxie III, parochial vicar of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Largo, MD

Fr. Boxie focused his discussion on racism faced by African-Americans, explaining that black culture should be viewed as one of many cultures found in the United States. He remarked that, generally speaking, the

“soul” of black culture is marked by a struggle—to be recognized, acknowledged and accepted. The dominant culture itself is seen more as a foe than a friend because of U.S. history, including slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, government-sanctioned discriminatory laws and policies, and media bias.

On the other hand, the “soul” of white culture, as the majority culture is viewed as the standard by which everything else is measured. This affords the majority various privileges and benefits. Moreover, challenging white identity causes people to think about issues that had previously not been considered, which can be seen as a threat. There has been a considerable rise in the number of racially motivated hate crimes, despite a growing economy and a drop in overall violent crime. This current environment, Fr. Boxie said, is in part due to backlash from the election of President Barack Obama and the actions of the current administration.

While Fr. Boxie advised attendees to be particularly aware of unconscious racism – prevalent views of African-Americans as athletes, criminals and poor – and institutional racism – which are geared to the success of the majority, he said the effects of racism are everywhere.

“For minorities, it’s an everyday struggle

to be who you are and know there are folks out there who hate you because of who you are – as God made you—without even knowing you,” said Fr. Boxie, who relayed a story about being racially profiled in a museum in Spain.

Fr. Boxie pointed to the examples of saints, such as St. Martin de Porres, St. Peter Claver, and St. Katharine Drexel, who helped black Catholics find a true home in the Catholic Church, as well as important events and people in the history of black Catholics in the U.S. As for what Catholics can do today, he advised St. Francis parishioners to love God and one’s neighbors, to exorcise the demons of racism, to seek healing and understanding in our hearts, and to continue the conversation about racism.

St. Francis parishioner Anne Russell said she attended Fr. Boxie’s talk because the Pax Christi Ministry has occasionally asked for a church program that helps facilitate difficult conversations, such as these. “The Church can play a role by continuing the conversations and upholding the underlying statement in Genesis – God saw that everything He made is good and this is exemplified by the example of Jesus,” she said.

OPT

GRANDPARENTS

Con’t from page 1

ence, then, is formed in relationship not just with his parents, but with his grandparents who provide him with a unique perspective on life and faith. Our children develop their own concept of the importance of their faith - beginning with the important rituals and traditions of the church - by engaging in and experiencing those traditions and rituals with their parents and their grandparents.

Relationships with older adults enrich the lives of children. When they can spend time with adults who are not navigating the hardships that come with parenting in a world that is hostile to family, children develop life skills and learn lessons. Many children in our area are far from their grandparents, and their busy parents have little time to go out into the neighborhood, and “recruit” substitute grandparents for their children. How can we find a way to pass on an historic perspective of life and faith? How will today’s children appreciate all that they have, and more importantly, how will they understand that not all that they have is good for them? Who will tell today’s children what life was like without cell phones or lettuce in bags? Who will teach them about how one person had to adjust the rabbit ears while the rest of the family tried to decipher the snowy picture on the black and white TV? Who will tell them how it felt to send a brother or a boyfriend off to Vietnam, or about how difficult it was to return from that war? Will they learn about

Forty Hours? Will they be able to imagine kneeling on the living room floor with six or seven, or ten siblings to say the Rosary every evening during Lent? What about weekly Confessions or Communion on our knees? Will they understand that Mass was not and is not optional without the perspective they can gain from those of us who grew up in the 1950’s, 60’s and 70’s? Without stories about growing up in a time when everyone knew the Ten Commandments, and almost everyone did their best to follow them, will today’s children be able to envision a Church and a world where people do their best to love God and their neighbor?

Our Catholic schools are tasked with teaching children far more than academics. Our Catholic school teachers and leaders recognize that they must teach our young people how to live in accordance with God’s will - how to see the Face of God in stranger and friend. Those teachers and leaders could use some help. Our schools are always in need of assistance in the library, the lunchroom, the preschool classrooms, or the nurse’s office. There are so many retired men and women in our area who have had distinguished careers, and still have so much to share. Many of our schools already enjoy the presence of senior volunteers, but many have not realized that the senior members of the parish can enrich the education and the life experiences of their students - that they can fill the gaps in so many ways. All it takes is a notice in the bulletin or a phone call to the school - give it a try! You will be glad you did!

—Patricia McGann

Catholic-Muslim Friendship at St. Francis: A Personal Reflection

By Anthony Bosnick

St. Francis parishioners have found getting to know our Muslim neighbors to be a pleasure.

When refugees from Syria began arriving in the Washington DC area, the St. Francis Pax Christi group encouraged the parish to support two refugee families during their transition period. Working with a synagogue and several other Catholic parishes, the St. Francis Pax Christi Ministry helped the families’ members find jobs, get medical help and get settled. Collaborating with others made it possible to accomplish things, which would be overwhelming to do alone.

During this time, we received an invitation to celebrate Iftar with the Muslims, the breaking of the daily fast during Ramadan. It gave us a chance to talk with Muslims and experience their hospitality.

As this partnership blossomed, the desire grew to build friendships with our Muslim neighbors. Considering *Nostra Aetate*, the Second Vatican Council’s declaration on interfaith relations, St. Francis decided to host an interfaith discussion in May 2018. With the participation of Fr. John Crossin, OSFS, who worked in interfaith relations with the U.S. bishops, an interfaith panel representing those of Muslim, Jewish and Catholic faiths held a deeply satisfying dialogue on interfaith matters.

In the fall of 2018, St. Francis continued these interfaith exchanges, with a three-part Catholic-Muslim interfaith discussion. Led by Iman Haytham Younis and Fr. John Dillon, a group of about 10 St.



Participants in the Catholic-Muslim Interfaith Discussion session on Oct. 6 pose in the church’s St. Clare Room. Standing, from left to right, are Louise Locke, Marie Barry, Director of Social Concerns and Adult Faith Formation, Tony Bosnick, and Mary Kate Ryner. Sitting, from left to right, are Fr. John Dillon and Iman Haytham Younis.

Francis parishioners met on three Saturdays and talked about areas where Catholic and Muslims agreed and disagreed. There are great theological differences between Catholics and Muslims, such as who Jesus is as Savior and Son of God. But we have found many areas of agreement, such as the desire to live faithfully as believers.

Later this fall, while on a St. Vincent de Paul home visit, members of the St. Vincent de Paul

Continued on page 28

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Our Parish Times

**St. Francis
of Assisi Parish**

6701 Muncaster Mill Road
Derwood, MD

**Rev. John J. Dillon,
Pastor**

301-840-1407

**Melissa M. Egan
OPT Editor**

301-972-4844

melissa.egan74@verizon.net

COAT DRIVE

Con't from page 16

Mass on November 4, the evening began with a pizza supper for all the volunteers, then the coats and accessories were sorted and put into bags according to size and gender. Thanks to members of COR (the parish youth group), Confirmation students and their parents, this task was completed in no time!

On Saturday, November 10, Mercy families delivered the coat racks, bags of coats and accessories to the Langley Park Community Center and took part in a preliminary set up of the donations. The next morning, a new team of volunteers arrived from Mercy and St. Elizabeth to arrange the final donations, which included new coats donated by St. Elizabeth's Knights of Columbus. After the final sorting took place, all the volunteers attended the 10:30 Mass with the Langley Park Catholic Community.

Following the liturgy, families arrived at the Community Center to look for coats, hats, scarves, and gloves for themselves and the children. The items not chosen at that day would find new homes when Mayra Mejia, the Langley Park Coordinator, would give them out at the religious education classes the following week.

Julie Baker, a Mercy School eighth grade Confirmation student, was one of the participants in the Sunday distribution. Julie felt that this service opportunity helped her to realize how people living so close to her were struggling and how important it was to help people. She went on to say, "I know how lucky I am, because I don't have to worry about getting a jacket; it's guaranteed. But for other people, they say, 'I hope I can get a jacket so I can stay warm.' When I first signed up for the project, I knew I was doing it for the service hours—but while I was doing it, I realized how much I liked helping others."

OPT

REFLECTION

Con't from page 27

Conference met a Muslim man whose family has suffered from violence through several generations. His grandmother fled the Armenian Genocide just over a century ago, where 1.5 million Armenians died. She went to Syria and began a new life. Now her grandson, the man we met, fled Syria with his wife and children in the recent civil war which destroyed everything they had built.

We would likely not find it possible to have such discussions if we lived in some other areas of the world, especially the Middle East. But we live in a land of freedom, a land populated by our immigrant forebears seeking peace and prosperity. What a blessing it is to live here and to have the freedom to have such discussions.

OPT

Anthony Bosnick is Director of Social Ministry and Adult Faith Formation at St. Francis.

CONVERSATIONS

Con't from page 1

the two or three root causes of the church's sexual abuse crisis; and what are the two or three comments participants would want church leadership at any level to hear and to address.

In their responses to a question asked on what they would like church leaders to know in the wake of the crisis, several people named "transparency," "honesty," and a "bigger role for women and lay members of churches." Participants offering their thoughts on what the evening's discussion meant to them expressed gratitude at having a venue where they could speak honestly, frustration that action should be taken before more Catholics leave the church; and relief that, among those who attended, people have not lost their faith in God and the good works of the church.

Moser explained that all the comments – recorded without attribution – would be shared with Cardinal Donald Wuerl, whose resignation was accepted from Pope Francis in October. With the help of parish staff, Fr. John Dillon compiled all the comments gathered from the staff and parish listening sessions and sent them to the archdiocese in early November.

Fr. John said he was pleased with how the listening sessions went in his parish community, relaying a story about a parishioner who approached him after the discussion ended. "She was feeling angry, sad and frustrated after reading the news about Archbishop McCarrick and then the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report. She was looking for a forum to express these feelings," he said. "She was one of many people who told me that they were grateful to have participated in the conversations. That is why I am happy that we had them here at St. Francis."



Father Stephen celebrates Mass on the beach during Mercy's sixth-grade outdoor ed.



Mercy's staff brings back the 70's at the Halloween parade!

BOX OF JOY

Con't from page 19

goal, which was surpassed, and then donations still poured in. Classrooms often had to send students to the event coordinators,

Miss Jennifer Massey and Ms. Victoria Posner, to get more boxes to fill. In one instance, a sixth-grade classroom had to send four students to get more boxes in one day.

With so many boxes filled, the school raised funds with a Christmas themed dress-down day

to be matched by the Knights of Columbus in order to send a shipping crate full of boxes of joy down to South America. Despite it being an October donation drive, there was no shortage of Christmas spirit and goodwill towards man.

OPT

DINNER

Con't from page 25

during the 5pm Mass in the Shrine Church. Many made a day of it, beginning their holiday shopping at the Crafts table laden with handmade goods, the Christmas shop with its unique gifts and decorations, and the Bake table featuring cakes from many parishioners, including some from Fr. Kevin's Kitchen.

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Joy McCartin displays her wares at the craft table.



**It pays to advertise in
Our Parish Times**



SJN families, large and small, came to the parish Neumann House party ready to capture their share of the candy and other goodies...rain or shine!

Halloween Trunk Treats

Inventive SJN parents and grandparents created or assembled costumes and a safe environment for celebrating this year's Halloween with costumes for all from the decorated trunks and tailgates of family cars.



Children enjoyed games and skits, while filling their bags and jack-o'-lanterns with the sweets of the holiday.

Resurrection



25 Years

A special reception was thrown on October 21 in honor of music director Annick Kanter-St. Hubert's 25 years. Photos by Kathleen Plunkett and Shelley Porter



TEAM SJN

Priests, seminarians and parishioners from SJN joined nearly 60 other cyclists from around the Archdiocese last Labor Day for a distance ride, ranging from 17 to 100 miles to raise funds for seminarians. Our Pastor, Fr. Kevin Regan (shown here fourth from the right), certainly finished near (if not at...) the top of "Riders for Vocations." He raised \$10,000 with his "haircut" promotion/contest tied to the fundraiser!



It's hard to imagine that when SJN parish celebrated its first Oktoberfest that it would grow into such a crowd-pleaser. There's authentic Bavarian food and beverages, live music, and even traditional Bavarian costuming with plenty of smiles and laughter. Let's party!

At right, flanked by two of the heartiest Bavarian dinner guests, Tom Firestone (L.) and Mike Gladu (R.) Father Kevin Regan (Center) dressed for his first SJN Oktoberfest in a spiffy gray pair of leather lederhosen. The two versions of the traditional checkered, blue shirts are sometimes also seen in red, maroon or green. Of course, Father Kevin has a whole new approach with his very stylish "Cleric Black". We think it'll catch on!



In our continuing celebration of SJN's 40th Anniversary Jubilee Year, fifty-six parish pilgrims motored up to Philadelphia to visit the national shrine of our parish patron, Saint John Neumann. Father Bill Wadsworth said a special Mass at the Shrine for parish pilgrims, with worship aides provided by SJN Director of Music & Liturgy MaryLu Hartsell. Cheryl Harskowitch planned and coordinated the trip.

St. John Neumann Parish
9000 Warfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20882
Fr. Kevin Regan, Pastor
Rus Wester, OPT Editor

St. Michael

DIVERSITY

Con't from page 24

and their lives in America.

The program reflected the parish's ongoing and fervent commitment to the Seven Principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Later that evening, parishioners continued the observance with a multicultural mass celebrated by Pastor Rev. Monsignor Eddie Tolentino and Parochial Vicar Rev. Father Luis Marroquin and backed by the

music ministry comprised of various St. Michael choirs singing joyfully during the mass. Following the mass, attendees enjoyed a multicultural pot luck dinner and entertainment provided by the parishioners. *Michaelmas* was a huge success due to the enthusiasm and generosity of the parishioners. It was a true example of the diversity, inclusion, volunteerism, participation and leadership that St. Michael Church is privileged to have in its congregation.

OPT

ROME

Con't from page 24

"Viva Monseñor Romero." My tears were impossible to stop. This witness of God as Christ defended the Salvadoran people alone, only those who suffered were on his side, but without being able to defend him. The joy that the church proclaims him Saint nearly 40 years after his martyrdom recalls the path of purification, just as the people of Israel reaching the prom-

ised land or Christ himself in the desert. There were 70,000 Catholics witnessing such a holy event and 7,000 Salvadorans with our Bishop who never died, but who became the voice of the Salvadoran people.

These three Saints teach me to continue working in the renewal of our Holy Church, to love it, to defend it; but above all to continue announcing the good news and to denounce the injustices of every human being; regardless of race and creed.

OPT



St. Michael the Archangel's Clergy, Parish Council, Finance Council, and staff went on retreat in November to pray about how our parish can better embody the seven theme of Catholic Social Teaching.

PROGRAMS

Con't from page 24

marriage in 2018 and will continue offering Marriage Prep classes throughout 2019.

In January, the Ministry plans to host a Marriage Enrichment Series featuring Rebecca Mullan, MS, LCPC. This series of talks will occur on the following Wednesday

evenings from 7PM to 9PM: 1/16, 1/23, 1/30, and 2/6. Topics covered will include: Managing Differences, Communication, Sexuality & Intimacy, and Thriving vs. Surviving.

This series will be offered free of charge, and all are welcome and encouraged to attend. For more information, please email the Marriage Ministry on smacc.marriage@gmail.com.

OPT

Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage

In September 2018, Our Lady Queen of Poland parishioners Izabella and Aleksander Macander went on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. This is what Izabella Macander shared about their experience.

I had known about the El Camino or, in Spanish, "the Way" to Santiago de Compostela for a long time. Santiago Compostela is the historical burial site of Our Lord's apostle James, about whom I had read and studied. I also was inspired by my favorite author Paulo Coelho, who wrote *The Alchemist* and *The Pilgrimage*. These two books talk about one's life journey and its spiritual and physical ups and downs, which eventually coalesce and lead us to personal fulfillment and grati-



Izabella & Aleksander Macander at the steps to the entrance of the Santiago de Compostela Cathedral



The Macanders near a typical rest stop on the trek alongside a statue of a pilgrim from the earlier years.


tude to the Almighty for what we have.

I had always wanted to go on this particular pilgrimage, not necessarily in the company of others but, rather, as one that is more personal and evocative of my relationship with my Creator, given that Santiago, or Saint James, was so close to our Lord. I have many things to be grateful for and I felt that going on this personal trek would help

me in thanking Our Lord for all the blessings He has bestowed on us and our family. Thus, this was to be both a spiritually and physically uplifting journey for both my husband and myself.

We feel a sense of accomplishment that both of us were able to complete this short but strenuous journey. We walked approximately one fifth of the total El Camino distance, which is about 500 miles. For us, it came to 88 miles in 6 days. It was very serene and peaceful, even though at times we were surrounded by other fellow pilgrims walking the same hilly path. Prayers and lots of water sustained us on our

Continued on page 38




QUESTION
a b o r t i o n SM

Abortion rights activists promised us a world of equality and reduced poverty.
A world where every child would be wanted.

Instead, child abuse has escalated,
and rather than shared responsibility for children,
even more of the burden has shifted to women.

Question abortion. No law can make the wrong choice right.

Refuse to Choose® • Women Deserve Better®



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Bake sale hosted by seventh graders, raising more than \$300 to purchase bikes for families in Vietnam

Baking for Bikes

By Brian Blomquist

The seventh-grade students read *Listen, Slowly*, a novel set in Vietnam. One of the things they learned from this novel is how difficult it is for some Vietnamese families to get to market and even school because most do not own cars and rely on bikes for transportation. A bike seems so ordinary for

students in the U.S.; however, for many people in Vietnam, a bike is special. Bikes take moms to market and children to school. Many cannot afford a bike and Thanhha Lai, the author of this novel, started a non-profit organization called Viet Kids with the goal of raising money to buy bikes for families in Vietnam.

In the SJB spirit of giving, the seventh grade hosted a bake sale

to support Viet Kids, Inc. Families from the seventh grade showed tremendous response with a variety of baked goods, and SJB students happily purchased delicious treats to help support Viet Kids. Together with the sale of baked goods and donations, the 7th grade raised \$300.00 – enough to purchase four bikes. Wonderful job SJB, 7th grade families! Thanks to all who supported this bake sale!

OPT

Fall Excursions – Field Trips at SJB

The eighth grade went to the Newseum in Washington D.C., thanks to a grant from WTOP, who paid for their admission. The students explored front pages of newspapers from the

Colonial Period through the present and were impressed by the ways the newspapers have changed overtime. One exhibit that sparked strong emotions was the September 11 exhibit. There were booths and

other video news stories throughout history, and students remarked that how impressed they were about America's freedom of the press.

The 7th grade took a guided tour through the National Gallery of Art to look at the work of the Spanish artists they studied in class and did a Sway presentation on. They did a sketching activity after observing Pablo Picasso's Family of Saltimbanques and Salvador Dali's The Sacrament of the Last Supper. The students also visited the American Art Museum/National Portrait Gallery just a few blocks away for a self-guided tour of the interesting collections and exhibits.

The fifth grade enjoyed a feet-wet experience on their field trip to the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center. The students explored tidal marshes, meadows, and native woodlands, while discovering the importance of Bay Stewardship.



SJB's seventh-grade class at the Smithsonian.

OPT

Pre-K, Kindergarten and First-Grade's Field Trip to Butler's Orchard

By Merianne R. Spencer

The first grade, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes visited Butler's Orchard at the end of October to pick out their pumpkins and enjoy a day out of their classrooms. Parent chaperones and teachers led children in groups of 5 or 6 to ride hayrides, feed animals, run through the corn maze, and play in the various areas of the orchard, including the pirate ship, house, train,



First grade class having a hayride at Butler's Orchard for class field trip

slides, and spider web playground equipment.

"The weather was perfect! So unexpected for October weather," one parent remarked.

"The kids [enjoyed a lot] of activities. We barely made it back in one piece after running after all the little balls of energy." Lena Maslov, a parent chaperone of a kindergartener stated.

Although many of these

Continued on page 32

SJB's Accelerated Math Class

Did you know Saint John the Baptist (SJB) Catholic School is one of very few schools in the Archdiocese of Washington with a third-level math class in middle school? We started an Accelerated Mathematics Program this year after piloting this new course to select students in the 4th quarter of last year. Based on positive results and feedback, SJB launched the new math class for the 2018-19 school year.

The new, third-level math class was added to the school's regular math curriculum, which includes algebra and pre-algebra. The new, accelerated class was offered to 27 students in 5th-8th grades with demonstrated aptitude for math.

The results have been promising

so far. The new accelerated class is unique in that students work constantly at their challenge point. They are assessed individually and continuously by an artificial intelligence system called ALEKS (McGraw Hill Education).

Based on the question-and-response pattern of each student, ALEKS creates a map of each student's math knowledge and an individual plan of concepts and skills that the student is ready to learn.

By introducing a particular concept or skill when the student is ready to learn that skill or concept, research shows, the student's learning rate increases. The learning rate of students using the ALEKS program is about 90 percent!

OPT

Annual Christmas Program set for Tuesday, December 18

Students have been eagerly learning songs in preparation for the annual Christmas program scheduled for Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at 7:00pm in Saint John the Baptist (SJB) church in Silver Spring, MD. SJB's music teacher, Mr. Darren Shillingford,

who grew up on a small island on the Commonwealth of Dominica, and had lived in Grenada, Trinidad, and Miami, is a new teacher to SJB this year. He brings a desire to expose his students to a basic understanding of musical concepts

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Kindergarteners in costumes for the Halloween parade

Halloween Parade at SJB

By Merianne R. Spencer

Each Halloween, Saint John the Baptist (SJB) hosts a Halloween contest parade around lunch time in their parking lot. Halloween-themed music is played as students from Pre-K to eighth grade don their costumes and walk around the perimeter of the parking lot. Students are judged by eighth graders on various criteria, including creativity and effort, and receive prizes from games and other party activities.

Standing among the judges, parents and other family members watch, cheer and show their support from the center of the perimeter, taking pictures and wearing Halloween themed attire. Some younger siblings and infants were

found eagerly watching their siblings take part in the parade as well.

OPT

**St. John
the Baptist Parish**
12319 New Hampshire Ave.
Silver Spring, MD
**Rev. Y. David Brault,
Pastor**
301-622-1122
**Brian Blomquist,
Principal**
301-622-3076

**More St. John the Baptist
News on Pages 32 & 39**

St. John the Baptist



Seventh-grade class gathering for picture with puppies in school field, Silver Spring.

Pups and Prompts

Writing is an area emphasized within the SJB curriculum. Students learn the process of drafting, editing, revising, and polishing for a final copy. Every now and then a unique writing opportunity presents itself. One of our SJB families, The Gardner family (Jillian - seventh), is currently

fostering three puppies as they wait for a “forever home” for the adorable pups.

One afternoon last week, the puppies came up to school and played with the seventh graders. The students thoroughly enjoyed their time with the pups. In connecting writing to real life, the class used vivid

details to describe the puppies to help locate a permanent home for the pups. Some of what the students wrote may be published on the Pet Finder website in the upcoming weeks. This was a unique writing opportunity that doesn’t come along too often.

OPT



SJB students gather in school gymnasium dressed in clothing representing their heritage and culture

International Night – A Night Celebrating Heritage, Culture and Custom

The diversity at SJB was celebrated in a big way at International Night! The event began with children proudly displaying their heritage, wearing tra-

ditional outfits and waving flags. They paraded through the gym and onto the stage. The night continued with a talent show filled with musical and dance performances,

followed by tastings of food from around the world. This highly attended event was a beautiful way to represent the many diverse cultures from around the world.

OPT



Display at Saint John the Baptist (SJB) school entrance with artwork made by students celebrating the Day of the Dead

The Start of November – All Saints Day

November 1 is the feast of All Saints Day, and November 2 is a time of remembrance for those who have died. At SJB, the school joined together for mass on Thursday, November 1, and third graders dressed up as one of the saints to remember these people from history.

SJB’s upper grade Spanish classes also observed the Day of the Dead during the first week of November. This day, which is celebrated in Mexico and other Speaking countries, combines the Catholic tradition of All Souls Day with indigenous beliefs. Families clean cemeteries and create altars to honor

the deceased family members. Families often gather to pray and remember their loved ones with food, drink and music.

The students in grades five-eight at SJB have been creating artwork to prepare for this holiday, including the traditional “calaveras” (i.e., decorated sugar skulls), beaded necklaces, and papel picado (i.e., cut-out tissue paper decorations). Artwork was displayed around the school foyer with an ofrenda (i.e., altar). Upper grades of SJB also celebrated a fiesta that included Mexican food and drink, as well as other delicacies from the many countries represented by SJB families.

OPT

FIELD TRIP

Con’t from page 31

students were new to SJB, friendships were already evident across both classes. Children were seen

running, playing, racing, hugging, and eating together at the picnic tables during the field trip. It was a perfect day for the children, parent chaperones, teachers – even the weather was perfect.

OPT

PROGRAM

Con’t from page 31

and hopes they will grow to appreciate the music that surrounds his students each day. “Music is a great form of self-expression,” says Mr. Shillingford.

Under Mr. Shillingford’s direction, each grade will be singing a song tied to the narrative of the Nativity story. The kindergarten class will feature the traditional “Lamb of the Flock of

David” song and other classes will sing Christmas classics including “Mary, did you know?” and “Ring Christmas Bells” set to the tune of “Carol of the Bells”. All classes will be united in singing “Light a Candle” (Andy Beck) and conclude the program with “Sing Alleluia” (Janet Vogt).

The SJB annual Christmas program is often looked on as a tradition and gift to the parents, families and others of the SJB parish community.

OPT

OPT Catholic Schools Week Edition January 23



SFIS students gather in St. Camillus Church dressed in costumes to help teach about holiness on All Saints Day.



Eighth-grade Confirmation candidates at SFIS serve the community at the annual Thanksgiving feast.



A traditional Mexican Day of the Dead altar was set up for All Souls Day.



The SFIS Student Council collected canned and boxed food for the St. Mark Food Pantry during November.



The SFIS choir performs the Prayer of St. Francis at the Interfaith Thanksgiving Prayer Service in Potomac.

So much to be thankful for at Saint Francis International

November was a very meaningful month at Saint Francis International School this year. The month really began in October with special lessons and projects geared toward exposing students to the lives of the saints and encouraging them to be like the saints. This effort reached its climax with a costume parade on October 31st where students in Pre-K through 4th grade dressed as “heroes and holy people.” On November 1st, All Saints Day, many of the students returned to school wearing their saint costumes and got to come to the sanctuary during the holy day mass to help teach about holiness during the homily. These are annual traditions at SFIS that have been growing over the last three years.

This year, a new tradition was added to November. For All Souls Day this year, students were invited to bring photos of loved ones who have died. The students included the family and friends pictured in the photos in a prayer service in the church and then placed the photos on a *Día de los Muertos* altar in the multi-purpose room for the rest of the day. This year’s All Souls feast occurred just a week after the murder of Jewish worshipers at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. In recognition of that horrible act of violence, the SFIS No Place for Hate Committee decided to remember the synagogue shooting victims as part of the All Souls Day prayer service along with the two African-Americans who were also murdered the week before in Kentucky because of their race.

Br. Chris Posch, the pastor of St. Camillus Church, invited Rabbi Adam Raskin of Congregation Har Shalom in Potomac to pray with the

students on All Souls Day. Rabbi Raskin was very moved by the experience at SFIS and in turn he invited the school choir to sing the Peace Prayer of St. Francis at an interfaith Thanksgiving prayer service in Potomac. The SFIS students joined leaders from many faith communities including the Episcopal Bishop of Washington in praying in thanks to God for the gift of neighbors.

The trip to the interfaith prayer service in Potomac came after a long day that included a Thanksgiving prayer service at the school during which over 950 items for the St. Mark Food Pantry were blessed. After the prayer service students escorted grandparents and elders to the newly remodeled Camillia Room for a Thanksgiving feast. Every year, in a tradition carried over from St. Camillus School, the entire school family shares a full Thanksgiving meal together. The community coming together just before the start of the Thanksgiving Break is always an overwhelming experience of love and support, which is the heart of the mission of Saint Francis International School!

OPT

St. Francis International School

www.saintfrancisinternational.org

Tobias A. Harkleroad,
Principal

St. Camillus Campus
1500 Camillus Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20903

St. Mark Campus
7501 Adelphi Road
Hyattsville, MD 20783

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The Glenstone Museum Integrates Art, Architecture and Landscape

The Glenstone Museum, a world-class art museum located in Potomac, revealed the results of a five-year expansion on October 4. Glenstone Museum, located at 12100 Glen Road, encompasses two buildings, several outdoor sculptures and more than 230 acres of landscape.

Established by Emily Wei Rales and Mitchell P. Rales, Glenstone opened in 2006 and now includes a new 204,000-square-foot museum building called the Pavilions, designed by Thomas Phifer of Thomas Phifer and Partners. It also includes an additional 130 acres of rolling meadows, woodlands, and streams, designed by Adam Greenspan and Peter Walker of PWP Landscape Architecture; an Arrival Hall and bookstore; and two cafés.

The original 30,000-square-foot museum building, called the Gallery, was designed by Charles Gwathmey of Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects and opened

in a 100-acre setting. With the addition of its new facilities, Glenstone now offers a total of 59,000 square feet of indoor exhibition space in two buildings, with all works drawn from its own renowned collection of modern and contemporary art, and 230 acres of serene, unspoiled landscape incorporating installations of major works of outdoor sculpture.

To fully experience Glenstone, visitors should be prepared to spend considerable time on foot, and comfortable walking shoes are recommended. The first of the Museum buildings is a seven-minute walk from the Arrival Hall.

Admission to Glenstone is always free. Glenstone Museum is open Thursday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with visits scheduled on the half hour until 3 p.m. February tickets will be released on Dec. 1 at 12:01 a.m. More information is available at www.glenstone.org/

OPT

Montgomery County and Prince George's County File Federal Lawsuit against Banks

Maryland Minority Communities Devastated by Defaults, Home Vacancies and Foreclosures Caused by Defendants' Practices

Montgomery and Prince George's counties have jointly filed two federal lawsuits against Bank of America, N.A. and Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., seeking damages and injunctive relief for violations of the federal Fair Housing Act those banks and their acquired entities committed, including Countrywide Financial Corporation, Merrill Lynch & Co and Wachovia Corporation. The lawsuits were filed on Nov. 20 in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland.

The complaints allege that beginning in the early to mid-2000s, these mortgage lending institutions targeted African American and Latino borrowers for, or steered them into, higher cost, non-prime mortgage loans. The complaints further allege that at the time, defendants knew that many of the loans were likely to fail or were not in the borrowers' best interests. They either originated such loans directly or assisted other brokers and affiliates – including Accredited Home Lenders, AmeriQuest Mortgage Company, First Franklin Financial Corp., New Century Mortgage Corp., Option One Mortgage Corp., and Ownit Mortgage Solutions – to originate them.

At issue are tens of thousands of potentially predatory and discriminatory mortgage loans made to minority borrowers in the two Counties since 2000 for which the defendants are responsible. In total, Bank of America,

Bank of America

WELLS
FARGO

Countrywide and Merrill Lynch are responsible for at least 97,500 potentially predatory and discriminatory mortgage loans originated in Montgomery County and Prince George's County; and the Wells Fargo defendants are responsible for more than 56,000 loans.

"The discriminatory equity stripping housing practices engaged in by the banks and their affiliates greatly damaged our communities," said Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett. "Bank of America's wrongful mortgage practices continue to this day. We cannot allow this to continue to harm the finances of the County and shift the costs that the defendants are responsible for onto our taxpayers."

Many of these loans continue to exist.

The complaints allege these loans were intended to, and did, generate higher profits and mortgage servicing income for the defendant banks through higher loan interest rates, increased mortgage servicing charges over the life of the loan, loan pre-payment penalties, expensive added fees and increased default interest rates and fees charged to late-paying or defaulting borrowers.

Wells Fargo and Bank of America's continued servicing of

such mortgage loans, failure to modify them, and default servicing and foreclosure practices, perpetuate this scheme.

Additionally, during the last few years the banks have foreclosed on minority borrower homes in a discriminatory manner as reflected in the numbers and concentration of foreclosures in minority neighborhoods compared to non-minority neighborhoods.

The lending agencies' discriminatory housing practices have resulted in increased numbers of home vacancies and foreclosures that have harmed both Counties through increased out-of-pocket costs for County services incurred for processing foreclosures, and the costs relating to the identification, maintenance, repair, monitoring and demolition of foreclosed, abandoned and/or vacant properties. In addition, the Counties have been damaged from the erosion of the tax base, the loss of property tax and other revenue and from the resources they have had to shift to address urban blight and the racially segregative effect on their respective communities and neighborhoods.

OPT

Call to Middle and High School Filmmakers

"B The One" Video Public Service Announcement Contest

All middle and high school filmmakers from Montgomery County have the opportunity to create a public service announcement (PSA) to raise awareness about suicide prevention. Winning PSA's will be shown in local movie theaters.

Using information from the website, students are asked to make a 30-second video highlighting one to two key points about suicide prevention.

DEADLINE for video submission is January 16, 2019.

"B The One" Video PSA Contest

As a part of the "B The One" campaign, Montgomery County middle school & high school students are invited to submit a 30-second PSA highlighting suicide prevention. **WINNERS will have their PSA's aired in local movie theaters!!!!**

Choose 1-2 of the following themes to address in your PSA and, using information from BtheOne.org, create a 30-second video appropriate for general audiences.

- Why suicide is a public health concern
- Warning signs of suicidal thoughts or mental health problems

- How to ask someone if you are worried about their mental health
- How to keep them safe
- How to be there
- How to help them connect (where can Mo Co teens go for help for themselves or others)
- How to follow up
- How parents can talk to and help their kids
- How to be an ambassador for BTheOne

Videos must be produced by middle or high school students in Montgomery County MD.

Videos must be submitted as 1920x1080p .MOV files, with a frame rate of 23.98

A panel of viewers will choose 4 videos to air in local movie theaters and may possibly be aired on YouTube or the BTheOne website in the future!

Winning videos will embody the spirit of the BTheOne website: educational, energetic, and empowering!

For questions or help with making your PSA, please contact emma@gandhibrigade.org

OPT





Joan Lacey

Joan Lacey, 90, Former St. Jude Teacher and Long-Time Active Parishioner Dies

Joan Lacey, the first lay teacher at St. Jude Catholic School (teaching full time from 1957-1986 and substituting until 2008) and charter member of the Shrine of St. Jude parish, passed away on Sunday, Nov. 18, following a short illness. Best known for her musical talent, Joan sang in the church choirs and for many weddings and funerals. Along with her husband Maurice "Buzz," Joan composed the St. Jude school song (see sidebar). She was also known for teaching students the song "A, You're Adorable," which many can still sing today.

Over the years, Joan served as Prefect and Vice Prefect of the Sodality, produced several fundraisers, co-chaired the first parish building fund campaign, served on endless parish committees, and was named St. Jude Sodality Woman of the Year in 1994 and in 1998.

Catholic education was important to Joan. In 2006 as the parish and school celebrated its 50th anniversary, Joan was featured in the local Gazette (June 7, 2006), saying "A Catholic education is something to be supported. It can carry a child throughout life if he has strong moral values. I would never have given my life to it for that amount of money if I didn't believe in that cause. And every day I loved it. It was my own little family."

Joan's husband Maurice

St. Jude Catholic School Song

Written by Joan and Maurice "Buzz" Lacey

With our hearts so loyal,
Ever true, to St. Jude School.
We will try our best in every way,
Obey each rule.
And as the years go by,
Many things we'll learn.
But forming Christ-like souls,
Is our main concern.
Through the years we'll study, work, and play.
And soon we'll find,
That the years spent here were fruitful ones,
With God in mind.
We'll kneel and say a prayer,
Asking him to bless,
Each and every day at Dear St. Jude's,
With happiness!

"Buzz," whom she married in 1951, passed away 10 years ago. She is survived by her two children, Maura Meehan and Brian, seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

The family requests donations be made in Joan's name to St. Jude Regional Catholic School, 4820 Walbridge Street, Rockville, MD 20853.

OPT

In Brief



To pray for the Church and for all the faithful departed, Father Gabriel Fermin, parochial vicar at the Shrine of St. Jude, led some of the Shrine's Hispanic parishioners on a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Seton at Emmitsburg, Md., and Parklawn Memorial Cemetery, located just across Viers Mill Road from the Shrine of St. Jude. According to Pedro Esteban, director of Hispanic Ministry at St. Jude, these are traditions preserved within the Hispanic community and at the same time a way to approach God through prayer as well as providing unity among parishioners.



The faculty and staff of St. Jude Regional Catholic School gathered at Our Lady of Good Counsel High School on Monday, Oct. 29, for a multi-school Collaboration Day. Keynote speaker Katie Prejean McGrady spoke about her Catholic faith, youth ministry, parenting, and education in an uplifting and humorous kick-off to the day. Teachers then met within grade levels and content area to share ideas and learn new technology.



St. Jude Regional Catholic School sixth-grade students learned important team-building skills on their overnight field trip to Bar-T Mountainside in Frederick, Md., Oct. 4-5. They compared efficiencies of different styles of wind turbines, found and tracked numbers of macro invertebrates to determine creek health, and munched on radish leaves and grilled pumpkin seeds while learning the importance of crop rotation. Faculty members Becky Sella, Kiersten Paul, and Carol Hampe supervised the outing, along with the assistance of parent chaperones Caleb Garcia, Anna Breece, Jerry Watson, Jose Flores, Betelehem Tulu, Felicia Williams, Morty Bragg, and Gezahegn Negatu. Pictured left-to-right are students Santiago Flores and Jackson Santoro.



The Shrine of St. Jude parish bid farewell to Joanna Mason as she enters into a commitment of holy life with our Lord. Joanna has served St. Jude parish in a number of ways, including most recently in the parish office, as a cantor, and as a seventh-grade Faith Formation teacher. The parish wishes her well as she starts her journey with the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth. Photo by Tom Roach.



Recently the Parish Council of the Shrine of St. Jude met for a retreat with the purpose of taking a temperature of how the parish is faring. Many things were discussed, and ongoing planning meetings will soon happen to coordinate a vision of the parish for the coming years. Pictured above in attendance are St. Jude Pastor Fr. Paul Lee, Jason Cochran, Sheila York, Jeffrey Prather, Enid Diaz, and Edwin Lopez, chairman.

Shrine of St. Jude Parish

12701 Veirs Mill Road
Rockville, MD

Rev. Paul Lee, STD, Pastor
301-946-8200

St. Jude Regional Catholic School
Mr. Glenn Benjamin, Principal
301-946-7888

Maureen Martin, OPT Editor
MaureenCMartin@verizon.net

Shrine of St. Jude



More than 100 young people in grades two-six participated in the First Communion Rite of Enrollment during the 10:30 and 12:30 Masses on Nov. 11 at the Shrine of St. Jude. Parents signed covenants, promising to both teach the faith to their children and bring them to Mass. Then each child received a St. Joseph Illustrated Bible. Additionally, 70 Confirmation students from St. Jude Faith Formation and 40 students from St. Andrew the Apostle Parish participated in the annual Confirmation Retreat on Tuesday, Nov. 6, in the Thaddeus Room. The retreat was conducted by 10 young adults from the National Evangelization Team in Minnesota, who were in the Archdiocese conducting three weeks of retreats. As part of the retreat, Father Gabriel Fermin celebrated Mass with the students. Please keep these young people in your prayers as they prepare to receive these sacraments. Photo by Tom Roach

Catholic Leaders Express Deep Concern About Restricting Access to Asylum

Bishop Joe S. Vásquez, of Austin, Texas, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Migration, Sister Donna Markham, OP, Phd, President and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, Jeanne Atkinson, Executive Director of Catholic Legal Immigration Network, and Sean Callahan, President and CEO of Catholic Relief Services issued a statement in November reiterating that it is not a crime to seek asylum and urging the Administration to seek other solutions that will strengthen the integrity of the existing immigration system.

On November 9, 2018, President Trump issued a proclamation barring people arriving at the U.S./Mexico border from receiving U.S. asylum unless they request it at a U.S. port of entry, a direct contradiction of existing U.S. asylum law.

The full statement follows:

“While our teaching acknowledges the right of each nation to regulate its borders, we find this action deeply concerning. It will restrict and slow access to protection for hundreds of children and families fleeing violence in Central America, potentially leaving them in unsafe conditions in Mexico or in indefinite detention situations at the U.S./Mexico border. We reiterate that it is not a crime to seek asylum and this right to seek refuge is codified in our laws and in our values. We urge the Administration to seek other solutions that will strengthen the integrity of the existing immigration system, while assuring access to protection for vulnerable children and families. The Catholic Church will continue to serve, accompany and assist all those who flee persecution, regardless of where they seek such protection and where they are from.”

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Bill Hamm's Car Care Center

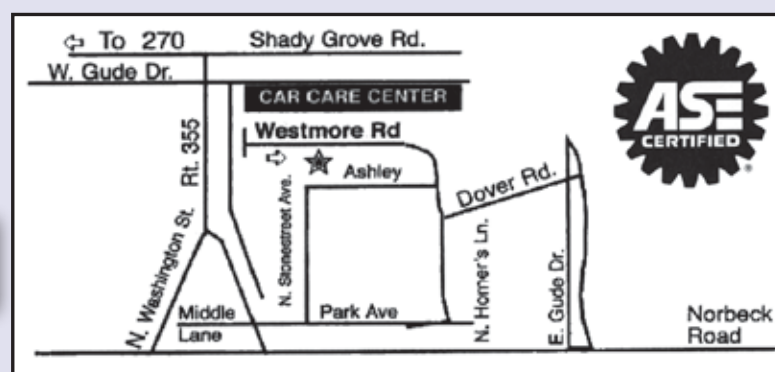


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On Nov. 11, the St. Maximilian Kolbe Knights of Columbus at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish, directed by OLQP organizer Janusz Bilinski, sang a beautiful rendition of an ancient Polish hymn. Titled Bogurodzica, or "Mother of God," the song dates to the time when Poland became a Christian country with the Baptism of Mieszko, the first ruler of Poland, in 966 A.D. The hymn begins with an appeal to Mary to intercede to her Son on our behalf.

Participants during the Nov 11 Polish Independence Day Mass and celebration at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish in Silver Spring, MD, included HE Piotr Wilczek, the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States, Col. Pawel Marzeda, visiting Fr. Andrzej Brzezinski, OFM Conv., Scout Leader Bozenna Buda, GK Tomasz Kolodziej (KofC), and scouts Artyom, Daniel, and Gabrysia.



After the celebration of Holy Mass at OLQP on Nov 11, Pastor Rev. Jerzy Frydrych, Col. Pawel Marzeda, Scout Leader Bozenna Buda, and Scouts and OLQP Polish School students Artyom, Daniel, Tiziano, Kaia, Maria, Emma, Julia, and Olivia, stand for a picture. During the devotions and Mass, the St. Maximilian Kolbe Knights of Columbus provided the honor guard. They were joined by scouts and students from the Polish School.

Students from all grade levels at the OLQP Polish Saturday School held an assembly to celebrate Polish Independence Day in November. Here, even students in the youngest classes, assisted by dedicated teachers, memorized verses and songs to share for this occasion.



Mr. Ted Mirecki, Dr. Edwarda Buda-Okreglak, SK Richard Zbigniew Okreglak. Photo by Dominik Mikolajczyk

OLQP Parishioners honored by PAC

On November 17, 2018, the Polish American Congress (PAC), Washington Metropolitan Area Division, held its annual Thanksgiving Dinner at the Arts Club of Washington, and honored two of Our Lady Queen of Poland (OLQP) parishioners, Dr. Edwarda Buda-Okreglak and SK Richard Zbigniew Okreglak (KoC). They were recognized for their many years of service to the Polish-American Community. Both have served in leadership positions in many organizations in the Washington DC Area.

The event was opened with a prayer by OLQP Pastor Rev. Fr. Jerzy Frydrych, S.Chr., who also gave the closing benediction. Among the distinguished guests was

HE Piotr Wilczek, the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States, who was the keynote speaker. The award was presented by Mr. Ted Mirecki, President of PAC.

In her acceptance speech, Dr. Edwarda Buda-Okreglak recalled that it all began at OLQP many years ago. She was called upon to serve on the Parish Council and ended up as the youngest and the third Chair of the Parish Council of the OLQP Mission, as it was on its way to becoming the OLQP Parish. Both Edwarda and her husband expressed their gratitude for their faith. They credit St. John Paul II and OLQP as their inspiration and remain enthusiastic OLQP parishioners.

OPT



Participants of the second annual pilgrimage from OLQP in front of the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, DC.

OLQP Second Annual Pilgrimage

by Bozenna Buda, ED

The second annual Pilgrimage from Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish took place on October 14 after the noon Mass. It was organized again this year by Mr. Janusz Bilinski with many participants from the OLQP Living Rosary Society. The five stations, corresponding to the five mysteries of the rosary, included several chapels at the Catholic University of America (CUA), the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (Our Lady of Czestochowa chapel), and the Saint John Paul II National Shrine.

The spiritual guide was Fr. Andrzej Brzezinski, OFM Conv., chaplain at CUA. The pilgrimage group included OLQP parishioners of all ages as well as Rev. Dr. Witold Ostafinski of the St. John Paul II University in Krakow, Poland. Sr. Donata Farbaniec led the Divine Mercy Chaplet at the St. JP2 Shrine. Both Sr. Donata and Sr. Gaudia Skass, who are based at the

Shrine, belong to the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Poland. Sr. Faustyna Kowalska, who received the Divine Mercy revelations, was a member of the same Congregation until her death in 1938. St. John Paul II canonized her as St. Faustyna in 2000.

The pilgrimage was a spiritually uplifting experience for the participants. Next year's pilgrimage is already being planned for Sunday, October 13, 2019.

OPT

Our Lady Queen of Poland

9700 Rosensteel Avenue
Silver Spring, MD

Rev. Jerzy Frydrych,
S. Chr. Pastor
301-589-1857

Bozenna Buda, OPT Editor
301-495-3377
bbudadc@gmail.com

PILGRIMAGE

Con't from page 30

journey. Walking on this path were countless other pilgrims from various countries and the interaction with people having a similar motivation was very moving.

You can start at any place you want. The walk is a topographical physical challenge and the time of the year also has to be taken into consideration. We went in September, thinking it was going to be much cooler. However, we hit temperatures from 95-98 Fahrenheit on a daily basis so that made it even more of a challenge. We made it, with God's help. This strengthened our determination to reach the terminal point which is the Cathedral of Santiago, the buri-

al place of the apostle Saint James. There, we participated in the Mass for the pilgrims which was the culmination of our journey.

During our pilgrimage, what impressed us the most were the bucolic surroundings, the peace and tranquility of the area, and the wonderful people that we met along the way. They were from all corners of the world and many had walked the Camino more than once. We met some that needed to clear their lives, others were raising money for charitable causes, and others wanted to reconnect with those around them. There are many reasons for going on the Camino, but you are by far better for it when you reach the city of Santiago de Compostela from your starting point, wherever that may be.

OPT

FESTIVAL

Con't from page 5

the pumpkin patch, painting their chosen pumpkin, and playing all kinds of carnival games in the gym. The wonderful food was provided by Off the Hook Caterers and Go Fish Truck. It was quite an experience to have a food truck at school!

The main event of the festival was the haunted house that Mr.

David Long and his team of students and alumni put together. They transformed the convent into a truly spooky event. They made sure to include everyone in the Halloween spirit by providing three different, age-appropriate experiences. Everyone that went through the haunted house raved about how well the eighth graders were able to make the experience truly horrific!

OPT

KERRIGAN

Con't from page 5

of Lourdes, he paid a visit to the Kindergarten class and read them a story. He then took the time to sign a very large collection of Redskins memorabilia left by the students.

Ryan Kerrigan showed himself

to be a true role model. He strives to be his best in all aspects of his life and he taught the students at Lourdes to never squander the gifts we've been given by God. His patience, humility and kindness will not be forgotten. Mr. Kerrigan has a fan in every Lourdes student and we will be cheering on #91. Hail to the Redskins!!

OPT

THANKSGIVING

Con't from page 1

brightened the residents' day and made them feel loved.

The Little Sisters of the Poor were so grateful when they saw the large donation and were so impressed how tender the students were to the residents as they wheeled the residents into the chapel for the 11:00am Mass.

"It made me feel really good

inside," Harrison Combs, an eighth grader at Lourdes, told us. The students from Lourdes were also very enthusiastic about visiting the Little Sisters of the Poor again. Gracie Cardwell, an eighth-grade student from Lourdes remarked, "I really enjoyed making everyone smile, and I want to go back."

This outreach to The Little Sisters of the Poor and the residents enabled Our Lady of Lourdes 8th grade students to mirror the actions of saints.

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Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love

A Pastoral Letter Against Racism

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) approved during its November General Assembly, the formal statement, "Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love, A Pastoral Letter Against Racism." The full body of bishops approved it by a two-thirds majority vote of 241 to 3 with 1 abstention.

Shelton J. Fabre, of Houma-Thibodaux, Chairman of U.S. Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism, issued the following statement:

"The entire body of bishops felt the need to address the topic of racism, once again, after witnessing the deterioration of the public discourse, and episodes of violence and animosity with racial and xenophobic overtones, that have re-emerged in American society in the last few years. Pastoral letters from the full body of bishops are rare, few and far between. But at key moments in history the bishops have come together for important pronouncements, paying attention to a particular issue and

with the intention of offering a Christian response, full of hope, to the problems of our time. This is such a time."

"Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love," is a Pastoral Letter from the full body of bishops to the lay faithful and all people of goodwill addressing the evil of racism.

The pastoral letter asks us to recall that we are all brothers and sisters, all equally made in the image of God. Because we all bear the image of God, racism is above all a moral and theological problem that manifests institutionally and systematically. Only a deep individual conversion of heart, which then multiplies, will compel change and reform in our institutions and society. It is imperative to confront racism's root causes and the injustice it produces. The love of God binds us together. This same love should overflow into our relationships with all people. The conversions needed to overcome racism require a deep encounter with the living God in the person of Christ who can heal all divi-

sion.

"Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love" is the first time in almost 40 years the U.S. Bishops have spoken collectively on race issues in the United States. In 1979, they approved "Brothers and Sisters to Us: A Pastoral Letter on Racism in Our Day." Among the many things it proclaimed was the fact that "Racism is a sin: a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father." The newly approved "Open Wide Our Hearts" continues the message that "Brothers and Sisters to Us" sought to convey.

The full text, as well as many accompanying pastoral resources, will be posted at <http://www.usccb.org/racism>. Resources will include a bulletin insert, homily help, prayer materials, background information on systemic racism, and activities for primary, secondary, and higher education classroom settings.

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Tips to Make You and Your Family Safer this Holiday Season

The holiday season is officially starting. As you begin to take part in the travel, traditions and festivities of the season, please review what you can do to make your 2018 activities as safe as possible.

General Guidelines for Staying Safe this Holiday Season

Tragically, we have seen a recent increase in pedestrian-related injury and fatal crashes. Activities and roads will continue to get busier during the holiday season. It is vital that everyone recognize the importance of following the best safe driving, walking and bicycling practices right now and throughout the new year. All of these general guidelines support the County's Vision Zero initiative which has a goal to reduce severe and fatal collisions on County roads by 35 percent for vehicle occupants (drivers and passengers), pedestrians, and bicyclists by November 2019.

Be Seen: Pedestrians need to remember that just because they can see a car, doesn't mean that the driver can see them. Think about how to be more visible when walking during morning and evening periods of darkness. When you are purchasing a winter coat, consider purchasing a light-colored one, or

select a white scarf and gloves. Look for reflective and/or flashing accessories in bicycle supply shops that can be easily worn with a coat. Carry a small flashlight in purse or coat pocket to use after dark.

Be Alert: Always give full attention when walking or driving. Maryland is a Hands-Free state, no texting or even holding a cell phone while you are driving. Distracted driving continues to be a leading cause of collisions. When walking by a roadway or crossing streets, don't wear ear buds and don't look down at a cell phone. Holiday shoppers are particularly encouraged to be aware of one another in parking lots.

Be Responsible: Don't Drink and Drive and don't host a party for guests under the age of 21 that includes alcohol. During the holidays, County law enforcement agencies work together to deploy a Holiday Alcohol Task Force to reduce the incidents of drunk and drugged driving. Task force members will also be responding to reports of underage drinking parties. Adults and parents are asked to support zero tolerance of underage drinking. This year the task force began on November 14 and will continue through January 5, 2019.

Important Holiday Shopping Safety Tips:

- Don't be distracted, Stay aware of your surroundings.
- Lock your car doors and don't leave anything of value within view.
- If you take trips back to your vehicle to lighten your gift package load, move your car to a different parking space because potential thieves can be watching to see which vehicles contain gifts.
- Don't hide or store gifts in your trunk when you get home from shopping. Theft from vehicle is a prevalent crime.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash.
- Keep a list of credit cards at home, in case they are stolen.
- Carry your closed purse in front of and close to your body.
- Carry a wallet in a front jacket or pants pocket.
- Don't let your guard down because you are in a rush.

If someone does try to rob you, don't resist. Give up your property; do not endanger your life. Report the crime to police as soon as possible, and try to describe the attacker as accurately as possible.

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St. John the Baptist



SJB 12 and Under Girls: Katelyn Trebel, Caitlyn Ribas, Alex Brioso, Evelyn Draper, Adobe Obikwelu, Amera Egoro, Bella Calis. Non-SJB students: Annetta Ubedor, Nnedi Nwosu, Abigail Sagastume, Jordin Sagastume, Kimberleigh Hansbury Jessica Mages

Congratulations, Girls 12 and Under Soccer Champs!

The Saint John the Baptist (SJB) girl's 12 and under soccer team were champions this season! Their coaches and assistants include Saie Hazelon, Neive Carr, Sophia Vinson, Kali Grant, and Adaobe

Obikwelu. The team enjoyed a day at Five Guys to celebrate their accomplishments and were recognized in the weekly Principle's Note at school.

OPT

FELLOWSHIP

Con't from page 17

Chuck's car with donations for the pantry. St. Raphael's Parish collects donations for St. Martin's Food Pantry once a month.

Sodalists continue to lead the holy rosary after the 6:30 and 9:00 daily Masses at St. Raphael's. In

addition, some Sodalists pray the telephone rosary Monday through Saturday at 8:00 pm led by women of the Archdiocesan Conference of Catholic Women. The rosary will be prayed through September 4, 2019 for the healing of those hurt by individuals within the Church. To join the telephone rosary call 605-468-8016 and enter access code 357090#. All are welcome to pray for healing within our Church.

Our January event is a bus trip to the Museum of the Bible, and we will have our third annual Sodality Tea in February. For more information, please contact Louise Cox at 240-731-1348.

To join St. Raphael's Sodality, send your dues of \$30 to Aleta Phillips, 304 Winter Walk Drive, Gaithersburg, MD 20878.

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St. John the Evangelist



Congratulations to the coaches and players of our 14U Girls Soccer team for taking 2nd place in the City Title tournament.

St John the Evangelist CYO Soccer Highlights

Soccer brought everyone out to the fields during the fall either as a team member or a loyal fan cheering on our SJE teams from the sidelines. The soccer season provided a great way to get some exercise and fresh air while learning to be a team player and a good sport. This season our 12U Boys and 12U

girls both won their Silver Division championships while the 14U Boys were the Silver Division Runner Up. The 14U Girls made it all the way to the City Title tournament and took second place. Thanks to all the coaches, players, and their families that helped make the 2018 Soccer season a success.

OPT

St. Raphael



A highlight of the Fr. Bill Finch Memorial St. Raphael Golf Classic is having the Finch family participate every year. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia / St. Raphael School

Fr. Bill Finch Honored at the St. Raphael Golf Classic

By Nina Cardillo

The tenth annual St. Raphael Golf Classic was held at Lakewood Country Club in memory of Fr. Bill Finch, who at the time of his passing in 2009 was laying out the framework for a new educational building at St. Raphael's. Construction began a year later, establishing the groundwork for "Fides et Ratio" (Faith and Reason, our school motto) to be learned and lived out through Catholic education in a faith-filled

environment. In his honor, a memorial cookout and awards celebration ended a day of golf and fellowship with proceeds benefiting St. Raphael School.

Among the many participants who make this day so special, the company of Fr. Bill's family continues to touch our hearts year after year. This day of remembrance, as well as the many sponsors, generously contributes to the growth of SRS and continues to make Fr. Bill's dream possible.

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José Andrés, World Central Kitchen

Founder's Award Winner
Rob Scanlon, Esq., Anderson & Quinn LLC



Above, Mistress of Ceremonies, Eileen Whalen, Good Morning America Meteorologist and Feature Reporter



Above, CBN-MC President Pete Hodgson presents the Business Person of the Year award to James V. Reyes.



CBN-MC Board of Directors

Above, (L-R) Back: Chris Kelly, Andrew Ryan, Bill Gessner, John Comunale, Geoff Gonell, Kathy Ogilvie, Meagan Sexton, Ana Morales, Anna Chapa, David Kuzma, Joe Powers. Front: Jay Long, President Elect, Anita Segreti, Pete Hodgson, President

Below, Joe Powers, Head of School at Woods Academy, accepting the Humanitarian Award on behalf of José Andrés



Rob Scanlon receives the Founders Award, named in honor of CBN-NC founder Paul Zurkowski, from Pete Hodgson



CBN-MC spiritual advisor Fr. Mike Conway, President of Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School, with Lance Ford and Jay Long, President Elect

CBN-MC Awards \$56,000 in Need-Based Scholarships in 2017!

The Need-Based Scholarship Program was initiated by CBN-MC in 2007. The Scholarships are awarded to Montgomery County Catholic Elementary School students / families with financial, physical or learning challenges.

This program is funded completely with donations from the Gala. As a result of the generosity of our donors, CBN-MC was able to award a scholarship to every applicant this past year. In fact, CBN-MC has awarded a scholarship to every applicant

in eleven years of this program.

This year, the scholarship committee has been able to award tuition scholarships of \$3,500 each to students at 16 Montgomery County parochial schools.

Photos by Fredde Lieberman, 240-274-2824