



Parish Times

Summer Camp Special
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MARCH 2017

Living the Faith Together

FREE



Fr. Sweeney (seated, middle) is surrounded by his fellow clergy celebrating his 80th birthday at the January 17 meeting of the Upper Montgomery County Deanery of the Archdiocese of Washington. Standing (L–R): Deacon Dave Cahoon (St. Mary's, Barnesville), Deacon Frank Salatto (St. Raphael's, Rockville), Fr. Joseph Pierce (St. Paul's, Damascus), Deacon Mike Davy (St. John Neumann, Gaithersburg), Fr. Vincent Rigdon (Our Lady of the Presentation, Poolesville), Fr. Lee Fangmeyer (Mother Seton, Germantown), Fr. Joseph Rogers (St. John Neumann, Gaithersburg), Fr. David Wells (St. John Neumann, Gaithersburg), Deacon Larry Bell (St. Martin's-Gaithersburg), Deacon Ted Dmuchowski (Our Lady of Visitation, Darnestown), Deacon Ed Close (St. Paul's, Damascus), Fr. Rich Gancayco (St. Martin's, Gaithersburg), Fr. Angel Gabriel Fermin (St. Martin's, Gaithersburg), Deacon Leo Schneider (St. Rose, Gaithersburg). Seated (L–R): Fr. Kevin O'Reilly (St. Mary's, Barnesville), Fr. Peter Sweeney (St. John Neumann, Gaithersburg), Deacon Bill Vita (Mother Seton, Germantown). Photo by Leo Schneider

Father Sweeney of St. John Neumann Turns 80!

By Gloria Fernandez, Sylvia Granados-Maready, Rebecca Tuban

On Saturday January 28, St. John Neumann celebrated its Vigil Mass, which followed the annual Spaghetti Dinner by the Knights of Columbus, however this year there was an added bonus

– Father Sweeney turned 80 years old! SJN parishioners celebrated with immense joy and gratitude for the life and years of services of Father Sweeney. As a Parish, speeches and stories were told and good food was served. The night did not end until the presentation of the Parish gift to Father Sweeney: a traveling

mass kit.

Father Peter Sweeney was born in County Kerry, Ireland. He was one of 10 children. He attended St. Brendan's College and Catholic University of America. On June 4, 1961, he was ordained a priest after completing

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Sanctuary Hearts



Chuck Short

By Chuck Short

I don't know whether we Christians sin more, are more truthful about our sins, or simply have more guilt than our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters,

but our season of atonement is considerably longer than theirs. Jews apparently sin the least, they atone for a year's worth of iniquity in one day, Yom Kippur. Muslims are a bit naughtier requiring thirty days of Ramadan to make things right. We Christians require six weeks of atonement to cleanse ourselves! Regardless, we can all benefit from the holy season of Lent as a time for prayerful discernment, spiritual cleansing, and preparation for the blessings of Easter.

This month we celebrate and thank Fr. James Meyers on his retirement as pastor at St. Raphael's and for his many years as pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes. Fr. Michael Salah moves over from St. Catherine Laboure to St. Raph's and we welcome Fr. Francisco Aguirre to St. Catherine's.

Upcountry Community Resources, a scion of Potomac Community Resources, was established a few years ago with the help of St. Francis Assisi and St. Patrick's parish.

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Rose Ferguson of OLOM Chosen for Oakcrest School Veritas Award

Rose Ferguson of Potomac, Maryland – an eighth-grader at Oakcrest School and a member of Our Lady of Mercy parish – was recently awarded the prestigious Veritas merit scholarship for the Class of 2021.

The award consists of a \$5,000 tuition remission to Oakcrest School renewed annually through graduation. It is granted to two outstanding young women each year who best display high academic achievement, leadership, and strong moral character. Rose was chosen along with Grace McGovern from a highly competitive applicant pool of 33 eighth-grade students from throughout Maryland, Virginia, and DC.



Oakcrest School Veritas Award winner Rose Ferguson of Our Lady of Mercy parish

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A Beautiful Witness

By Colleen Zarzecki

The annual benefit for the nonprofit organizations St. Joseph's House and Isaiah's Promise was held on the crisp and clear evening of January 28, 2017 at the Knights of Columbus, Rosensteel Council in Silver Spring. The capacity crowd came together to celebrate the life's work of Cubby LaHood who passed away in September 2015. Her work continues in St. Joseph's House, which she founded with her husband Dan, and Isaiah's Promise, which she began with her friend, Nancy Mayer-Whittington.

St. Joseph's House provides after-school, summer, and respite care to children and teenagers with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Cubby's son, Joe, and his wife, Natalie, now lead St. Joseph's House with the support of Dan and the other LaHood children, Mary Frances and Johnny. Their mission is not only to care for the children they serve,

but also to support and strengthen their families. Their entire ethos is rooted in their experience of loving the children under their care and is supported by their belief in the dignity of every human being, regardless of their age, condition, or "usefulness." St. Joseph's House helps families find the joy that is theirs as children of God and serves the entire family unit so they can stay intact as they face the future.

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(L-R): Theresa Brogan (St. John the Evangelist), Delaney Dunigan (Holy Redeemer), St. Francis House Associate Director Joe LaHood, and Gina Baldini (St. John the Evangelist)

An Inspiring Model of Getting Involved



Fr. Enzler

By Fr. Enzler

I can tell you from my years as a pastor that it is truly special when the people in a parish are passionate about meeting a need or helping a segment of our population and decide to get involved. And when

the pastor is open to the energy and leadership of others, great things can happen. I've been blessed to see this over and over again, and one reason we all like to read *Our Parish Times* is because it is filled with such stories of faith and good works throughout Montgomery County.

I would like to share one such story with you now. It is the story of Potomac Community Resources, or PCR as it is known. It is a wonderful success story that I believe we can draw on and replicate in parishes throughout the county and the archdiocese.

Almost 25 years ago, when I was pastor at Our Lady of Mercy, a group of people came to see me. They all had individuals in their families with developmental differences, and

Continued on page 27

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UCR Wins Again

The UpCounty Community Resources group took a trip to the Verizon Center on Sunday, February 26, to watch the Wizards play against the Utah Jazz. Over a hundred members of the group took advantage of the special deal to come early, watch the team's practice, and receive a free T-shirt. Even though the Wizards lost, it was still an adventure going to the phone booth with family and friends.

If you would like more information about our group and a schedule of upcoming events, check out our website at www.ucresources.org/ and follow us on Facebook.

OPT



Eli Lewis and Stevie Sabia got a chance to meet up with a couple of the Wizards cheerleaders.

CBN-MC Monthly Breakfast

April Monthly Meeting and Scholarship Awards Breakfast
Join us for the monthly networking breakfast and the annual CBN-MC scholarship awards.

Friday, April 7, 2017
7:30 am EDT

We will meet at the Best Western Plus Rockville Hotel and Suites, located just off of 270 at the Darnstown Road exit.
Registration is \$25 for pre-registered CBN-MC members, \$30 at the door and for non-members.
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Record crowd at Nonpublic Schools Advocacy Day

More than 1,300 students from nonpublic schools in 12 Maryland counties and Baltimore City converged on Annapolis March 2 to advocate for the Broadening Options and

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Physician-Assisted Suicide bill withdrawn in Senate

On March 3 in the Maryland Senate, the Physician-Assisted Suicide bill (SB 354) was withdrawn from consideration by lead sponsor Senator Guy Guzzone and the bill's hearing in the Senate

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Volunteer for Lent: Discover a Culture of Service

By Chris Farrell, Justice and Advocacy
Council of Montgomery County

Lent is a season for many practices. In his *Catholic Standard* column, Father William Byrne named "5 Ways to Discover Lent." Lent is about changing or opening our hearts. Service to others, begun during Lent, can be habit forming and thus a practice started during Lent is made part of our routine.

Need is all around us. So are organizations eager for our help. Parishes throughout Montgomery County present many opportunities. Many invite parishioners to prepare and freeze casseroles for So Others May Eat). Others conduct food drives to help our neighbors struggling with food insecurity in one of the richest counties in America.

Candidates for Confirmation, in most parishes, are required to complete service hours. High school graduation requires a specific number of Student Service Learning hours. But one special organization, visited by Pope Francis during his visit to America, Catholic Charities, offers opportunities almost every day for individuals and groups to part of "Inspiring Hope, Building Futures" through occasional or ongoing volunteerism.

Catholic Charities can be reached by phone (202/772-4300) or email (volunteer@cc-dc.org) but using the website is usually

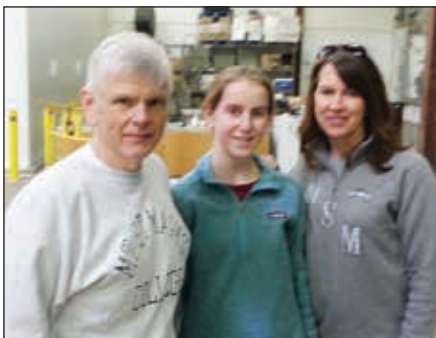


Chris Farrell

best. Catholic Charities home page (www.catholiccharitiesdc.org) lists "Volunteer!" on the right-hand side just underneath the place for "Email Sign up." Select "Volunteer!" to describe what type of volunteer: One-time (Volunteer Today!), Ongoing (six-month commitment) or Group (5+ people)." If you select "One-time" you will see "Get Acquainted with our Work!" and an explanation: "To get involved, just browse through our Volunteer Calendar and choose a date and volunteer opportunity that works for you! Check back often, we'll be posting brand new opportunities

each month."

March and April are filled with opportunities for both individuals and groups. For instance, on Saturday, February 18, volunteers of all ages came to a Landover warehouse to assemble thousands of "Cup of Joe" food kits that are distributed to night shelter patrons in the morning so they will have nutritious food during the day. (see group photo) Student age volunteers earned SSL hours and adult groups including Booz Allen Hamilton and Mount Saint Mary's Alumni Association had fun while doing good. Best of all, whole families can serve together. (see photo of Scott Stroud, his daughter and wife) Msgr. John Enzler, President of



Volunteering as a Family: Saint Jane de Chantal parishioners Scott and Kathy Stroud flank their daughter Colleen.

Catholic Charities, envisions the "parishes and schools throughout the Archdiocese of Washington becoming even more involved in a vast array of charitable works. Catholic Charities seeks to be a partner with the ADW parishes and schools to better serve our brothers and sisters in need." There are a number of programs that allow volunteers of all ages to participate. Opportunities include the Cup of Joe breakfast program, Joseph's Coats of Many Colors Coat Drive, SHARE Food Network, food drives, St. Maria's Meals program, homeless shelter cleanups, and more. The holidays come with additional needs, and we welcome schools at this time and throughout the year.

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Catholic Charity "Cup of Joe" volunteers after assembling 3500 kits on February 18, 2017. Photo by Lydia Pearl

OUR Parish Times

Kathleen &
Lawrence Hamm
PUBLISHERS

Danny Gannon
Michael Roseleigh
DISTRIBUTION

Prepress by Electronic Ink
www.eink.net



Parish Community Services, Inc.
5212 Goddard Road Bethesda, MD 20814
Phone: 301-706-9684
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Sixth graders and their Kindergarten buddies work together to make scarves for "An Afternoon of Service" during Catholic Schools Week. Scarves were used to accessorize the 350 coats donated as part of the "Joseph's Coats of Many Colors" coat drive, led by the fifth-grade class.

The Best Week of The Year!

St. Patrick's School celebrated Catholic Schools Week in style with numerous activities of service, appreciation, and just plain fun. In addition to daily special treats, students were permitted to come out of uniform in a variety of ways throughout the week, including pajama day, favorite book character day, class color day, and mismatch day.

Activities were planned to show appreciation to parents, students, teachers, and clergy. There were several buddy-themed activities including reading with your buddy (milk and cookies too) and the Buddy Service project which benefitted the fifth-grade coat drive. Students made scarves to accompany the coats

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Mrs. Silk, second-grade teacher, is such a trooper! Theo choose the lucky can of silly string! A moment he surely will remember.



A memorable time for seventh-grader Natalie, and her first-grade buddy Kelly enjoying cookies and milk in their PJs and reading their favorite picture books!



Read-a-Thon Selfies decorated the cafeteria walls!

Get the Scoop on Reading

St. Patrick's School participated in a school-wide Read-A-Thon event for three weeks in February. The total minutes read by all students was 217, 157 minutes with 8th grade winning for most minutes read as a class at 42, 827 minutes. This fundraiser collected over \$4000 with the 5th grade class raising the most money at \$1600.00. Both the 8th grade and 5th grade classes enjoyed an ice cream party for their efforts! The funds will be used to support the school library, classroom libraries, class novel sets, and technology resources to support research.

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For the Least of Our Brothers

Throughout the month of January, fifth graders at St. Patrick's School organized a winter coat drive. This service project supported the Archdiocese-wide coat drive, "Joseph's Coats of Many Colors" which strived to bring warm coats to needy men, women and children this winter.

With the support of their teacher, Mrs. Nancy Mixson, the fifth grad-

ers collected more than 350 coats from the student body, 150 coats more than their goal of 200 coats!

During the "Afternoon of Service" event of Catholic Schools Week, the entire school community worked together to make scarves for each donated coat and to write notes of prayer and encouragement to place in the pocket of each coat.



OPT

**More St. Patrick News
on Page 38**

Holy Cross 2017 Middle School Science Fair

On Sunday, January 22, 2017, Holy Cross hosted its 2017 middle school science fair. By participating in the science fair, our students flexed their creative muscles while showing off their creations, and some even walked away with a prize recognizing their efforts. The Holy Cross Science Fair offers onlookers a glimpse into

the future from a crop of young, powerful minds that have only just begun to take shape!

The science fair was a culmination of four very busy months of work during the 1st and 2nd quarters of this school year by 61 middle-school students who presented their projects to parents, judges, and fellow students. Twenty-six parents

and volunteers from the scientific community shared their time and talents to help judge the projects. For the students, preparing for the science fair is like “doing homework on steroids!” but was also very rewarding nonetheless. Quite a few Holy Cross students and their parents are invested in STEM education. For example, seven students

from this year’s 2017 middle school science fair will also compete in the Montgomery County Science Fair on Saturday, March 18. Holy Cross believes that its middle school students benefit from discovering that their ideas have broader meaning, and that they can learn as well as teach others about what they have learned.

Middle school science teacher, Mrs. Shari Connor, expressed her gratitude to the parents and judges for sharing their time, talents, words of encouragement, and their wonderful support to the students through the entire process. Mrs. Connor stated that, “I’m always so incredibly proud of all the hard

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Time for a Cup of Joe

Holy Cross School students prepared 1,000 packaged meals for Cup of Joe, an organization that serves men and women in area Catholic Charities shelters. Holy Cross held a 5K run this past October and used a portion of the proceeds raised to purchase the food and supplies for the Cup of Joe event.

Students in grades two through

eight worked together to assemble the packaged meals.

“Our mission is to educate our students to be good citizens, and to care for all of God’s children,” said Lisa Kane, Principal at Holy Cross School. “Cup of Joe enables our students to make a difference in our local community.”

“I like this activity because we are working together to help others,” said seventh-grade student Katie Zalewski. “We hope the people that receive these meals know that people are praying for them and care about them.”

Completion of a service project during Catholic Schools Week is only one of the many Holy Cross School community traditions where the students collaborate to support a local charity. Mrs. Kane noted, “Holy Cross is a community that lives by the school’s motto, ‘Faith.



Students at Holy Cross School help to package meals for Cup of Joe, an organization that provides help to men and women in shelters run by Catholic Charities. Even our young students participated, with the help of our older Middle School students.

Scholarship. Service.’ We teach our students to be generous with their time, talents, and energy in service the community. It is how we live our faith.”

OPT

Spellbinding!

Holy Cross School hosted its annual Scripps Spelling Bee during Catholic Schools Week on Tuesday, January 31. Eleven students in grade four through grade eight qualified to participate in the school bee. Fourth-grade student Paris Etchu hung in for ten rounds when, in the eleventh round, eighth-grader Erin Rhodes cinched the win.

Erin went on to compete in the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee at Holton-Arms School on Saturday, March 4, along with thirty-seven other students from participating local schools in Montgomery County. Erin was one of twelve students to make it to the sixth round of the bee. It was a spellbinding event, and we are very proud of Erin!

OPT



Pictured here are fourth-grade student Paris Etchu (left) and eighth-grade student Erin Rhodes. Paris was the runner-up in Holy Cross School’s Scripps Schoolwide Spelling Bee. Erin earned the title of School Champion.

Holy Cross Parish

4900 Strathmore Avenue,
Garrett Park, MD

Fr. Robert Buchmeier, Pastor
301-942-1020

Holy Cross School

Lisa Maio Kane, Principal
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Fr. John Dillon (center, in chasuble) and members of St. Francis of Assisi Parish welcome you all to the Parish Lenten Mission on March 24/25.

All are invited!

Dr. Ralph Martin preaching SFA Lenten Mission

By Anthony Bosnick

St. Francis of Assisi Parish has a number of events during Lent 2017 to help parishioners on their spiritual journeys. A special event is our Lenten Mission featuring Dr. Ralph Martin of Renewal Ministries. He will speak on “Living as a Catholic in Challenging Times.”

A unique feature of the mission is that it will be held on just two days, with an evening and a morning session.

Dr. Martin will focus on “The Times We Live In” on Friday evening. His Saturday

talks are “Called to be Witnesses: The Mission of Catholic Lay People” and “Called to Holiness: Me Be a Saint.” The Friday session begins at 7:30 p.m., following Evening Prayer and Stations of the Cross at 6:40. The Saturday talks begin at 9:45 a.m., following Mass at 9:00.

Ralph Martin is president of Renewal Ministries, which is focused on Catholic renewal and evangelization. He hosts “The Choices We Face” on Catholic television and radio, which is heard around the world.

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The best way to grow one's faith is to share it with others

By Terry Davis

Fr. John Dillon asked me to share some of my experiences as a part of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) at St. Francis of Assisi Parish. Reflecting on my almost three-decade journey in that wonderful ministry has made me realize that it has been both humbling and faith-strengthening for me, our RCIA team, and our whole parish. It certainly has validated for me personally the old axiom that the best way to grow one's faith is to share

it with others.

This experience has also taught me that the Lord does call each of us by name to show us his love and give us a part in his plan. My call to be a part of RCIA came in 1989 through our then-pastor Fr. Don Worch. When Fr. Don asked me to be a part of a new RCIA team, I gladly said yes – even though I didn't have the slightest idea of what RCIA was or what I was saying yes to.

Looking back, I can also see the truth and

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Catholics from across Maryland lobby in Annapolis

By Anthony Bosnick

St. Francis of Assisi parishioners from MD Legislative Districts 19 and 39 joined Catholics from across Maryland

at the annual “Catholics in Annapolis” lobbying event on February 15. Those attending focused on the four issues chosen by Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) as of most importance this year.

- Opposition to physician-assisted suicide is one of those issues of great concern. MCC has joined in coalition with other groups opposed to physician-assisted suicide and continues to lobby against the same legislation that died in committee in 2015 and 2016. A seven-hour hearing was held by a joint House committee on February 16 regarding physician-assisted suicide. The bill was withdrawn from the

Continued on page 36



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Pastoral Council President John Nalls addresses the new parishioners at a special welcome coffee and donut social.

St. Jane de Chantal Welcomes New Parishioners

Twice a year members of the Pastoral Council, together with the Parish priests, welcome new parishioners with a social after the Sunday 10 o'clock

mass. During the March event, the President, Mr. John Nalls, and other members of the Pastoral Council presented the many activities taking place in the Parish and invited people to get involved. The Pastor, Fr. Samuel Giese, was also on hand to introduce opportunities for spiritual growth and the groups that offered them. Following the presentations, a short video newly produced by the school was shown. The video highlighted the teachers and their reasons for choosing to be a part of the St. Jane de Chantal School. After the formal program, there was time for coffee and conversation giving everyone the chance to get to know the newest members of the Parish.

OPT

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

More St. Jane de Chantal News on Page 36

DAR Honors St. Jane de Chantal School's Student Winners

By Mary Russell

Four of St. Jane de Chantal School's students, Riley Gozycki (fifth grade), Joanna Pagedas (sixth grade), Nora Pottker (seventh grade), and Jack Rhea (eighth grade), have been honored by the Goshen Mills Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for their winning essays in the annual American History Essay contest. The students, along with their families and English teachers Tina Maxwell and Eileen Theim, attended the Chapter's February meeting and read their essays to the assembled members. Each of the Chapter winners was awarded a certificate, a bronze medal, and a Barnes and Noble gift card.

In a surprise announcement,



L-R: Chapter Regent Cindy LaBon, her guide dog Gardenia, American History Chairman Karma Beal, Nora Pottker, Jack Rhea, Riley Gozycki, Joanna Pagedas, English teachers Tina Maxwell and Eileen Theim.

the Chapter's American History Chairman, Karma Beal, reported that an independent panel of judges has named Riley as the 5th grade

winner and Joanna as the 6th grade winner in the state-wide essay contest. They will be honored at an

Continued on page 36

Happenings In Our Blue Ribbon School

School reports provided by Mrs. Catherine Skibo

Science Fair

All students participated in St. Jane's Annual Science Fair. From 100-Day projects, to habitats of endangered animals, to the discovery of sugar amounts in popular drinks, every class researched different topics for the Science Fair. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders present their individual projects in

front of a panel of judges. The winners of the 2016 St. Jane Science Fair are: First Place: Maggie Gleeson, Second Place: Jonas Long, and Third Place: Lauren Long. Congratulations to all who participated and a special thank you to the judges who volunteered their time to listen to the dozens of science fair presentations.

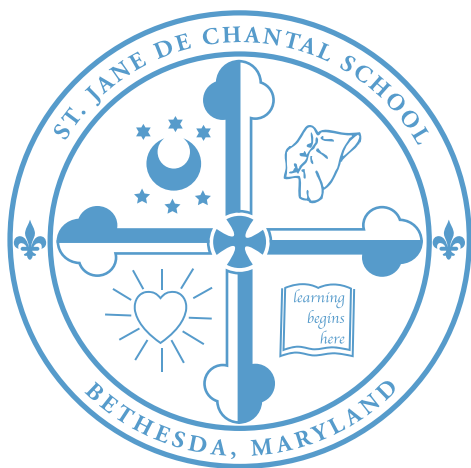
Hoops For Heart

Congratulations to the St. Jane

de Chantal School community for reaching our goal by raising \$22,442.00 for The American Heart Association through Hoops For Heart. The school is grateful to Mrs. Tehan, Katrina Penney, Isa Western, and Riley Clark for supporting this event and the cause.

Talent Show

Music ranged from Broadway to Vivaldi as performers from sec-
Continued on page 36



St. Jane Frances de Chantal School

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SCIENCE FAIR

Con't from page 5

work that is displayed at the Holy Cross science fair. Every year, there is something new I've never seen, and always a different way to attack a familiar problem. I'm always very thankful for the hard work by the students, the support from the parents, and the interest from the wider community."

The results are now in, the research data has been thoroughly analyzed, and what we have found supports our original hypothesis which is that the Holy Cross 2017 Middle School Science Fair was an outstanding success! Following are the 2017 Science Fair winners at Holy Cross:

Sixth Grade

First Place	Croix Harris	Are You Lying?
Second Place	Donhee Cui	Fingerprint Genetics

Third Place	Michael Ryan	Distractions During Testing
Fourth Place	Alyssa Afari	Plants and Caffeine
AND	Maegen Mathews	Fingerprint Genetics

Seventh Grade

First Place	Mykel Bailey	Hydropower
Second Place	Katie Zalewski	Power of Persuasion
Third Place	Diego Lopez	The Sound of Global Warming
Fourth Place	Haley Freeman	Building a Desalinator

Eighth Grade

First Place	Clare Striegel	Colored Inkblots
Second Place	Jennifer Tartaglia	Age and Illusions
Third Place	Tara Anders	Fruit Extracts for Plants
Fourth Place	Annie Paxton	The Age of Sunscreen

SERVICE

Con't from page 3

Our staff is happy to visit to area schools and work with faculty to help provide an interactive learning experience. We recognize students are not only the future but the present. For more information, contact Grace Hegarty (Grace.Hegarty@catholiccharitiesDC.org).

If you have questions, Catholic Charities has answers to questions frequently asked by volunteers:

www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/volunteerFAQs.

Chris Farrell is a parishioner at Saint Andrew Apostle Parish in Silver Spring and a former member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

BILL

Con't from page 2

Judicial Proceedings committee was canceled. It is likely that the bill was withdrawn because the majority of the committee continues to oppose the bill.

This action effectively ends the chance of this issue passing in Maryland for the third straight year, although the Maryland Catholic Conference will be monitoring the House bill (HB 370) until the last day of session to make sure it does not pass.

"It is a relief that this very dangerous bill is not moving forward again this year," said Maryland Catholic Conference Respect For Life lobbyist Jennifer Briemann. "We are very grateful to all of our coalition partners for working tirelessly on behalf of the intellectually and developmentally disabled, the elderly, the sick, and the vulnerable to make sure this legislation was seen for what it is, a fatally flawed bill. This victory would not have been possible without the support of the Knights of Columbus and parishes from around the state, whose grassroots advocacy efforts proved yet again that Marylanders strongly believe our state is not a state where this practice belongs."

Funded by out-of-state, multi-million-dollar entity Compassion & Choices, the legislation sought to allow doctors to prescribe lethal drugs to terminally-ill patients who want to end their lives. The Conference is part of the Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide coalition, a diverse group of healthcare professionals, disability rights advocates, mental health professionals, advocates for Seniors, and members of faith communities in opposition to the legislation.

OPT

FERGUSON

Con't from page 1

The application process helps identify a charismatic leader who has a compassionate soul and a passion to "lead by conviction" wherever she goes. To qualify, Rose had to submit an original essay, video or art project on the topic "We Each Make a Difference." Candidates attended a reception as the last step in the application process where they were interviewed by Oakcrest alumnae.

As a Veritas scholar, Rose will serve as an ambassador of the school. She will speak at open houses, talk to prospective parents and students, lead service projects, and help create an Oakcrest atmosphere among her peers.

"We try to choose young women who are intellectually qualified who are humble leaders, who are servant leaders, and who are going to represent Oakcrest during the next four years," said Michael Barvick, Director of Institutional Advancement at Oakcrest.

In the fall of 2017, Oakcrest will open the doors to its 23-acre permanent campus in Vienna, Virginia. Applications for the Class of 2022 Veritas Awards will be available on May 1, 2017.

OPT



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St. Elizabeth School's Ash Wednesday Mass was beautiful! Thank you, Msgr. Parent!



What an honor it was to have our Archdiocesan Chancellor, Mrs. Kimberly Fiorentino, visit St. Elizabeth School on Dr. Seuss's Birthday! She read to our second-grade classes! Thanks, Mrs. Fiorentino, for making today even more special!



Congratulations to St. Elizabeth School's Team SQUAD who earned 1st place in the Robot Performance and design at the First Lego League Competition at UMBC! Congratulations also to St. Elizabeth School's Team S.T.U.D.S. for their 2nd place finish for Robot Design! This team is now off to Nationals! We are so proud of all our students!



We sure do love our friends at St. Elizabeth School! #SaintsRockville

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

More St. Elizabeth News on Page 34

Who knew summer **camp** could be this much **fun**?



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Eighth graders at St. Bartholomew's use newly acquired Chromebooks to prepare for an upcoming presentation.

Integrating Technology to Enhance and Enthuse

Technology has brought a new level of enthusiasm, support, and innovation into the classrooms at St. Bartholomew's Catholic School! Through ongoing professional development workshops teachers are finding exciting new ways to engage students and to develop innovative thinkers in global classrooms.

Different technology sources including recently purchased Chromebooks are regularly used to enhance presentations for direct instruction, assessment, and extension activities such as producing music and movies. Online articles and stories are tailored to individual reading levels offering a new way of differentiated instruction throughout grade levels. Additionally, the use of the PlusPortal and Google accounts allows students and teachers to more easily collaborate and support each other while strengthening written communication skills.

Increased access to technology does come with challenges. Fostering critical literacy skills is an important part of using the web for research. Additionally, "We are thrilled to host Liz Repking of Cyber Safety Consulting to present a series of presentations for our parents, children, and teachers on the dangers of the Internet as well as tangible solutions for building healthy technology habits."

St. Bartholomew Catholic School is currently accepting applications for the 2017-2018 school year. The next scheduled Open House is Thursday, April 27 from 9:30am-11am. Schedule your visit to experience technology in action!

OPT

St. Bartholomew Parish

6900 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20816

Rev. Mark Knestout
Pastor

301-229-7933

St. Bartholomew School
Stephen Lamont, Principal

301-229-5586

Frank Maguire, OPT Editor
202-512-8226

More St. Bartholomew News on Page 16

St. Bart's Bingo Blast – SOLD OUT!

By Cecilia Castiello

St. Bartholomew's annual BINGO Night on Friday, February 24 was a huge success! The event, put on by the 6th grade room parents, raises funds for the 6th grade outdoor education trip which takes place in the spring. Every 6th grader and their family helps in some way with set-up, clean-up and candy sales to make the event fun for all.

This year the event sold out with over 180 participants in the church hall. Everyone enjoyed pizza, drinks, a raffle and of course BINGO! The caller was a 6th grade dad, Tommy Castiello, who rounded out the evening with



Bingo Players Get Rowdy at St. Bart's Fundraiser! Photo by Dana Jackson

a free dress for the day live auction donated by the principal,

Steven Lamont. It was a great night!

OPT

Seminarian Jeffrey Chichester Happy to Join St. Bart's Staff

By Frank Maguire and Jeff Chichester.

Seminarian Jeffrey "Jeff" Chichester has joined the St. Bartholomew Parish staff. Jeff, whose home town is Leicester, New York, is preparing for the priesthood at Theological College Seminary in Washington. He is currently in Third Theology and has been in formation for the priesthood for six years. On May 27, he will be ordained to the transitional Diaconate and he will be ordained to the priesthood in the spring of 2018.

Jeff attended both Catholic and public schools growing up. He earned a BA in biology at SUNY Geneseo and then focused on terrestrial ecology in graduate school. He worked as a naturalist for the



Seminarian Jeff Chichester assists at St. Bartholomew Parish.

Audubon Society before entering seminary. Jeff explained that as he began to take his childhood faith more seriously he came to a deep appreciation of its beauty and depth. As his prayer life and relationship with God grew, he realized that although his career as a naturalist was fulfilling, he never included God in the decision-making process for his life's path. In light of this, and after much prayer and discernment, he ultimately concluded that a life of service in the Church was his vocation.

Jeff's current duties at St. Bart's are assisting with the eighth-grade CCD class and preparing his students for confirmation. He also assists with the liturgy. Jeff told OPT, "It's really a blessing to be at St. Bart's."

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The St. Bart's Youth Group climbs for the stars!

St. Bart's Youth Group Stays Busy as Weather Turns Cold!

The St. Bart's Youth Group has had a busy winter, including skating, movie night, game night, dodgeball, rock climbing, and service. The St. Bart's Middle School Youth Group are sixth, seventh, and eighth graders interested in serving their neighbor, playing together, and getting to know Our Lord Jesus Christ. All are welcome! If you would like to learn more, please email John & Maria Archer at 32kaufmann@cua.edu.

OPT

Mercy to Host an "All-School" Shadow Day

In support of the school's Strategic Enrollment Management Process, Mercy will be hosting its first ever All-School Shadow Day on Friday, March 24. We are inviting students in rising Kindergarten through eighth grade to spend the day as a Mercy student.

Participants will have the option of attending for half of the day, or staying through dismissal. Current Mercy students are encouraged to invite a friend or neighbor to spend the day with them. By opening our doors to the extended community, we hope to offer a more fun and relaxed way for students to explore Mercy!

Interested families should contact Karen Robertson 301-365-4477 for more information or to reserve a spot for the March 24 event.

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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

Under the Big Top – MATH!

Mercy's gym was transformed into a lively Big Top Circus on Tuesday, as the staff and students kicked off the 2017 Math Initiative! Mercy Vice-Principal, Frank English was the Ringmaster, and led an assembly that featured a former Ringling Brothers juggler who demonstrated his amazing talent and the math behind these tricks. Mercy teachers, decked out in all things clown-like, joined in the fun.

Math will be the main attraction under the big top. Using a fun and engaging program, Mercy students will improve their math skills and help their class be the best it can be. The goal is that each child will see how math is used in the classroom and in real world practice. Students will be challenged to use the online ixl.com program as well as real world math (cooking, measuring, taking pictures of shapes, etc.), and teachers will be tracking their progress.

Each grade level will have a minimum amount of time to work on these math challenges each night. For every five nights that they complete the minimum time for their grade level, they will have their name displayed on a pennant, which will be hung in the hallway. We are going to fill our hallways with circus flags! This practice will help each child enhance and increase math knowledge and skills.

The Mercy Math Big Top will be in town through April 7!

OPT



Mercy students were welcomed to The Greatest Show on Earth!



Teachers and staff clowned around as Mercy kicked off its annual Math Initiative Program.

I am a thinker, an athlete, an artist.

SUMMER AT HOLY CROSS

Co-Ed Summer Enrichment Grades 7-8 High School Placement Test Prep (HSPT) Course

June 19 - 23

Morning Session:
8:30 am - 12 pm

Afternoon Session:
1 pm - 4:30 pm

Girls Robotics Camp Grades 6-8

Session 1: July 10 - 14

Session 2: July 17 - 21
8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Girls Summer Sports Camps Grades 4-10

Basketball, Field Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball

Session 1: June 19 - 23 • 9 am - 3 pm

Session 2: June 26 - 30 • 9 am - 3 pm

Girls Soccer Camp with Coach Mastro Grades 7-12

August 7 - 11 • 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

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June 19 - 30 • 9 am - 3 pm

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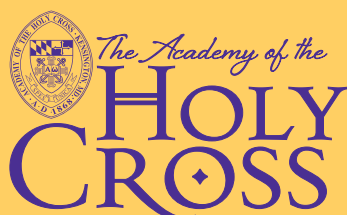
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*Shrek The Musical JR. is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.MTIShows.com



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The Soul: Hiding in Plain Sight

*Joseph Miller of the Magis Center
to Speak in April*

It is a bit of an irony that many moderns doubt the existence of their own soul. Not only are we acutely aware of our inner subjective realm, but there's a growing body of scientific and medical evidence indicating a trans-physical aspect of the human person. Joseph Miller, Executive Director of the California-based Magis Center, will speak about the soul at St. Raphael Church on Tuesday, April 25. His presentation will address the topic in three parts:

- What are some philosophical arguments for the soul?
 - What are some of the more interesting findings from contemporary science and medicine that indicate the existence of a trans-physical soul?
 - What is a rational being to do?
- The lecture is offered by the



Joseph Miller

St. Raphael Adult Faith Formation committee on Science and Faith. It is open to the public and all are welcome.

No fee. Free Will Offerings accepted.

Tuesday, April 25, 7:30-9:00 PM
Duffy Center

1513 Dunster Road
Rockville MD 20854

The Magis Center of Reason and Faith is an organization committed to revitalizing belief in God and the transcendent dignity of the human person. Joseph Miller holds a Masters in Philosophy from Holy Apostles College and Seminary and a Master of Arts in Theological Studies from the Notre Dame Graduate School of Christendom College. Magis (pronounced mah-jis) in Latin means "more." In some contexts it can mean "the even more" – the furthest frontier – frontiers of reason, knowledge, the universe, and reality itself. Visit: www.magiscenter.com

OPT

Stepping into the Working World at Career Day

At St. Raphael School, Career Day opens up a world of opportunities in response to the timeless question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" On this day, parent presenters bring their unique talents and the workplace to our school and showcase a variety of vocations. This year's panel featured an electrical engineer (Richard Baum), a business owner (Mike Krivka of CrossFit Concepts), a U.S. Army Nurse Practitioner (Marguerite Lawrence), a Green Beret from the U.S. Army Special Forces (Trey Lawrence), a representative of the non-profit sector as Director of Development for the National Park Trust (Maryann Kearns), and an Assistant General Counsel for the U.S. Government Accountability

Continued on page 29



At St. Raphael School's Career Day, Lt. Col. Trey Lawrence said the hardest part about being a Green Beret is leaving his two children whenever he gets deployed. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia, St. Raphael School

Praying for Life

On Jan. 27, SRS eighth-graders joined thousands of others from around the Archdiocese of Washington and across the nation for the Youth Rally and Mass for Life. It was early in the morning, but the students, accompanied by teachers and parent volunteers, were joyful as they made their way to the Verizon Center to pray and stand for life. Praise and worship music lifted hearts and spirits, and Cardinal Wuerl celebrated Mass before the youth-filled arena. Fr. Conrad Murphy delivered a powerful homily that encouraged the youth to a life of holiness and happiness that can only be found in Jesus and to not be afraid, and instilled in them the conviction that their own personal holiness will save and change lives.

OPT



Kindergartners Mia Bernstein and Mathieu Boteler are in stitches during a presentation by author-illustrator Timothy Young, who spoke at St. Raphael School to mark Read Across America. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia, St. Raphael School

Reading Across America

As part of the Read Across America program that promotes reading and honors Dr. Suess' birthday, SRS welcomed author and illustrator Tim Young to help nurture the gift of lifelong reading and writing skills. Young spoke to all our classes, read aloud from some of his books, demonstrated his illustration skills, answered questions, and even enjoyed lunch with aspiring eighth-grade writers. Also during Read Across America week, buddy reading between classes fostered literacy and gave students a chance to boost each other towards this goal.

OPT

Celebrating Catholic Schools Week in the Company of Angels

By Nina Cardillo

We don't have to see them to know that they are there—angels are everywhere. And in celebration of Catholic Schools Week, the hallways of St. Raphael School and Nursery School were filled with reminders and of our ethereal companions, especially our guardian angels and patron archangel. These beautiful inspirations of our heavenly helpers inclined our hearts even more to their angelic presence and movement. In their company and with their assistance, we celebrated Catholic Schools Week by honoring teachers, clergy, and families who support the value of Catholic education and share the hope that it may bear fruit through the success

of the students.

Throughout this special week, students participated in various community outreach initiatives. They prepared sandwiches for McKenna's Wagon, collected coats and socks for Catholic Charities' Coats of Many Colors Drive, and donated diapers to the DC Diaper Bank. To show appreciation for the sacrifice of our service members and to lift their spirits, the students also wrote letters expressing gratitude to those at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Recognizing everyone who makes Catholic schooling possible at St. Raphael, and extending blessings to those in our midst, was a reflection of our school theme – "We are St. Raphael" – and evidence that indeed there are angels among us.

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The Great Kindness Challenge



Saint Andrew Apostle School Community Embraces The Great Kindness Challenge

Recently, the student body of Saint Andrew Apostle School participated in The Great Kindness Challenge. This nationwide event is a two-week program dedicated to creating a culture of kindness on campuses. During the two weeks, students were challenged to perform as many kind deeds as possible, using an age-appropriate checklist as a guide.

Simple gestures such as “smile at 25 people,” “help a younger student,” and “help someone if they fall down,” are examples of the deeds the students were challenged to consciously perform in an effort to proactively create a

Continued on page 21

School Celebrates Dr. Seuss

To celebrate the 113th birthday of Dr. Seuss, Saint Andrew Apostle School held a Vocabulary Parade on Thursday, March 2.

The idea of the vocabulary parade is from “Miss Alaineus, a Vocabulary Disaster,” a book by Debra Frasier. Students created and wore costumes that illustrated a word or idiom. The costumes were largely made from hats, poster board with straps, sandwich boards and other props. Clever and creature costumes were displayed at every grade level.

OPT



Mrs. Cullen's Pre-K class models the “hairy blue” of Thing 1 and Thing 2, creatures from The Cat in the Hat

Finding Fulfillment in Jamaica

Jamaica – Sun, Sand and Surf for Saint Andrew's Mission Teams' trips to Mustard Seed Communities (MSC) in Jamaica? Nope, instead, it's cold “bucket” showers, lumpy bunk beds, absent air conditioning....AND...encountering Christ, serving the disabled, experiencing unconditional love, and enabling over 100 Mustard Seed residents to have adequate housing and sustainable agriculture...that's PRICELESS!

By year's end, Saint Andrew Apostle will have sent half dozen teams consisting mainly of parishioners, accompanied by Father Dan Leary and Monsignor Kevin Hart, to experience a “priceless” vacation visiting Jamaica's Jacob's ladder, a Mustard Seed Community.

Jamaica offers no facilities, government or otherwise, to care for individuals with mental and physical disabilities after the age of 18. Jacob's ladder strives to fill this void by providing adults with mental and physical disabilities a home where they can live out their lives in a safe and nurturing environment. Monsignor Gregory, MSC's founder, seeks to provide the residents with a safe and healthy place to live where they have care and therapy. MSC's purpose is to advance the moral, mental, and physical well-being of Jamaican children and adults with disabilities.

At Jacob's Ladder, a typical day for the Mission teams includes early morning Mass, one-on-one inter-

actions with the residents, assisting staff in feeding and dressing residents, planting basic vegetable crops as part of MSC's sustainable agriculture program, painting and repairing cottages that house residents and evening reflections and a novena. The teams also visit other Mustard Seed locations in Jamaica, including those for children with HIV/AIDS and homes for young teen mothers and their children.

Much has been accomplished since that first trip in May, 2015. With fundraising in excess of \$250,000 and hard work, parishioners from St. A's and several nearby parishes have provided Mustard Seed and Jacob's Ladder with:

- A new well bringing a reliable

Continued on page 21

St. Andrew Apostle Parish

11600 Kemp Mill Road
Silver Spring, MD

Rev. Daniel P. Leary,
Pastor

301-649-3700 ext. 311

St. Andrew Apostle School

Susan M. Sheehan,
Principal

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**More St. Andrew Apostle
News on Page 39**

ST. JOHN'S

2017 SUMMER SPORTS CAMPS

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The Buzz from The Hive Predominant Delivers Winning Sting



2017 SBS Spelling Bee Winners L-R: Third place: Declan Devilbiss; First Place: Julia Ryan; Second Place: Scott Tran. Also pictured is SBS Assistant Principal Ted Ewanciw.

By Gavin Weddington, Grade Seven, and Bryson Hill, Grade Seven, St. Bernadette School Student Council Commissioners of Publicity

This is the eighth year of the St. Bernadette School Annual Spelling Bee. There is a nervous energy at the start of every Spelling Bee at our school. The kids are a “buzz” with anticipation. The Spelling Bee is organized by volunteers and devoted parents. The intention of the annual Spelling Bee is to improve English language usage, vocabulary, and spelling among the students.

The annual Spelling Bee is one of the nation’s oldest competitions among American students. It is an honor for Saint Bernadette to proclaim Julia Ryan, Grade Five, as the SBS winner of the eighth annual Spelling Bee competition. The winning word was predominant. Julia Ryan will represent Saint Bernadette in the Spelling Bee regional competition. Scott Tran, Grade Eight, captured second place and Declan Devilbiss, Grade Five, secured third place. Go Bees!



Women of St. Bernadette Parish attended a Day of Recollection sponsored by Sodality on Saturday, February 25, following the 8:15 AM Mass. The facilitator was Fr. Greg Markey. The day included reflection, prayer, and Confession.



St. Bernadette School Librarian, Anne Spout (left), organized a spectacular event on campus for 80 SBS students with American Girl author Valerie Tripp (right) on February 3. St. Bernadette School was the first school library to receive Valerie Tripp’s newest book, #4 *Wellie Wishers: Camille’s Mermaid Tale* as a gift at the end of her incredible visit.

St. Bernadette Parish

70 University Blvd., East
Silver Spring, MD

Rev. Msgr. K.
Bartholomew Smith
Pastor

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St. Bernadette School
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www.saintbernadetteschool.org

Discover the St. Bernadette School Science Lab

By Gina Riazi, St. Bernadette School Middle School Science Instructor

Thanks to generous SBS community support through The Annual Fund, our dream of building a state of the art science lab became a reality in 2013. Our Middle school students take their science class in the lab every day. The long sturdy tables and ample supplies provided by the successful fundraising allow us to conduct a variety of labs and hands-on activities throughout the year. For example, sixth-grade students design and conduct experiments on the behavior of composting worms, study minerals and rocks and observe chemical reactions. Seventh grade students enjoy using microscopes and field scopes to study cells

and microscopic organisms while our eighth-grade students use the space to discover the laws of motion and experiment with forces. Sixth grade students share that they “love using field scopes” and “like the easy access to materials we need for labs” such as beakers and flasks.

The lab and all its supplies are available to students in all grade levels at St. Bernadette School. Collaboration and joint projects are goals that we have for the science program. A recent collaboration is bringing spring to St. Bernadette School in February as seeds, roots and flowers are on the minds of third, fifth and seventh-grade students. Third-grade students are using the school’s new lab to observe living plant cells under the microscope. In

Continued on page 31



Grade Three students using microscopes in St. Bernadette School Science Lab

A Legacy to Build On

Saint Francis International School exists because generations of faithful men and women have been committed to building. In 1952, Catholics in the neighborhoods around New Hampshire Ave. wanted a parish community to call their own, so with the help of a young priest name Fr. Jim Grace they went about building that community. First, they built up the communi-



Devoted St. Camillus parishioner Ron Dickenson works with an SFIS student on a project.

ty in someone's house and later,

Continued on page 32

Authors and Illustrators Interact with Students

Saint Francis International School is committed to providing students with "real life" experiences to help them better understand why they learn what they learn in school. This strategy includes experiences like the third-grade salad gardening program and the recent trip by the entire SFIS middle school to Annapolis to advocate for themselves. But it also includes making sure that students meet professionals who are using the skills and abilities that are taught in the classes that the students are taking.

Recently, elementary students had the chance to meet professional author Valerie Tripp. Ms. Tripp is the author of 31 American Girl novels as well as the *Boys Camp* series and numerous other titles aimed at young readers. Ms. Tripp returned last week to visit the SFIS middle school students in fifth and sixth grade to deliver the message that being a professional writer takes work and that the writing process is something that paid authors have to go through just as much as students writing for a language arts essay!

Ms. Tripp's valuable stories from her own life, going back to writing she did as a seven and eight-year old, helped to crystalize that every-



American Girl author Valerie Tripp shares writing from her own childhood with SFIS students.

one can be an author if they work at it and have a passion for it.

This week, SFIS is pleased to have Caldecott Medal winning illustrator Paul O. Zelinsky visit to talk to the Kindergarten about his role in creating amazing books for children like *Z is for Moose*. Thanks to an ongoing friendship with An Open Book Foundation, this will be the

second in-depth workshop SFIS students have had with a current artist in the publishing world.

SFIS students are blessed to regularly hear and see about the world of publishing when children's literature expert, and friend of the SFIS school library, Maria Salvadore of ReadingRockets.org shares current books in contention for awards like the Caldecott and the Newberry with them. Getting up close with authors and illustrators helps students to understand that writing skills are more than just busy work for a report card grade and that projects like the National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) in middle school help to make learning real.

OPT

Making a Change during Lent



SFIS faculty member Ann Batiste presents to students about her mission trip to Haiti.

The journey of Lent has begun at Saint Francis International School. Among the annual highlights of the Lenten practices at SFIS are the Mission Fair and #change4change. This year Mission Fair included presentations by Ms. Ann Batiste, the ELL teacher at SFIS, along with her pastor Msgr. Ray East and members of St. Theresa of Avila Parish in DC who talked about their

Continued on page 32

St. Francis International School

www.saintfrancisinternational.org

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Third Graders Walk in Footsteps of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

“Did Elizabeth Ann Seton really sit in this chair?!” Wide-eyed St. Bartholomew third graders were full of questions as they enjoyed a

firsthand look at the life and works of the first American-born Catholic Saint. At the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland, students visited the

basilica and museum dedicated to the pioneering and devout educator. A highlight of the day included a tour of the grounds where Mother Seton founded both the Sisters of Charity and the first Catholic girls’ school in the nation. “Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton is special because she created the first parish school,” said third grade teacher Kerry Parker. “The

field trip allows us to explore where she did some of her great work, and we were able to see primary sources and relics from her life.” After their trip to the shrine, students enjoyed a lesson in geography by visiting the Mason-Dixon Line, where they snapped a photo with half the class in Maryland and the other half in Pennsylvania.

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Excited St. Bart's 3rd graders, about to enter the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

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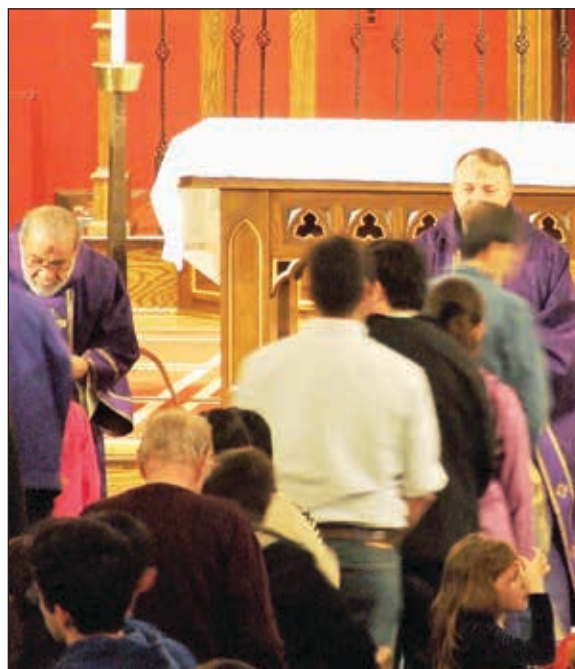
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Lent at St. Bart's Parish Begins with Ashes, Mass, Soup and Stations

On Ash Wednesday, St. Bart's had ashes during the day and also at a crowded bi-lingual Mass in the evening. During Lent at St. Bart's, Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday Evening. On Friday, March 3, "Soup and Stations" were available before Mass where parishioners could enjoy soup and fellowship before Stations of the Cross.

Father Mark Knestout and Deacon Julio Blanco-Eccleston distribute ashes at Ash Wednesday Mass.



More St. Bartholomew News on Page 10

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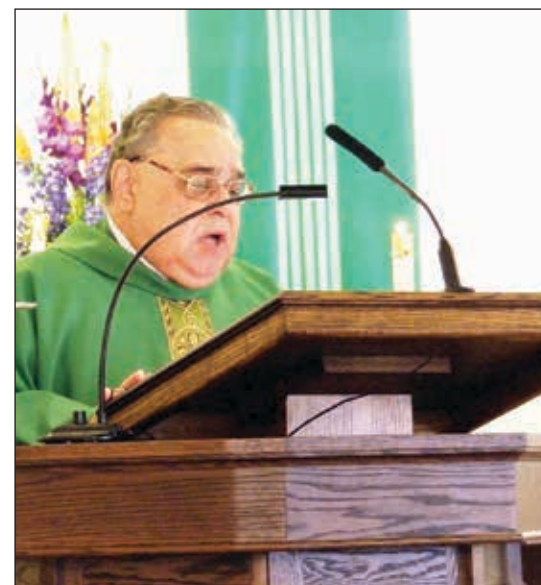
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Father Joseph Sileo Leads Lenten Retreats at Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center.

Fr. Joseph Sileo Leads Men's and Women's Retreats

Father Joseph "Joe" Sileo, former Pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish, led Lenten retreats during March for men and women. On March 9, Father Sileo led a retreat for women at the Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center. The topic was The Beatitudes. Fr. Sileo will lead a retreat for men on March 11, also at the Bethesda Retreat Center, on the same topic

OPT



Seventh- and eighth-grade students attended the March for Life in January. The school's music teacher, Mrs. Ruppert has marched every year for 30 some years and has been taking SJE kids to the March for many of those years! We are particularly proud of Jean Marie Hathway, a graduate of St. John the Evangelist parish school and currently a student at CUA, who spoke outside of the Supreme Court in support of life. In the photo is a group of seventh graders wearing bright neon SJE hats to the March for Life. L to R: Molly Gilgunn, Lucy Droege, Anna Johnson, Lilly Comello, Ellie Campbell



Students create Thanksgiving placemats for a women's shelter as part of a service learning project.

Celebrating 20 Years of Service Learning

To kick off Catholic Schools Week in 1997, St. John the Evangelist School unveiled its first Service Learning Project. The school children, faculty, families, and members of the parish community created woven panels which were assembled together to make one large wall hanging. During the process, the art, social studies, and homeroom teachers discussed ethnic heritage, cultures, traditions, and geography, as well as the art of weaving. When the project was completed, students reflected on the experience and how it strengthened their community.

Twenty years later, Service Learning Projects are still a part of St. John's culture. Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Students improve their academic skills by applying what they learn in school to the real world. They then reflect on their experience to reinforce the link between their service and their learning.

Nowhere is this concept more visible than in our Art classes. Mrs.

Stephanie Rico, our Art teacher and one of the original architects of Service Learning at St. John's, structures her curriculum around Archdiocesan standards and Service Learning. Stressing the Corporal Works of Mercy, Mrs. Rico plans projects for the students which provide an opportunity to develop an increased sensitivity to and concern for the needs of those in our community. While studying about local economics and government, students learn about the hungry and homeless in our neighborhoods. When Mrs. Rico cooks for the homeless and a women's shelter, her students create placemats or cards of encouragement for the recipients. As 5th and 6th graders begin to knit, they learn of Knitting Ministries which combine prayers for those in need with the practicality of warm items.

Learning about the Earth's ecosystems, art students in all grades created murals of animal life. The murals then arrived at their new home at the Children's Inn at NIH. Bookmarks, ceramic pumpkins, friendship bracelets, or postcards all find their way to nursing homes,

Continued on page 33

High-School Students Share their Faith at Confirmation Retreat

By Robyn Fobouo

On Friday, February 24, the 2017 Confirmation Class of St. John the Evangelist had a retreat at the Knights of Columbus Rosensteel Hall. The location of the retreat was of great importance, as it is near a model chapel used by Reverend John Carroll, the first Archbishop of the United States.

The day began with a song led by Miss Smith and a prayer service. The students were split up into eight groups and each group was assigned a topic such as the rosary, the sacraments, and so on. Each table created a church that had pieces of paper representing bricks on it, detailing the gifts the student and their chosen saint bring to the church. The presentations that ensued were punctuated by seniors giving short spiels about the saint they chose for Confirmation and what that saint meant to them. Prior to eating lunch all the students gathered together to pray the rosary.

After eating, students went on a cemetery scavenger hunt and later listened to a senior panel. The senior panel was made up of 14 students that have been on the Confirmation Team since they were freshmen. They gave witness to how the Holy Spirit is working in their lives and keeping them connected to God.



Eighth-grade students participate in activities led by high school mentors during their Confirmation Retreat

The candid senior panel was followed by a series of short plays acted out by the students, often-times with a high schooler's help. One such play explained the story of Saul and how he gained an eagerness to preach His goodwill, which is the same feelings the confirmation students should have been experiencing.

Towards the end of the day, students received letters and attended a mass led by Father Calis, one specifically geared towards celebrating their accomplishments. All in all, the Confirmation Retreat was a success, as students deepened their faith while partaking in several

activities throughout the day.

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

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2017 Lenten Supper Talks: “We are One in the Spirit”

Come to the Lyon Center to observe the Lenten fast by sharing a simple supper of soup and bread. Listen to a presentation on a topic related to the Social Concerns of our Church. Supper is served at 6:00 pm, presentations start at 6:20, and end at 7:25 pm. Please bring a non-perishable food item as a donation to the St. Camillus Food Pantry.

March 3: Recycling 101: For Clean Land, Air and Water

Alan Pultyniewicz, the Recycling Coordinator for Montgomery County's Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Solid Waste Services, will walk us through recycling in

Montgomery County. The presentation will include a brief overview of the history of recycling in Montgomery County, the current status of our recycling efforts, the benefits of recycling, and what can be recycled in the County.

March 10: One in the Spirit

In our current climate of tensions and uncertainty, Deacon Ed McCormack will help us understand what it means to truly be one in the Spirit.

March 17: Can We Talk?

Sr. Marge Clark, BVM, is the Senior Government Relations Advocate for NETWORK, a national lobby and advocate orga-

nization for Catholic Social Justice. Sr. Marge will address how we can listen and be open to other people, what frames our view of ourselves, what frames our view of others. This will be interactive so bring your smart phone if you have one.

March 24: Everybody needs a Second Chance

Bernita Johnson serves as the Re-entry Coordinator for Catholic Charities Welcome Home Reentry Program in Montgomery County. The team matches volunteer mentors with participants to help ease them back into society after incarceration. Their goal is to restore dignity to those who are coming from a place of despair. The pro-

gram also works to meet the participant's basic needs through light case management and resources for support.

March 31: Keeping Seniors (and ourselves) Safe

Keeping Seniors Safe (KSS) is a program developed in conjunction with the Volunteer Resources Section of the Montgomery County Police Department. The KSS program was established to increase awareness of safety issues within our community and to provide guidance and resources to everyone regarding these issues. Our presenter, Mike Conrad, is a volunteer with the KSS team of the Montgomery County Police Department. In

2016, the KSS team took part in 50 events within Montgomery County and in 2015, received the Governor of Maryland Award for Crime Prevention.

April 7: We will rise up! Resilience and faith of our Sister Parish in Baradères

SJB Director of Social Concerns Cynthia Norris and members of the SJB Sister Parish Committee will give an update on status of the recovery and rebuilding of Baradères, Haiti. Come and hear how our outreach and response has reaffirmed the relationship between SJB and St. Pierre.

OPT

Preschool Program to Start in September

St. John the Baptist is starting a preschool program for 4-year-olds in September. Father David Brault, SJB pastor, has agreed to create a new pre-Kindergarten classroom in the Lyon Center, the parish multipurpose facility attached to the school.

The parish is planning renovations of the building in the spring and summer, with preschool classroom doors opening on Sept. 5, the same date that the rest of the school will open for the 2017-18 school

year. SJB will enroll up to 20 pre-Kindergarten students in its first year. The principal recently hired Diana Liddi McPherson to be the program's preschool teacher, and there are plans to hire a classroom aide soon.

Mrs. McPherson has a Master's degree in early childhood special education, she taught preschool in Prince George's County Public Schools for two years, and she is a graduate of University of Maryland, St. John's College High School, and SJB.

The SJB School Advisory Board began studying the preschool concept in 2015. In a recent survey, 16 school parents said they would send their 4-year-olds to preschool to be with their older siblings at SJB. On Feb. 3, the SJB preschool proposal received the approval of the Archdiocese of Washington.

SJB preschool will start at 8 am and end at 3 pm, Monday to Friday.

OPT

Coffee beans and basketball

SJB's “Starbucks” League is good to the last drop after almost half a century

By Douglas R. Palmer, parishioner and parent of children at SJB School

Almost 50 years ago, in the fall of 1967, Frank McCarthy, an original SJB parishioner and father of six, needed a league for his oldest son Michael to play in. Michael was in the 5th grade and loved basketball. At the time, however, there was only one CYO team and Michael was not picked for the team.

Frank had an idea and SJB had a gym. “Why not start our own intramural league on Saturday mornings for all the kids who need a team?” Frank got sponsors for the league including Jimmy's Tire Shop, Capital Area Insurance, Burnt Mills Auto Body, and Big Ed's Pizza (now



Longtime volunteer referee Mary Alexa officiates a heated game between Notre Dame and Georgetown.

Dominic's Italian Grille). The sponsors paid for the jerseys and the referees always volunteered.

The league was successful from the start and maintained a strong base of players throughout

the 1970s, 80s and 90s. Notable players from these decades included Chuck Driesell (son of Lefty Driesell, famous University of Maryland men's basketball

Continued on page 33

St. John

the Baptist Parish

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Share the Cross 2017

Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that we have a social mission that is an essential part of what it is to be a believer. Every believer is called to serve the least of our brothers and sisters, to hunger and thirst for justice, and to be peacemakers. Pope Francis reminds us: “that all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity.”

During our Lenten journey, we can make a difference by “sharing the cross of Christ” in a personal way. Each item is labeled on a cross and found on the wooden cross at the foot of the altar in the Church. Select the cross of your choice as part of your Lenten journey

The crosses are color coded as follows:

- Call to Family & Community & Participation: Yellow
- Care for God's Creation: Green
- Dignity of Life: Orange

- Human Rights and Responsibilities: Red
- Preferential Option for the Poor: Blue
- Solidarity: Purple

Call to Family & Community & Participation

Bring a pot of meatless soup, or a loaf of bread to share to the Friday Night Lenten Supper Talks.

Participate in the Lenten Food Drive to benefit the St. Camillus' Food Pantries.

Join the Hospitality Ministry as an usher or a greeter. Contact Susan DeCamp: 301-622-1122.

When we sing, we pray twice. Join the Music Ministry. Contact Susan DeCamp: 301-622-1122.

Dignity of Life

Learn about Human Trafficking by visiting www.ijm.org. Help end Human Trafficking

Donate your old cell phones to benefit individuals in the commu-

nity at risk of domestic violence.

Help our formerly homeless veterans with move-in supplies.

Human Rights and Responsibilities

Visit: www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/index.cfm. to learn about the Church's teachings in immigration

Visit: www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/migrants-refugees-and-travelers/parish-activities-immigration.cfm and learn how you can help immigrants.

Care for God's Creation

Skip the Bottled Water: Use a water filter to purify tap water instead of buying bottled water.

Donate re-usable shopping/grocery bags for the Mid-County United Ministries' Food Pantry.

Join the Eco Ministry: New Hampshire Avenue clean up.

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Student Appreciation Day at Lourdes

Every year, our students and staff look forward to Catholic Schools Week to celebrate Our Lady of Lourdes School. This year, we culminated the celebrations with Student Appreciation Day, on Thursday, February 2. Ms. Sheehey and Mrs. Richardson planned an exciting day for all of our students, which just happened to be our 100th day of school – adding a theme and extra excitement to our celebrations.

In the morning, our 100th student to enter the gym won a Target gift card. After that each class, Little Group through seventh grade, selected two students to participate in a “100 Lion Hunt.” Joe Novak was the 100th student—congratulations, Joe! The 100 Lion Hunt was a great success, led by our

eighth graders, who had hidden 100 pictures of our mascot around the school. The children raced through the halls, collecting as many pictures as possible! Even our youngest students collected five or six lions each. The fourth grade won!

After a morning full of surprises, treats, and excitement, we were all looking forward to the first ever Lourdes Lip Sync /Class Dance competition. Earlier in the week, grades two through eight drew song names from a hat. Students and teachers worked hard all week preparing a performance to their songs. The songs chosen were: 2nd grade – Love Runs Out by One Republic, third grade – Fight Song by Rachel Platten, fourth grade – Brave by Sara Bareilles, fifth grade – Happy by Pharrell, sixth grade

– Hardknock Life from the musical “Annie,” seventh grade –All Star by Smash Mouth, and eighth grade – Be Our Guest, from “Beauty and the Beast.” Students and teachers all enjoyed the performances, and all of the children were brave and enthusiastic as they performed for the whole school.

There were many fan favorites, and the competition was fierce! After a weekend to deliberate and vote several times, the judges selected the Second Grade and the Eighth Grade as the winners of the show. Both classes won a tag day a month for the next three months. It was an exciting day we will never forget, and we are already looking forward to next year’s Lip Sync / Class Dance competition!

OPT

A Student's Gratitude

One morning last month, a very large, wrapped package awaited the students at Our Lady of Lourdes (OLOL) school as they entered the gym for morning assembly. After the students and teachers were assembled, Principal McGann asked sixth grader, Nathalia Martinez, to come forward and unwrap the package. As Nathalia removed the wrapping, a beautiful painting of Our Lady of Lourdes was revealed. Students and teachers were amazed to learn that Nathalia had painted the picture that was before them.

Nathalia started at OLOL as a third-grader. She has grown to love the school and wanted to donate the painting to OLOL to show her appreciation for all that the school has done for her. Nathalia was 6 or 7 when she realized that she had a passion for art, particularly paint-

ing. Earlier this year, many of Nathalia's classmates and teachers attended an exhibit of her work. She is already an accomplished artist! This painting took her about one month to complete. Nathalia said the work required a lot of patience and much effort, but she was happy to do it and to share her talents.

After a special blessing by Monsignor Filardi, the painting was moved to the school library where it will remain on display for all to enjoy for years to come. Monsignor explained to the students that painters of religious icons are believed to

be inspired by God's grace. We feel certain that God inspired Nathalia as she created this remarkable work. Thank you, Nathalia!

OPT



Will Smith and Sean Lacey assist Nathalia Martinez as they unveil her painting of Our Lady for the students.

A February Filled with Fun at Our Lady of Lourdes School

February was a fun-filled month at Our Lady of Lourdes School. On February 8, the third-grade students studied the weather and made themselves some anemometers to measure wind speed.

February 14 was pink and red day at Lourdes in honor of Valentine's Day. Students arrived in some of the wackiest costumes we have ever seen. Mrs. Wasp's Pre-K really got into the spirit of things.

With spring-like weather the norm, Mr. Long, Ms. McGann and Mr. Dwyer decided to take the fifth and sixth grade to Harper's Ferry for the day. The children learned about John Brown's raid ahead of time and were able to hear Mr. Long's mesmerizing tales about all the excitement that took place at Harper's Ferry while they ate their lunch. What a lucky group!

On February 24, with the whole school in attendance, Eric Marcelin and Reese Stephens of the second grade were baptized into the Catholic Church. Eric and Reese have been



Sydney Nemitz, Greta Rank, and Liana Gesesse measure wind velocity.

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Annual Spelling Bee and Talent Show

Ella Fernandez calmly spelled “picturesque” to win Our Lady of Lourdes' 16th Annual Spelling Bee on Thursday, February 16. From a group of 26 top spellers, Ella, a seventh grader, and Helina Daniel, a sixth grader, were the only two left standing in the tenth, and final, round. Students in fourth through sixth grade are eligible to participate in the Spelling Bee, and they are eliminated after spelling two words incorrectly.



Our Lady of Lourdes (OLOL) Pastoral Council Chairman Steve Noyes (left, holding flag) leads OLOL churchgoers at the March for Life Rally January 27, 2017 in Washington.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

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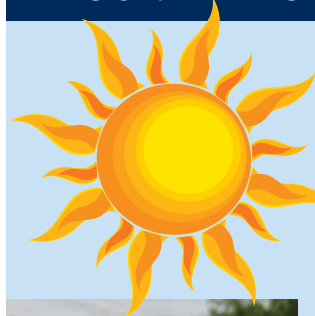
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2016 Washingtonian of the Year William Whittaker speaks to HR fifth-eighth graders.

Faith and Service...Nothing Else More Important

By Michelle Ardillo

Holy Redeemer Catholic School was honored to have as its key note speaker on Career Day during Catholic Schools Week one of the 2016 Washingtonians of the Year, Mr. William Whittaker. With his commanding presence and booming voice, fifth through eighth graders sat riveted in their seats for the hour-long speech, giving Mr. Whittaker the one thing he demanded from each student: eye contact. It was apparent from the very active and thoughtful question and answer period after the speech that the students were also paying close attention to Mr. Whittaker's introduction of himself, his family history, and his path to having "won the Super

Bowl," when he was asked by the Jesuits to leave a great position at Gonzaga College High School to become the founding president of the Washington Jesuit Academy, serving underprivileged young boys from grades fourth through eighth, giving them the opportunity of a solid Jesuit education. It is on faith alone, after a period of prayer and discernment, that he accepted the position, placing offers from the Naval Academy and the University of Richmond behind him. And, it is through his hard work and leadership that WJA gives these young men something more, hope. It is with that solid Jesuit foundation that they leave WJA and attend some of the finest high schools in the country, and from there, many of them continue on to college, all with support and mentoring from the WJA community along the way.

For a community of very fortunate boys and girls, Mr. Whittaker, who lives in the HR neighborhood and knew many of the students in the audience, outlined the kinds of lives that his students experience. He asked that each and every student think long and hard about service and ask themselves the question he asks himself each and every morning: "What more can I do to serve those in the most need?"

OPT

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

A Presidential Campaign to Remember

On Friday, February 24, 2017, the sixth annual Presidential Tea took place in Holy Redeemer's Herb Young Auditorium, a tradition brought here six years ago by the recently retired Debby Hannan. This year's 41 fourth graders became our nation's presidents, from George Washington to George W. Bush. Parents were invited to attend the event where students, each dressed as their chosen president, presented a report and then had lunch with their parents.

Back in early December, each child chose a president's name out



Above, Fourth graders dressed as presidents with National's George Washington.

At left, Jimmy Alexander from Mix 107.3 came to share his knowledge and love of our US Presidents.



of a hat. Then, the children spent two months researching that president's life. They learned about their president's childhood, early

adulthood, their reason for running for office, and their achievements as president. Each and every year the children discover

Continued on page 32

Fifth Grade Fictional Character Tea Party

By Shannon Egan (5B Teacher)

This past Friday, 5B celebrated the end of our dive into Realistic Fiction. We started our novel study series in December with the book *Out of My Mind* by Sharon M. Draper. Then, we ventured further into the genre with our Newbery Medal Winners project. Each student picked a Newbery Medal Winner that was realistic fiction and spent the month reading on their own, both in class and at home. I read From the *Mixed up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* out loud.

Continued on page 38



Fifth graders enjoyed dressing up and acting like their favorite Newberry book winner.

When I Grow Up I Want To Be ...

Students in Holy Redeemer's Half Day 3s pre-K program have been learning about Community Helpers this month. As part of this unit, they were even treated to a visit from a real firefighter! He talked to them about fire safety, how to call 911 in an emergency and just what kinds of things constitute such a call. The children then practiced "stop drop and roll" if their clothes would ever catch on fire, and "stay low and go" if they had to exit a smoke-filled house. The highlight of the visit for the children, though, was when they got to see and even try on some of the protective fire gear. Many wide-eyed preschoolers were amazed at how heavy the clothing was. Most importantly, these children now know that firefighters are our friends.

Later in the unit, we had a visit



Pre-K 3 student is trying on a fireman's gear.

from a pediatric dentist, who talked to our 3-year olds about healthy eating habits. She played a game with

the classes using different types of play food, asking which were healthy for our teeth and which were not. Later during snack time, the children ate crackers and then looked in a mirror at their teeth to see the crumbs stuck in their teeth. They then ate fruit and drank milk, and looked at their teeth again. More than one student exclaimed "Hey! The healthy food cleaned my teeth!"

Throughout this unit, there have been multiple discussions about what the students want to be when they grow up. While there are plenty with aspirations to become doctors, dentists, construction workers, firefighters and police officers, some of the more entertaining answers have been: a ballet person, the King and a dolphin. Keep those dreams alive, 3-year olds!

OPT

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St. Mary's sent the team, Five Horsemen, to compete in the First Lego League State Championship at UMBC. Despite a sometimes uncooperative robot, the team rode off with second place in Mechanical/ Robot Design category. It was due to the dedicated mentorship of Mike Badamo, Bob Goodfellow, Paul Sanneman, Simon Cauchi, Dave DeSantos, and Vince Camobreco that the boys were able to learn and succeed. Great day for the Five Horsemen and St. Mary's School!

Lent at St. Mary's Church

The Lenten Season is one of reflection and sacrifice, please join us for any or all of these special Lenten events.

Stations of the Cross

Friday evenings beginning March 3, 7pm, in the Main Church.

Sunday Vespers

4:40pm each Sunday of Lent, just prior to the 5pm Mass. Books will be provided. Families are encouraged to attend.

Lenten Bible Study: The Bible and the Sacraments

Tuesdays, March 7 through April 25, 7-8:30pm.

The Theology of the Body: The Teachings of St. John Paul II

Wednesdays, 7-8:30pm, beginning March 15 thru Wednesday April 5 in the Rectory meeting room. Led by Brother Norbert Keliher, O.P.

Wednesday evening Confessions

6:30-8pm during Lent

KINDNESS

Con't from page 13

more positive environment at school, home and, ultimately, in society. Kindness quotes were posted throughout the school and announced twice daily. The entire school participated in an effort to provide hundreds of sandwiches to homeless shelters. Midway through the campaign, the faculty and staff created a

human tunnel in the morning to greet and encourage the students.

A highlight of the two weeks was a visit from spiritual and motivational singer Tony Melendez who talked to small groups of students about showing respect at school and at home. His words and presence touched the children. Also, our First Grade was featured on the WJLA Good Morning America program spread-

ing the news of our efforts to promote random acts of kindness. Following an all-school Mass on the last day of the Challenge, several students in each grade were awarded certificates in recognition of their outstanding displays of kindness. It was a positively spirited two weeks. The school continues to embrace the theme that "kindness matters."

OPT

JAMAICA

Con't from page 13

water supply five miles to Jacob's ladder, located in an area noted for lengthy droughts.

- A sustainable agriculture program to provide fish, livestock and food to feed not only residents of Jacob's ladder, but also many of the Mustard Seed residents in locations throughout Jamaica.
- Construction of 4 new homes, each housing 8 to 10 residents.
- A refrigerated truck to

transport food around the island.

After each trip the teams leave behind freshly painted cottages, fields planted with cabbage and scallions, newly tiled rooms, and most importantly, relieved caregivers who have had some much-needed help for a week and joyful residents, who have smiles on their faces and love in their hearts for the priceless gift of a one-on-one relationship with one or more parishioners.

What do the Mission teams bring home from Jamaica? Along with sore backs, callused hands and sunburned

skin, they come back with much more than they gave. Two of many similar thoughts expressed by team members:

"I thought I was going to Jamaica to help those less fortunate than I. Turns out, the people of Mustard Seed were the ones who helped me."

"We climbed Jacob's ladder and touched God's angels. We experienced a bit of Heaven on Earth!"

If you are considering a Jamaican vacation to renew and revitalize your body and soul, forgo the fancy resorts and cruises and give Mustard Seed a try. It's priceless.

OPT

The Spirit of the Amazon: Gala '17

Not only is the St. Mary's Gala the largest fundraiser for the school each year, it is the biggest party as well. On Saturday February 11, the temperatures outside were chilly but the warmth of the rain forest welcomed patrons as they entered the school. The entire building had been transformed with waterfalls, palm fronds and birds of paradise.

After a silent auction featuring over 100 fabulous items, guests settled in for the highlight of the evening, the Live Auction. The bid paddles were raised high for the offerings like a trip to Costa Rica, Caps signed memorabilia, a house on Cobb Island and an Off-Shore Fishing Trip. Many items were so popular that donors offered to sell two packages!

The excitement is partly due to the way the Gala brings together the school and parish communities unlike any other event. Former parishioners, Luci-Ann and Mark Tafuri, return from Florida each year to attend the Gala.

"Our St. Mary's family is just that – our family forever. Even though we've moved, we still carry great memories of St. Mary's in our hearts. We love returning every year for this worthwhile event and to support the school that was such a wonderful experience for our three children."

Nearly 300 others joined the Tafuri's and danced the night away while celebrating this worthwhile cause. Many thanks to our hard-working Gala committee for transporting us to the Amazon!



Mark and Luci-Ann Tafuri return from Florida annually for the Gala

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

Maureen Stiles, Parish Editor

301-990-4329

OPT



St. Mary's 2017 SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM

Art • Drama • STEM

Preschool through 8th grade
offerings beginning at 8:00 am through 6:00 pm

St. Mary's School is excited to offer an array of creative and enriching camp programs this summer!

We are providing fun and flexible options in five week-long sessions from June 26 through July 29 for 4-year-olds through rising eighth grade students.

We strive to take the stress out of your summer vacation child care needs with morning and afternoon camps as well as free early drop off beginning at 8:00 am. Camp is open to St. Mary's School, St. Mary's Parish and the local community ... invite your friends and neighbors!

Check out our offerings online at
www.stmaryschoolrockville.org

Register online at:
<http://bidpal.net/smscamps2017>



600 Veirs Mill Rd., Rockville MD, 20852 | Phone (301) 762-4179

OLQP newlyweds Edyta Szemiel and Maciej Poltorak hold the Apostolic Blessing of His Holiness Pope Francis after being presented with it in February, 2017, by a parishioner from Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish, who requested and obtained it for the couple as a wedding gift while visiting Rome and the Vatican.



Holy Lent And Easter Season Schedule 2017 at Our Lady Queen of Poland & St. Maksymilian Kolbe Parish

OLQP Parish Retreat (in Polish) will begin on Thursday, March 30, and conclude on Sunday, April 2, 2017. Rev. Dr. Tomasz Kraj, Visiting Theologian at the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, DC, will be the retreatist. A detailed program can be found at www.parafia-dc.org under "Biuletyn."

- Stations of the Cross –Fridays at 7:30 PM
- Lamentation devotions, "Gorzkie Zale"-Sundays at 11:40 AM
- Palm Sunday, April 9
Procession with palms at 10:00 AM and 12 Noon Masses
- Holy Thursday, April 13
7:30 PM, Holy Mass of the Lord's Supper
- Good Friday, April 14
7:30 PM Stations of the Cross and devotions
- Holy Saturday, April 15
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Easter Food & Bake Sale
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Blessing of the Easter food baskets every half hour
7:30 PM, Liturgy of the Paschal Vigil
- Easter Sunday, "Wielkanoc", April 16, *Wesołego Alleluja!* Happy Easter!
10:00 AM, Resurrection Mass with procession
12:00 Noon, Holy Easter Mass
- Divine Mercy Sunday, April 23,
Mass at 10:00 AM; Mass at 12:00 Noon will include exposition of the relics of St. Faustyna and St. John Paul II in the church
Parish Easter Dinner, "Swieconka" after the noon Mass.
Adoration after the noon Mass
3:00 PM, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Divine Mercy Chaplet
- Sunday, May 7, Solemnity of Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish Feast day
10:00 AM & 12:00 Noon, Holy Masses
Parish Annual Picnic after the noon Mass

We invite you to come share the experience of the upcoming celebrations in our Parish!



Officers of the new St. Maximilian Kolbe Council of the Knights of Columbus on Feb. 5, 2017, at the Saint John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, DC: Grand Knight John Armstrong (center), Deputy Grand Knight Jacek Marczyński (left), and Chancellor Roman Korzan (right).



Members of the new St. Maximilian Kolbe Council of the Knights of Columbus engage in a "prayer huddle" outside the Our Lady Queen of Poland & St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Silver Spring, Maryland, on February 19, 2017.



Dr. Lucas Kulczycki, our 105½ year-young OLQP parishioner, is surrounded by friends at the coffee hour "Kawiarenka" after the noon Mass on February 19, 2017, at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish Hall. Clockwise from left are Dr. Edwarda Buda-Okreglak, Mr. Lechlitter, Mr. Armstrong, and Dr. Katarzyna Kalka Lechlitter.

St. Maximilian Kolbe Council of K of C launched

A new Knights of Columbus Council, Saint Maximilian Kolbe Council, is active at Our Lady Queen of Poland & St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Silver Spring, Maryland. The First Degree ceremony took place on February

5, 2017, at the Saint John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, DC. Rev. Jerzy Frydrych, Pastor of the Parish, is the Council's Chaplain.

The officers and members are: Grand Knight John Armstrong; Deputy Grand Knight Jacek Marczyński; Chancellor Roman Korzan; Warden Dawid Birely; Secretary Filip Golebiowski; Financial Secretary Andrzej Kaminski; Treasurer Janusz Bilinski; Advocate Terrell Roberts; Guards Piotr Ciecwierz and Maksymilian Korzan; Trustees Maciej Poltorak, Stanley Scofield, and Tomasz Kolodziej; Lecturer Wojciech Czaja; Knights are Aleksander Macander, Andrzej Migasiuk, Marek Zgol, Andy Michels, Zbigniew Okreglak, and Slawomir Korzan.(ED.)

OPT



OLQP parishioners including scout Klaudia Weidlich, scout leader Bożenna Buda, and scout leader-in-training Dominika Gawryolek traveled to the American Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, to participate in Scout Thinking Day on February 26, 2017. Members of Boys' and Girls' Councils of the Polish Scouting Organization ZHP from many states along the Atlantic seaboard gathered there for Holy Mass and a day brimming full with exciting activities.



Pastor Rev. Jerzy Frydrych (front center) celebrated the memorial Holy Mass on March 5, 2017, at Our Lady Queen of Poland & St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Silver Spring, MD. The Mass commemorated the Polish soldiers and others who fought in the underground for Polish freedom and independence against Communism after WWII. They were called *Zolnierze Wykleci*, the "Doomed Soldiers." Many of them were murdered by the post-WWII Soviet-backed Communist regime. This part of history was suppressed by the authorities until the overthrow of Communism in Poland in 1989. The Polish *Sejm* (Legislature) in 2011 declared March 1 as the National Day of Remembrance for them. Participants in Sunday's Mass included representatives of the Polish Legion of American Veterans (PLAV), Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Polish Scouting Organization ZHP, Knights of Columbus St. Maximilian Kolbe Council, Polish American Congress, and many parishioners and guests. Polish Saturday School students were lecturers at the Mass.

Our Lady Queen of Poland

9700 Rosensteel Avenue
Silver Spring, MD

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

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



He Abides in Us by the Spirit Given Us
2017 Confirmation Candidates Dana Graham, Madeline Graham, Valerie Graham and Mary Shawhan with Sponsors, Julia Shawhan, Elizabeth Tran, and Elisa China and Will Shawhan.

Sponsors, Guiding Lights for Confirmation Candidates

Forty-three 2017 Confirmation Candidates and their Sponsors attended the evening Mass on Saturday, February 25. The importance of the Sponsor's role was singled out during the Mass. Resurrection Pastor Fr. Jeff Defayette had the Sponsors stand to receive a special blessing upon them calling on God's grace as they share and guide the faith journey of their Candidate and finally witness their Candidate's acceptance of the Sacrament.

Following the Mass, the Candidates and Sponsors enjoyed dinner and light conversation. Afterwards, Fr. Jeff spoke of the importance of the sponsor

as a role model for their candidate by their faith lives and their good actions and words. Fr. Jeff told the candidates that they in turn should take advantage of this journey with their sponsor, sharing with them thoughts about faith and other aspects of life. He ended by saying, "Embrace the Holy Spirit as you journey together to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation."

Confirmation Candidates and Sponsors then engaged in a spiritual question and answer activity. The evening event ended with the Candidates giving their Sponsors a hand written thank you card and gift for their willingness to be a guiding light in today's world. **OPT**

Resurrection's Got Talent from God!

The parishioners of Resurrection Parish drew their talents out from under bushel baskets and to paraphrase Mathew 5: 16, they, "Let their light shine before others..." for the second annual *Resurrection's Got Talent*, a fellowship builder and fundraiser organized by the Knights of Columbus, Bishop Lyons Council #9808. The Amadeo room in the Keffer Parish Life Center was turned into a dinner club as over 120 guests enjoyed a chicken shish kabob dinner with refreshments and then entertained by singers,



Resurrection's Abundance of Talents
Resurrections Got Talent! contestants of all ages gather before their performances



Sharing Perfect Harmony
Abigail Hancock and Abigail Aronne perform their winning selection at *Resurrections Got Talent!*

pianist, dancers, and instrumentalists competing for cash prizes by age categories. Contestants from the Church ranged in age from the youngest prodigy at 2 to those who cut their teeth during the Folk Mass revolution.

Vocal prowess was a popular gift. Solo contestants were Marie-Lauren Kouao (17), Camila Martinez (8), Harper Hornbostel (6), Noah Martinez (7) who danced as well, and Nicole Ude (14). Melissa Wright (28) was accompanied on piano by Jean-Paul Rock, Maddie Graham (14) and Jasmine Owens (17) accompanied themselves on piano, and adult Ellen Curro accompanied herself on guitar. Vocal duo Abigail Aronne

and Abigail Hancock wowed the crowd and won their age divi-

Continued on page 34

Church of the Resurrection Parish
3315 Greencastle Road
Burtonsville, MD
Fr. Jeffery Defayette
Pastor
301-236-5200
Amy Horn,, Parish Editor
afhorn@aol.com

More Resurrection News on page 38



Come to our
TAKE-A-TOUR TUESDAYS

Every Tuesday from 9- 10 a.m.
from January through May *

*Except April 18

The Avalon School is a K-12 Catholic, independent school for boys. Please come visit our school in action on any Tuesday from 9-10 a.m. from January through May.

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TUESDAYS FROM 9-10 A.M.
FROM JANUARY THROUGH MAY*

*EXCEPT APRIL 18

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2017 Maryland Senior Olympics

The 2017 Maryland Senior Olympics will be held from April 5 through Oct. 1 at venues in Montgomery County, Howard, Prince George's, Anne Arundel, and Frederick counties. This year is a non-qualifying year for National Senior Games featuring over 140 events in 23 sports on the state level, including non-qualifying participatory sports billiards, bocce, croquet, disc golf and lawn bowling.

To participate, you must be aged 50 and above. Registration deadline is one week prior to your event. Get everything you need to know about MSO and registration through the



2017 Information and Registration Guide. You can download the guide or request one via mail by emailing

us your name and address at info@mdseniorolympics.org or by calling 240-777-4930.

Teams and individuals can register online or by mail-in. Here's how:

MSO Online Registration!

Thanks to our partners at FuseSport and our friends at the National Senior Games Association, Maryland athletes have a fast, easy and convenient way of registering and paying quickly online. There is a \$5 processing fee for each online registration. Payment is through PayPal but you don't need an account, you can pay by credit



card. Follow the easy instructions below:

1. Go to the web address of: <https://maryland.nsga.com/registration/398/>;
2. Sign up by selecting "Register for the 2017 Games Here." Returning and new athletes register in the same manner;
3. Once registered for the 2017 games, you can view or update

your registration at any time by selecting "Update or Add Events to my 2016 Registration" and entering your confirmation number and last name;

OPT



RSVP/AARP Tax-Aide Program

RSV (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)/AARP Tax Aide provides free federal and state (Maryland) tax preparation services for low-to-moderate income taxpayers who live or work in Montgomery County. Special attention is given to those 60 years old and older. The program runs during tax season.

Tax Aide has more than 100 volunteers who are trained to prepare simple tax forms. Each year we prepare nearly 5,000 federal and state returns. Please note that this year we are only able to prepare 2016 returns. The AARP flier provides more information on which returns are considered simple and which are too complex (out-of-scope) for the program. Please read this information before making an appointment. Taxpayers with complex tax returns will be advised to seek paid tax assistance.

The RSVP/AARP Tax Aide program prepares taxes at more than 20 different locations across Montgomery County.

Make your RSVP/AARP Tax-Aide Appointment Now! Only a few appointments remaining! To schedule an appointment online visit www.montgomeryserves.org/tax-aide or call 240-777-2577.

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Bone Builders

Volunteers are needed to lead free Bone Builders exercise classes that help prevent falls and fractures caused by osteoporosis. Bone Builders volunteers at work

The one-hour daytime classes,

Continued on page 27

Seniors on Fixed Incomes Can Find Help with Rising Costs

Modernized BenefitsCheckUp.org makes it easy to research and apply for national and state benefit programs

Living on a fixed income is a challenging reality for millions of older Americans. Social Security provides most retirement income for about half of households aged 65 and older. And approximately half of households aged 55 and older have no retirement savings in a defined benefit plan or IRA.

Programs that older adults rely on like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security could undergo changes this year that would affect their expected budgets. Which means, now is the time for older adults to fortify their fixed incomes by finding benefits programs. For many low income older adults, there are federal and state programs that can supplement their fixed incomes, but often they are unaware of them. The National Council on Aging's (NCOA) recently updated website, BenefitsCheckUp.org, is the go-to resource available to easily see if an older adult qualifies for more than 2,500 of these federal, state, and private programs.

BenefitsCheckUp, the nation's oldest and most successful public online benefits screening tool,



has helped more than 5.5 million people find more than \$18 billion in benefits. The website has a new modern design that facilitates a simple process for consumers to learn about programs available to them, easily find out if they qualify, and quickly get connected with the application process.

"Many older adults tell us they need just a little extra money added to their budget, so they don't have to worry about paying for their basic needs. But they also tell us they aren't sure where to turn for information," said Leslie Fried, Senior Director of the NCOA Center for Benefits Access. "BenefitsCheckUp is the solution. Seniors or their loved ones can use the free, confidential screening tool to see if they're eligible for help and get all the information they need to apply."

The most accessed programs on BenefitsCheckUp help seniors pay for medications, health care, housing, utilities, and nutrition. However, the resource library on

the website now makes it even easier to search programs by state and get information on other programs, such as:

- Tax relief to help pay property taxes and/or prevent foreclosure
- Employment and volunteer programs
- Income assistance to help meet basic needs
- Veterans programs such as housing assistance and educational grants

"Older adults are tech savvy, and they're comfortable using websites to find answers for themselves," said Marlene Schneider, Vice President of NCOA Decision Support Services. "The updated BenefitsCheckUp.org makes benefits programs and resources easy to understand and access. There is something for everyone at BenefitsCheckUp."

Older adults and their loved ones can find benefits programs by visiting www.benefitscheckup.org and answering a few questions to get started. At the end, they will receive a personalized report with programs they likely qualify for, along with contact information, and next steps.

OPT

New Death with Dignity Drugs: Zero Dignity, No Safeguards

Over the last few years, the price of the most commonly prescribed "death with dignity" drug, Seconal, rose significantly and currently costs approximately \$3,000 per prescription. Doctors who support physician-assisted suicide argued this was too



expensive for most patients. A group of those doctors came together informally to create a new lethal drug cocktail designed to kill people under the guise of 'Death with Dignity.' The results were not pretty for patients who were their test subjects.

According to Kaiser Health News:

"The first Seconal alternative turned out to be too harsh, burning patients' mouths and throats, causing some to scream in pain. The second drug mix, used 67 times, has led to deaths that stretched out hours in some patients — and up to 31 hours in one case. "[Twenty percent] of the cases were 3 hours or more before death, which we think is too long," said Robert Wood, a

retired HIV/AIDS researcher who volunteers with the advocacy group End of Life Washington, in an email. "The longest was 31 hours, the next longest 29 hours, the third longest 16 hours and some 8 hours in length."

This news is extremely troubling.

First, people who believe they are receiving a dignified death are getting anything but that. Screaming in pain and waiting 31 hours to die is not dignified.

Second, this group of doctors is experimenting on real people without any sense of what this drug cocktail will do to them. It's clear even to non-doctors that high-level doses of diazepam (anxiety medica-

Continued on page 27

OUR RESIDENTS HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS.



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~ Len - 11-year resident

~ Marie - 10-year resident



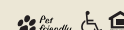
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County Commission on Aging Invites Community to Forum on Age-Friendly Initiative

Seniors, interested residents and non-profit organizations and businesses serving seniors, are invited to attend a forum on Wednesday, March 29 sponsored by the Montgomery County Commission on Aging. The forum will help residents understand the County's Age-Friendly Initiative and gather feedback about how the program can be customized and publicized to deliver the most benefit to residents.

The forum will be held at the

Silver Spring Civic Building from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Following a panel discussion, participants will be invited to join group discussions on topics such as Housing, Transportation, Communication, and Home and Community-Based Services. Future forums will focus on other topics such as Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Respect and Social Inclusion; Civic Participation and Employment; Support and Health Services; Emergency Preparedness and Resilience; Elder

Abuse, Neglect and Fraud; and Age Friendly Business Practices.

In December 2015, the County became an Age Friendly County, part of the World Health Organization's "Age Friendly Cities and Communities Program," administered by AARP. The Age Friendly Montgomery Initiative was formed to implement the program and track progress.

"Enrollment in the World Health Organization's Age Friendly Communities program is another way for our community to show its commitment to residents across the

lifespan," said County Executive Isiah Leggett. "I urge everyone who can to attend the forum so we can hear from you about what's important for us to focus on."

The forum will be held at the Silver Spring Civic Building, located at 1 Veterans Plaza in downtown Silver Spring. The Civic Building is accessible by public transportation and adjacent to the Ellsworth Drive parking garage.

Refreshments will be served. The event is free but reservations are requested. Contact Tremayne Jones at Tremayne.jones@montgomery-countymd.gov or 240-777-1262.

Organizers will provide sign language interpreters and other auxiliary aids or services upon request. Please make your request with as much advance notice as possible, if possible at least three (3) full business days in before the meeting, by contacting Tremayne Jones at Tremayne.Jones@montgomery-countymd.gov or 240-777-1262 (Voice) or MD Relay 7-1-1. Last-minute requests will be accepted but may be impossible to fulfill.

OPT



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Montgomery County Provides a Property Tax Credit to help you do it!

- Educate residents and building professionals about the Design for Life Property Tax Credit Incentives to increase accessible homes in Montgomery County.
- Meet local organizations and builders showcasing accessible features and homes for all ages and stages!

For more information, or to request a registration form, contact:
Crystal.Roberts@montgomerycountymd.gov

DPS | **Montgomery County**
Department of Permitting Services



"Put Your Best Fork Forward" When Dining Out

At the office or a restaurant, eating away from home doesn't have to undermine your healthful habits. To help find your healthy eating style during National Nutrition Month, celebrated each March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages everyone to "Put Your Best Fork Forward" when dining out.

"Choosing healthful options at restaurants is easier today than it ever has been," says registered dietitian nutritionist and Academy spokesperson Robin Foroutan. "Use a smart-eating strategy to plan ahead, consider the menu and choose foods carefully."

According to Foroutan, how much you eat is as important as

what you eat. For example, if you plan to have lunch with coworkers, eat a light dinner. If you know you're going to a restaurant in the evening, plan to have lighter meals earlier in the day.

"It's important to consider meal options at different restaurants and choose places with a range of menu items," Foroutan says. "You

can balance your meal by choosing healthier items such as lean protein foods, non-starchy vegetables and fruits."

Most restaurants offer healthy side dishes such as salads and steamed or roasted vegetables.

"Don't be afraid to ask questions about how the food is prepared or for a substitute or an extra side of veggies," Foroutan says. "Make

special requests to meet your nutritional needs, like asking for a side salad instead of mashed potatoes or fries."

To-go boxes can help control portions. Eat half your meal at the restaurant and take the other half home for a second meal.

As part of National Nutrition Month, the Academy's website includes articles, recipes, videos and educational resources to spread the message of good nutrition and an overall healthy lifestyle for people of all ages, genders and backgrounds. Consumers can also follow National Nutrition Month on Facebook and Twitter (#NationalNutritionMonth)

OPT



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BONE BUILDERS

Con't from page 24



held twice-weekly throughout the County, led by trained volunteers, are designed to prevent and slow the development of osteoporosis. Regular participants can help increase their bone density naturally through the classes, an effective option for those who may not wish to use anti-osteoporosis medications.

Osteoporosis causes bones to become thin and to break easily. Although osteoporosis can strike at any age, it affects one in three women and one in eight men over age 50. Each session is based on bone density research and includes balance and weight training. Among other activities, volunteers will demonstrate the exercises, encourage and assist participants, within a safe, clutter-free environment.

Volunteer leaders receive two full days of free training, as well as periodic refresher classes, ongoing support and supervision by master trainers. New Volunteer Leader training takes place in the spring and fall.

The Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disability Services, in partnership with Montgomery County's RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) program and the Recreation Department, County Libraries and Churches, the City of Takoma Park, the Housing Opportunities Commission and the City of Gaithersburg, offers 30 classes throughout Montgomery County.

For more information please contact the Bone Builders Program at 240-773-8268 or email phyllis.elperin@montgomerycountymd.gov

OPT

ZERO DIGNITY

Con't from page 25

tion); digoxin (heart medication); and morphine will cause death. But what these doctors did not understand are the potential side effects and interactions with other prescription drugs the patients may already be taking.

Third, as we know from Oregon's death with dignity annual report, in 2016 in only 18% of cases was a health care provider present (either their prescribing physician or a hospice nurse, for example) when the patient took the lethal dose. This means that people who are now forced to experiment with a drug cocktail have no one present in case something goes wrong after they ingest the pills.

Physician-assisted suicide is anything but dignified. This latest example is another case of supporters of PAS ignoring the reality of assisted death.

OPT

Source: *Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide*

WITNESS

Con't from page 1

Isaiah's Promise provides support to families who receive a severe or fatal prenatal diagnosis for their unborn child and who lovingly decide to welcome that child until his or her natural death. Its model relies on peer support, accompanying families through their pregnancies, offering telephone and email support, helping to prepare a birth plan, and creating personalized mementoes to memorialize their children. By walking with these families on their uncharted journeys through pregnancy, Isaiah's Promise offers them a measure of comfort, hope, and control in an overwhelming time.

The Benefit, attended by over three hundred guests, featured the music of Deacon Jimmy Nalls and the Bar Band. Hors d'oeuvres and an open bar added to the conviviality, as did Master of Ceremonies, Father Joseph Goldsmith, who kept the evening fun with quips and banter. Father Dan Leary, pastor of St. Andrew Apostle parish in Silver Spring and chaplain of St. Joseph's House offered opening prayers. Fr. Joseph Calis, pastor of St. John the Evangelist parish in Silver in which St. Joseph's House is located, was also in attendance.

Later in the evening, Mr. Thomas Gravely, an Isaiah's Promise father, gave a moving testimony regarding what he had learned about fatherhood through the birth of his son, who was diagnosed with a chromosomal abnormality mid-way through pregnancy. The baby was missing a crucial part of his DNA and doctors predicted that he would not make it to term. Defying expectations, however, that baby WAS born and was named after his father, Thomas, to signify that his parents accepted him with love and joy.

Mr. Gravely related that, before his son's diagnosis, he had dreamed of teaching his little boy to do things like throwing a baseball and passing on other fatherly wisdom. But, he told the crowd, after Thomas's birth and odds-defying seven-month-long life, he realized that his son had taught his parents so much more. Mr. Gravely also spoke movingly about the love and sup-



St. Joseph's House teens and friends

port he and his wife, Elizabeth, had received from Cubby and Nancy at Isaiah's Promise which was crucial in helping them see their son's life as a gift.

The evening's keynote speaker was Tony Melendez, a musician who was born without arms after his mother was prescribed thalidomide to treat morning sickness. He spoke of his mother's determination to help him achieve whatever he wished and of having been brought to the United States from Nicaragua at an early age to be fitted for prosthetic arms. Mr. Melendez uses his feet to play guitar and sang songs of worship and praise, expressing his joy in the Lord and his wonder at God's providence. He held the crowd enthralled and encouraged everyone watching and listening to trust in the Lord.

Mr. Gravely's testimony and Mr. Melendez's performance were living signs of the dignity of every human being, which

is the impetus for the work of both organizations. As Dan LaHood says, St. Joseph's House and Isaiah's Promise have intertwined missions. "At St. Joseph's House," he says, "we serve the one we can see who gets off the bus [after school], and through Isaiah's Promise, we serve the one we can't see who is really alone in the womb.... We have found that the human approach always leads to God. People have found peace in it – a new loving Presence in their lives becomes a revelation."

St. Joseph's House and Isaiah's Promise work to support children and families who are signs of the worth of all people, no matter their circumstances. Attendees at the Benefit came away understanding more clearly the crucial work that these organizations do to support families and children who are affected by intellectual and developmental disabilities or adverse prenatal diagnoses. For more information about St. Joseph's House, go to www.saintjosephshouse.net. For more information about Isaiah's Promise, go to www.isaiahspromise.net.

OPT



Isaiah's Promise staff and families

ENZLER

Con't from page 1

they wondered if the church could do more to support and create a place for them.

They all had family members with developmental differences, but their needs were different. One mother was worried about the impact one child's need for special attention would have on her other children and whether they would feel neglected. Another family had a high-functioning daughter with autism and wanted to find recreational and social opportunities, which were not as readily available at the time. A third family was dealing with profound issues for their daughter who had never walked or talked and was then in her mid-20s.

We wrestled with how to help these families, united in the love of their children, yet with different needs. One person in our group had the very smart idea that we

hire a social worker to reach out and determine the needs of all the people in the parish as well as the surrounding community. Based on what we learned, we could then develop a program to better assist with those needs.

That approach has worked for 23 years now, and it continues to be the way we develop efforts to help those with developmental differences. PCR's mission is to encourage and support the full inclusion of persons with intellectual and developmental differences into all aspects of community life. I am amazed when I think back to those early conversations and realize how PCR now serves over 400 teens and adults through the 35 programs it offers.

One of the best of these programs is the Tricia Sullivan Respite Care. On two Sundays each month, families can bring a dependent who has severe developmental differences for an afternoon of care, compassion and activities, allowing the

parents to run errands or simply have some time to themselves. For many of these families, these few hours two Sundays a month are the only breaks they get from caring for their loved one who is so greatly dependent on their time, talent and love.

PCR's main source of financial support is the annual Patricia Sullivan Benefit Dinner, which will be held this year on Saturday, April 1, at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center. This very special event brings out close to 500 people, and we take time to honor those who have been particularly generous with those with developmental differences. I invite any and all who would like to join us for what is always a wonderful evening. Among the honorees this year is Father Don Worch, who went home to God last year. He was a friend of mine, a friend of Potomac Community Resources and a friend to so many in Montgomery County. His family will accept his award

posthumously. You can find more information at www.pcr-inc.org.

PCR's inspiring story began because people cared and were willing to get involved, and its impact has expanded well beyond Potomac. PCR has helped start six similar organizations in Maryland and Washington, D.C., including at Holy Redeemer and Blessed Sacrament Parishes. I like that the model that worked so well at Our Lady of Mercy can be replicated in a general sense, but the details can be easily adapted to the specific needs of each community.

I am proud to have worked with the committed, passionate and energetic people who have been the driving force behind Potomac Community Resources, and I thank God for all of the amazing work that has been accomplished over the last 23 years. What are you passionate about? Is God calling you to help meet a particular need? Maybe there is a similar story in your future.

OPT

By Youth group member Alexia Ayuk

The vision of the March for Life organization is to demonstrate a world where every human life is valued and protected. In this modern age, it can be difficult to feel as though one is supported in their beliefs about how everyone, big or small, has a right to life. When I stepped out into the streets of Washington DC on January 27, 2017, I was amazed. Although, I know that there are many people who are testifying and fighting for the dignity of human life, it is a different experience to view.

People of all genders, ages, and races gathered after hearing speeches by many prominent political figures concerning the Pro-Life movement. Father Joe Rogers led

St. John Neumann Youth Group Marches for Life



St. John Neumann youth representing with pride and smiles at the March for Life. Photo by Jerry Kelley



Despite the cold air, our youth group bravely marched to pray and walk for the unborn and their mothers. Photo by Jerry Kelley



St. John Neumann Youth Group stands for life! Photo by Jerry Kelley

our youth group in the Rosary as we marched through the streets with people screaming and yelling with signs. What is so unique about the Pro-Life movement is that it is not exclusive to one religion, it is for

all. Those who did not even believe in God were there to show their support about the beauty of life.

In that moment, I did not feel alone. I felt protected and justified to proclaim my beliefs. I was able

to communicate this message of being Pro-Life to the government, the media and the nation in a way that is powerful and life affirming was rewarding because I am the Pro-Life Generation.

OPT

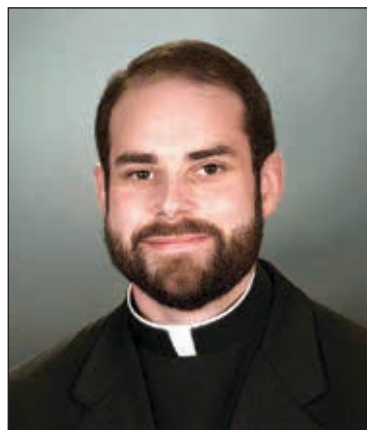
Fr. Bill...Getting From There To Here

By Rus Wester

Fr. William Franklin Wadsworth comes to SJN from St. Andrew Apostle Parish in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Father Bill is a convert. "My family attended a High Church of the Episcopal Faith. We had a professional choir, sang Latin [liturgies] often, burned incense, prayed the rosary, celebrated Corpus Christi and Assumption Day – all the hallmarks of Catholic worship. It was what I grew up with."

When Fr. Bill got to college, he went to the local Episcopal Church and it was different from what he had become close to in his youth. "As I got to know more about the faith itself," said Father, "I began to see that the Episcopal Church didn't have a consistent belief system I wanted from my early youth. I was called



Newly appointed SJN Parochial Vicar
Fr. William Wadsworth

to the priesthood from a fairly early age, but I came to learn that the Episcopal Church wasn't where I was supposed to become that priest."

Father Bill realized that he was fairly comfortable in pursuing the Episcopal priesthood, but he had a strong pull toward Catholicism. One Sunday while substituting for the Episcopal parish organist, the Gospel was from Luke, Chapter 9: Once you put your hand to the plow, you can't look back. "I took that to be the Holy Spirit telling me to just let go of my comfortable place and take my leap to Catholicism".

A local Catholic Priest provided the phone number for Monsignor

Panke, Vocations Director for the Washington Catholic Archdiocese. A brief conversation led to Msgr. Panke revealing to young Bill Wadsworth that he would have to become a Catholic before entering seminary for the Catholic priesthood. After RCIA training at St. Patrick's in Rockville, the baptized Bill Wadsworth was confirmed in the Church, studied for the Catholic priesthood in Seminary and was ordained by Cardinal Wuerl in 2015.

While it's not likely you'll see Fr. Bill seated on the bench of the SJN church organ, playing a weekend Mass, it'll be obvious he loves playing. "I'm self-taught, no major works by the great organists, but I can do a number of hymns and small pieces."

Other interests include fencing. "My roommate and I both were fencing captains of our college team. But racquetball is much less expensive, so I still get to the courts."

Fr. Bill attended St. Mary's College in Southern Maryland, grew up in Aspin Hill, just twenty-minutes away from SJN and has already secured parental support from his Mom and Dad who have pledged to attend Mass at SJN. Welcome to the parish, Father Bill and Wadsworth family!

OPT

St. John Neumann Parish

9000 Warfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20882

Fr. Joseph Rogers,
Pastor

Sylvia Granados-Maready,
OPT Editor

ADVOCACY DAY

Con't from page 2

Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) program. The Maryland Catholic Conference is a member of the Council for American Private Education, which hosted the event. St. Francis International School in Silver Spring brought more than 100 students to Nonpublic School

Advocacy Day. The school choir sang "Maryland, My Maryland" at a rally on Lawyers Mall before Gov. Larry Hogan spoke to the crowd.

Last year, the General Assembly expanded educational options for low-income students through BOOST. The program helps eligible students, who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, to attend the school best fit for their educa-

tional needs by providing scholarship assistance toward attending a nonpublic school.

The primary focus of the day was for students to thank legislators for the BOOST scholarship program and ask to continue funding. Various officials and legislators addressed the group in the Miller Senate Office building and during a rally on Lawyers Mall.

OPT

ALMOST SUMMER BINGO & DINNER Friday, May 19

Prizes Include Bags and Jewelry from Kate Spade,
Coach, Dooney & Bourke, and Vera Bradley

Location:
Mother Seton Parish
19951 Fr. Hurley Blvd.
Germantown, MD

Doors Open at 5 PM
and
Bingo Starts at 7 PM

Chicken Dinner with
Sides and Dessert

Admission:
\$35.00

Includes:
Regular Game Boards,
Two Special Games,
Supper and Door Prize
Drawings

Additional Game
Boards, Raffle & 50/50
Tickets Available
For Purchase

Presented By:
Mother Seton Sodality

You can reserve your seats now
upon payment of admission.
We welcome groups.

Contact:
Kathleen Coughlin at mspodalitybingo@gmail.com
or call 301-613-6893 (evenings & weekends only)

Let's Celebrate the beach! All those who bring in can foods to be donated to
Germantown HELP will receive
an extra entry for the door prize drawings.

Disclaimer: Kate Spade & Co., Coach, Inc., Dooney & Bourke, and Vera
Bradley Designs, Inc are not affiliated with this event.

Mother Seton's Valentine's Day Dance

By Jim Novitzki

Friday, February 10 saw the Parish Center filled with parishioners enjoying themselves at the Mother Seton Parish Valentine's Dance. The winter par-



Great conversations

ish dance has often been the victim of bad weather, but this year the weather was perfect. The Knights of Columbus Council 11024 offered to sponsor the event for the parish, and they worked hard to make the event a success. The hall was festively

decorated with red table clothes, sparkling centerpieces, and valentine heart shaped balloons. There was even a rotating mirrored ball reflecting on the dance floor.

The menu for the event included heavy hors d'oeuvres, chicken, salad, sub sandwiches, meatballs, chips, desserts and free non-alcoholic drinks. Those who wished adult beverages could BYOB. Music was provided by the Knights special DJ Art Padama with his unmatched variety of music. As an incentive to increase attendance there was no charge for the event. Before the evening was over more than 100 parishioners had danced and celebrated the occasion. Our Pastor Father Lee was also there for part of the evening leading several dances. A good time was had by all.



Parishioners enjoying themselves at the Mother Seton Parish Valentine's Dance.

Perhaps next year we'll have even more parishioners laughing, dancing, and sharing fun at this event.

OPT

Celebrate Life Concert at Mother Seton Parish

By Dominique Seraphin

On January 26, Mother Seton Parish welcomed the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal and Catholic Recording Artist Audrey Assad to Celebrate Life. Pilgrims arrived from all over the country, who were in town to attend the annual March for Life in Washington DC. We decided to offer people who had arrived in town early an evening of prayer, fellowship and music; we had over 600 people in attendance. The evening was modeled after an apostolate of the Franciscans of the Renewal called Catholic Underground. Catholic Underground is a direct response to a call that began with Pope Saint John Paul II, and is continued by Pope Francis.

The first part of the evening began with Mass at 5:00pm celebrated by Fr. Luke Mary Fletcher, CFR, followed by Eucharistic Adoration. The Holy Hour began with Vespers (Evening Prayer).



Catholic recording artist Audrey Assad entertains pilgrims to the annual March for Life.

Vespers is the universal prayer of the Church – prayed by Catholics throughout the world in every time zone and in every language. After Vespers, there was a time of simple praise. This provided a window for each person to personally encounter Jesus Christ. The beauty of the darkened Church illumined by candles helped us enter into

the mystery of our Lord's presence in the Eucharist. Confessions were offered all evening by at least ten priests. The Holy Hour ended with solemn Benediction.

Afterwards we served a simple dinner where people from all walks of life and all parts of our country got to sit and talk, the common thread being the celebration of life. The second part of the evening showcased Catholic recording artist Audrey Assad. Audrey Assad is the daughter of a Syrian refugee, an author, speaker, producer, and critically lauded songwriter and musician. Audrey's performance touched the hearts of youth, young adults and mature adults, while being intentional and passionate about exploring theology and faith via music. Here we experienced the "new evangelization". We ended our evening as we began, with the prayer of the Church, Compline (Night Prayer) which is simple and beautiful. Our evening concluded with a hymn to Our Lady.

OPT



Franciscan Friars of the Renewal backup a singer at the Celebrate Life concert.

CAREER DAY

Con't from page 12

Office (Kate Lenane).

With each presentation, the children learned about personal careers and professional fields and enjoyed many memorable moments. They realized that the circuit board and tiny parts inside an iPad can be

as fascinating as the device itself; they listened intently as the Green Beret came in speaking Arabic and also spoke about how his Christian faith has helped him feel protected on the field; they saw the effects of smoking on the lungs and the difference between five pounds of fat vs. muscle; they discovered that someone can launch their own fitness company and also write their

own books; they recognized the challenges that nonpartisan government agencies face when having to confront people from different parties on issues such as spending; and they met the National Park Trust mascot, Buddy Bison. We are grateful to our parent speakers who shared their valuable work experience with us!

OPT

2017 Lenten, Triduum and Easter Schedule

Confessions during Lent:

- Tuesdays from 6:00 to 6:45 p.m.
- Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- Saturdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- Saturdays from 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. (Spanish)
- Good Friday from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.

Weekday Masses

- Monday - Friday – 6:30 and 8:00 a.m.
- Tuesday and Friday – 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday – 9:00 a.m.

Stations of the Cross, Fridays (except Good Friday)

- 12:00 Noon
- 6:30 p.m. Spanish
- After 7:00 p.m. Mass.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

- Tuesdays 7:30 to 10:00 p.m.
- Fridays 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Palm (Passion) Sunday, April 9

- Masses will follow the regular Saturday and Sunday schedule
- Palms will be blessed at all of the Masses that weekend
- The Solemn Entrance and Blessing of palms will take place at all the Masses

Holy Thursday, April 13

- No morning Masses
- Mass of the Lord's Supper – 7:30 p.m.
- Eucharistic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will take place in the Parish Center following the 7:30 p.m. Mass until Midnight

Good Friday, April 14

- No Masses
- Stations of the Cross – 3:00; 4:00 in Spanish
- Pro-Life Stations of the Cross on Wisteria 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Service of the Lord's Passion and Death and Veneration of the Cross – 5:00 p.m. (Spanish)
- Service of the Lord's Passion and Death and Veneration of the Cross – 7:30 p.m.

Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil, April 15

- No morning Masses
- No Confessions
- The Solemn Easter Vigil – 8:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 16

- Masses – 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 2:00 p.m. (Spanish)
- No 5:00 p.m. Evening Mass on Easter Sunday

Divine Mercy Sunday, April 23

- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after the 12:30 p.m. Mass until 4:30 p.m.
- Confessions from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.
- Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3:00 p.m.
- Solemn Benediction following the Divine Mercy Chaplet



Young people of the Shrine of St. Jude who were baptized on the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus are pictured on the altar with Fr. Sean Foggo. Photo courtesy of AG Studio.



The very active youth group from the Shrine of St. Jude in Rockville at Mount2000 retreat at Mount St. Mary's University, Feb. 17-19.

Amazed and Afraid

St. Jude Youth Group Attends Mount 2000 retreat

By Xiomara Esteban, volunteer Youth Group leader

The St. Jude Youth Group was blessed to take 27 teens for the first time to the annual Mount 2000 retreat in Emmitsburg, organized by Mount St. Mary's seminary and University. The retreat, themed Amazed and Afraid, took place February 17-19 and welcomed approximately 1,200 teens from several dioceses, including Washington, Baltimore, and Harrisburg.

The weekend, which happened to be a surprisingly warm and beauti-

ful one, included dynamic Catholic speakers, nightly concerts, quality time spent with seminarians, priests, and religious, a visit to the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, and most importantly, time spent with the Lord in the Sacraments—Mass, Confession and Adoration. A powerful and intimate Adoration experience on Saturday evening was what many of the St. Jude teens reflected on as their favorite part of the retreat. God-willing, the youth group will be able to attend the retreat again next year!

OPT

International Day at St. Jude Regional Catholic School

The St. Jude Regional Catholic School community celebrated its rich diversity at its 2nd annual International Day in early February. The event was the culmination of a year-long effort by the entire school. Each class studied a different country from around the world, and then they studied various subject areas about the country, including its literature, arts/crafts, geography, and history of its culture. Students then created artwork based on the artistic styles



Students Susana Lopez-Chavarriaga and Mariana Tellez Leon, both first graders, and Isabella Grijalba, a fifth grader, participate in the school's celebration.



Pictured from left to right are Joshua Hoffman, Bridget Junghans, Margaret Young, Alex Condori, Angelica Braswell, and Fr. Sean Foggo at the school's International Day celebration.

from that nation, and learned about music/dance from that culture.

Students and their parents then came together to celebrate the school's diverse community with a culminating event—International Day. Parents set up a booth with artifacts, pictures, and flags from their home countries. Additionally, parents brought food that represented the cuisine from their nation for the students to try. Upon entering the International Day celebration, students each received a “passport,” which they took to the various country booths, received stamps, and sampled the various international dishes. For fun, students got their pictures taken at a photo booth, showing their “travels” around the world!

Some of the countries that were represented were: the Philippines, Italy, France, Columbia, Brazil, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Ireland, USA, China, Guatemala, Ethiopia, Honduras, Benin, Switzerland, Mexico, Peru, Germany, Bolivia, Uruguay,

Continued on page 34

Xiomara Esteban Receives Manifesting the Kingdom Award for St. Jude Parish



Congratulations to Xiomara Esteban who received the “Manifesting the Kingdom” award from Cardinal Wuerl. Photo credit: Jaclyn Lippelmann for the Catholic Standard.

outstanding service. Xiomara is an active member of the Shrine of St. Jude parish and has served as a volunteer leader for the St. Jude Youth Group for the past four years. She was on the committee that helped found and currently serves as co-chair of 270Catholic, a regional young adult ministry in Montgomery County that began in 2013.

OPT

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

More Shrine of St. Jude
News on Page 39

Fourth Annual Valentine's Dinner and Dance at St. Jude

The St. Jude Youth Group held its annual Valentine's Dinner and Dance on Feb. 11 in Thaddeus Hall of St. Jude for 300 of its parishioners. The teens helped set-up Thaddeus Hall and served as hosts throughout the dinner. The evening consisted of fellowship, a delicious dinner prepared by the Youth Group parent committee, dancing, a raffle, and a brief presentation from the youth group.

This is the fourth consecutive year the group has planned and organized this event for parishioners. Funds raised go to supporting St. Jude Youth Group events and activities,

including retreats and pilgrimages.

The youth group is led by Fr. Shaun Foggo and assisted by a group of St. Jude young adult volunteers. The youth group meets every Friday from 7-9 p.m. and participates in various activities to grow in their relationship with God, their prayer and spiritual life, moral values, friendships and parish community. Weekly events have included social outings, movie nights and discussions, panel presentations with Q&A, and the March for Life/Rally. To join the St. Jude Youth Group and find out about upcoming events, email stjudeym@gmail.com.

OPT



The St. Jude Youth Group held its annual Valentine's Dinner and Dance on February 11 in Thaddeus Hall of St. Jude for 300 of its parishioners.



The line of those praying on Spring Street.

Christ the King Participation in Defund Planned Parenthood

By Katie Holland, Parish Editor

Christ the King joined others Saturday morning February 11 in front of the (soon to be gone) Planned Parenthood abortuary on Spring Street in downtown Silver Spring. While this is the same time and place for prayers each Saturday, February 11 of this year was special and focused on the call to defund the federal funding of this alleged nonprofit. Every Saturday during the year people gather about 8am until 11am; a Group Rosary usually starts at 9:30am.

With reason to think that Planned Parenthood in Silver Spring will close by Easter, there remains the

need to keep up a presence there until it does close. At this special February 11 gathering, speakers included Andrew Moore from The Susan B. Anthony List. He came to the United States from his home of Christchurch, New Zealand, where he had helped re-establish the March for Life there.

In the US, Andrew launched AbortionWiki, a comprehensive online database of the abortion industry. He also helped coordinate the #Gosnell TweetFest which was successful in drawing public attention to the murder trial of late-term abortionist Kermit Gosnell. He lives in the DC Metro area with his wife and two sons, who were also at the gathering.

OPT



LOL parishioner Margaret Sheridan with CTK OPT editor and CTK parishioner Katie Holland.

SCIENCE LAB

Con't from page 14

the classroom, they are germinating seeds to observe how roots grow. Fifth-grade students are excited to use their new tabletop greenhouse to examine the entire life cycle of Wisconsin Fast Plants – germination to seed production in only 35 days! Seventh-grade students just started a long-term research project. Currently, students are making observations of the seeds they have chosen to germinate. After a few weeks of observations, students will develop questions and then carry out their own experiments to answer those questions.

Mrs. Cheri Wood, St. Bernadette School Principal, shares, "The goal is that our students will use the skills and knowledge that they gain in activities like those in the lab to develop interesting independent

experiments for the eighth-grade science fair, cultivate a lifelong love and confidence for the sciences as well as prepare our students for the rigor of high school science courses of study." She goes on to say, "Every day is a fun, new experience in our lab. As a former biology teacher, I love to interact with students of all grade levels in this well-designed space. It is an exciting place to spend the day." Director of Development, Hilary Bednarz shares, "St. Bernadette School is deeply committed to a well-rounded academic experience for all of our students including a high value for inquiry based, STEM directed instruction for all. Our students will be the scientific pioneers, researchers, and source of much discovery in the years ahead. Fostering this exposure and building their confidence in the sciences is critical to their opportunities and success."

OPT

Christ the King Church Militant Project

By Katie Holland, Parish Editor, in conjunction with Chris Tan and Noel Augustyn

Christ the King parishioners Chris Tan and Noel Augustyn were interviewed Saturday March 4 by St. Michael Media, a Detroit group documenting and archiving the memories of pre-Vatican2 Catholics and conducted by Michael Voris, Senior Executive Producer of the Internet program, Church Militant. Thirty people were selected nationwide to be interviewed.

Noel Augustyn found that the interview focused on three areas of Church life that have changed significantly since Vatican II: Liturgy, Discipline and Church Authority. The liturgical changes most visible are, of course, the total use of the vernacular vs. Latin, in the Mass (although never mandated by the Council), and the priest offering the Holy Sacrifice *facing the people*. Mentioned during the interview, was also the near elimination of collective popular devotions, e.g. rosary devotions, Stations of the Cross, litanies, 40 Hours Devotions, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament — all of which made Catholic life prior to the Council so rich. As to Discipline, the biggest change in the US was the elimination of abstaining from eating meat on every Friday throughout the entire year.

With many of the Faithful not understanding the difference



Chris Tan



Noel Augustyn

between Discipline and Dogma, they confused Sunday Worship with Friday abstinence, and Lenten discipline, and thought that if one now became optional, so would the other, hence contributing to the massive reduction in regular Sunday Mass attendance. Finally, there are now no disciplinary actions, in the sense of exercising authority, taken by

bishops against Catholic public figures who openly cooperate with evil and give scandal. Thus, in 1962, the Archbishop of New Orleans publicly excommunicated three Catholic public figures in his Archdiocese who were segregationists. In contrast, no "Catholic" public figures today are excommunicated for their public support of abortion.

Chris Tan was interviewed directly after Noel, on the feeling of what it was like to grow up Catholic in the 1950s and live through the Vatican II and subsequent changes. One thing prior to Vatican II, Church dogma and Discipline were important to Catholics, prompting Chris to recall how her mother checked to see if certain foods were permissible on "Ember Days". She found her First Communion Prayer book and some May procession pictures. Michael Voris seemed taken with the prayer book, noticing that her mother had written the date of her Confirmation in there, as well as that of the celebrant, Bishop Patrick O'Boyle. Voris knew a lot about Patrick O'Boyle, which got Chris hoping that someone would write about his life soon. He was a Bishop in the "old mold that we could use a little more of now!" She added if she wrote a book she would call it "Patrick O'Boyle Slapped My Cheek" ("because in those days we still received the blow on the cheek to remind us that we would need to suffer").

OPT



The Soup Supper servers, Ofilio and Hilda Quezada, and Terrie Adula on their left.

Lent for Christ The King Church

Tradition continued at Christ the King on Ash Wednesday, when the final Mass of the evening ended with a Soup Supper. Parishioners brought the soup and supplies, with other volunteering to setup, serve, cleanup afterwards.

During Lent, that is, March 1 until April 12, Christ the King is adding a 7am daily Mass for

Tuesday through Friday, to make it easier for working parishioners to attend Mass during this special season. The regularly scheduled 9:15am Mass Monday through Friday remains, as does the Saturday 8:30am Mass. Additionally, the schedule for Confessions has also changed; from March 8 through April 12, Confessions will be on

Wednesday evening 6-7pm, Fridays 6-7pm (replacing Thursday which had been the norm) and Saturday from 3-3:30pm.

Each Friday March 3 through April 7, there will be bilingual Stations of the Cross in the Church, followed by Holy Hour and Benediction.

OPT



Confirmation Retreat 2017

The St Rose Confirmation Retreat was held at the Wabanna Camp and Conference Center, February 17 and 19. Established in 1941, Wabanna Camp and Retreat Center is a non-profit, non-denominational Christian ministry located in Edgewater, Maryland, on a 23-acre point where the Rhode and West Rivers converge into the Chesapeake Bay.



Renowned Catholic musician Sarah Hart led a morning of reflection for the women of St. Rose on February 18. Sarah presented a retreat "Sisters of Christ." It was a morning of prayer, reflection, sharing and music. We were so blessed to have Sarah share her gifts with us. Photo by Chris Jeffrey



Mass for Life

On Friday, January 27, the St. Rose of Lima Youth Group attended the Youth Rally and Mass for Life at the Verizon Center in Wash., DC. The Mass was followed by the March for Life on the National Mall.

LEGACY

Con't from page 15

as the community built up, they rented the Langley Park movie theater for their Sunday masses. This group of builders became known as St. Camillus Parish and eventually they worked with the Archdiocese to buy land a few miles up New Hampshire Ave. and they went from building community to building structures.

It began with a school and a convent in 1954, but the building continued for decades. The school building and convent expanded three times, a large church was built in the 1970s, and within the last decade the parish gave its last stretch of developable land to Victory Housing to build an apartment residence for low-income seniors.

All throughout this process of building from 1952 to now, a devoted man name Ron Dickenson was constantly involved with the building. Mr. Dickenson was a veteran of the Marines and a convert to Catholicism whose day job was in engineering with IBM doing work that helped the Apollo Space Missions fly. Ron was perhaps just as involved in his beloved St. Camillus Parish as he was with work. Ron was on the original committees that built the school building and expanded it, he was involved with getting the church's architecture approved by Cardinal O'Boyle, and he was the driving force in getting Victory Oaks at St. Camillus built.

Just as much as Ron had a passion for making sure the parish had great facilities that were able to serve people's needs, he was also a cornerstone of building up the

community. Ron's kids attended St. Camillus School and Ron helped to establish many groups and activities at St. Camillus Parish over the years. As recently as last spring, Ron was volunteering to help 3rd graders at SFIS learn about the birds that live in our neighborhood habitat.

On February 17, Ron Dickenson, one of the fathers of St. Camillus Parish, passed away at 87. Saint Francis International School would not have the resources needed to serve so many children today without the building that Mr. Dickenson was devoted to. The physical resources of the St. Camillus campus and the friendship and community that Ron built are a legacy we hope to continue to build on at Saint Francis International School for generations to come.

OPT

CHANGE

Con't from page 15

recent mission trip to St. Antoine School in Haiti.

Middle school language arts teacher Mrs. Danina Garcia-Fuller talked about her experiences as an AmeriCorps volunteer work-

ing among the homeless in Seattle. Resource teacher Mrs. Jean Gaes talked about her time working with Servant of God Dorothy Day in the Catholic Worker in New York. Finally, Pre-K teacher Mrs. Jan Whitley, who is going through cancer treatment, talked about her commitment to participate in the Walk to End Breast Cancer later

this spring.

Throughout Lent the SFIS almsgiving campaign, #change4change, will collect money from students to support St. Antoine School in Haiti as the chosen international charity and Kairos Prison Ministry will be the domestic charity recipient.

OPT

CROSS

Con't from page 18

Solidarity

Donate money to help: provide teacher salaries and lunch for a child in secondary school; help in the recovery efforts from Hurricane Matthew in Baradères, Haiti

Preferential Option for the Poor

Donate \$25 to Meals on Wheels to provide a meal for a week for a homebound person

Donate disposable diapers (12 lbs. or more), baby lotion, baby shampoo, to C-4 Baby Closet.

Donate to the Spanish Catholic Center Clinic: low dose aspirin,

Ibuprofen, Tylenol, Loratadine, Benadryl, and Miralax in small bottles for adults; infant/children's Tylenol; Neosporin and hydrocortisone ointment/cream;

Donate to Shepherd's Table: toothbrushes, travel size toothpaste, soap, deodorant, and lotions; rain gear: umbrellas and ponchos.

OPT



Rite of Acceptance

Six people came through the Rite of Acceptance on Feb. 25 to formally continue their journey to Baptism and Full Initiation through the RCIA process. Twenty-four parishioners (both adults and young people) already in the RCIA process, participated in the Rite of Sending at St. Rose on Saturday, March 4. They then joined others from parishes throughout the Archdiocese for the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, held at the Basilica on March 5. These Elect and Candidates for Full Communion are preparing to receive Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil. Photo by Chris Jeffreys

Patricia Sullivan Benefit Dinner
April 1 See Back Page for Details

St. Rose of Lima

11701 Clopper Road
Gaithersburg, MD

Fr. Agustin Mateo, Pastor
301-948-7545

Mary Zoccola, Parish Editor

mary.zoccola@gmail.com
240-401-0612

CAMPAIGN

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new and exciting information to share in their speeches. Who knew that President Buchanan received an elephant as a gift, or that President John Quincy Adams enjoyed swimming in the Potomac River?

There was a surprise visit from

the Washington Nationals' mascot Abraham Lincoln. He posed for pictures with the students in their costumes.

Jimmy Alexander from Mix 107.3's Jack Diamond Morning Show visited the 4th and 5th grade in the afternoon to share his vast presidential knowledge. He told the children that his love of presidential history began when he was in the 4th grade. He engaged the students

with a lively interactive presentation about our founding fathers.

At the end of the day, it was another successful "campaign" for the Presidential Tea, thanks to the hard work of the 4th grade teachers (Mary Harper and Sharon Kennedy) and the fabulous room Mothers (Deirdre Whitty, Jennifer Mitchell, Karen Graham, and Tina Marmor).

OPT

Eighth Grade: Standing up for the Sanctity of Life and Living Their Faith in the World

There are several events that are special for the eighth-grade students during the school year. Two of these events are the Rally and March for Life and the eighth-grade retreat. The Rally and March for Life is an opportunity for the students to move from sharing answers in the classroom to giving witness to their faith in the world in a way



Eighth-grade students Elizabeth Clarke and Jackie Gilmore take time to reflect on the role that God will take in their lives as they transition to high school.

they have never experienced before. They join thousands of youth and young adults as they stand in support of the sanctity of life from conception until natural death. The day begins before dawn as they ride a bus to the Verizon Center to hear speakers and celebrate Mass with popular Christian musicians. After Mass they marched to the Capitol to

peacefully protest the current abortion laws and support the right to life for the unborn. It was exciting to see it from their perspective. Several students commented, "It was amazing to see the Verizon Center filled with teenagers unified and celebrating Mass. We walked down streets in DC normally filled with cars but instead we yelled cheers about protecting the unborn. The crowd was huge. There are so many people who believe the same thing we do. We did something important. We spoke for those who can't defend their rights. It was something bigger than ourselves."

For the eighth-grade retreat the students spent the day in the tranquil setting of St. Mary's Church and Shrine and the pavilion in Barnesville. They prayed and reflected on the challenges they will face in staying true to their faith as they transition to high school. An activity with a blindfold simulated



Mary of Nazareth's eighth-grade class pictured in front of the United States Capitol while advocating for the sanctity of life.

the need to trust in God and choose friends who share the same values to support them in achieving their goals. Skits provided a silly and fun way to explore Catholic responses to real life situations and temptations they are likely to encounter. Working with spaghetti and marshmallows helped the students recognize that everyone has unique talents and ideas that are valuable in life. The students shared and prayed about their anxieties and hopes as they begin a new chapter in their lives. The day ended with Mass in the historic Church of St. Mary.



Mary of Nazareth students and Principal Mike Friel stop for a selfie with Cardinal Wuerl at the Rally and March for Life.

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: Beth O'Connell,
boconnell@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.

LEARNING

Con't from page 17

hospital wards, and veterans overseas.

The last part of Service Learning is reflection. How has this experience challenged you to grow and change? What connection do you see between this experience and your faith? Who or what made the greatest impression on you? Students answer these and other questions in their journals. These journals follow the students from second to eighth grade. It is wonderful to read how these experiences have helped students grow over the years.

St. John the Evangelist School's Mission Statement reminds us "to integrate Catholic philosophy and teaching with academic excellence. Our school is a community where the Gospel message is internalized and proclaimed in a living, conscious way." Over the last 20 years, Service Learning Projects have helped our community live this mission.

OPT

STARBUCKS

Con't from page 18

coach, who was a regular at the games). Throughout the years, the teams changed from sponsors' names to ACC team names such as Maryland, North Carolina and Duke (there was national powerhouse UCLA too).

In the early 2000s, the league made some changes to its format that sky-rocketed the number of players and parent spectators and, in the process, formed an even more welcoming basketball community.

The teams were formed to include players from the third to sixth grades. Since the league is not associated with CYO, it is not limited to SJB parishioners and students. The league includes players from St. Jude's, St. Bernadette's, St. John the Evangelist, St. Andrew and a few other area schools.

The format is in place today. The third/fourth graders play two quarters and the fifth/sixth graders play

two quarters.

"This was a brilliant change" said Michael Diokno, the current SJB Athletics Director. "It includes more kids and the younger kids learn a lot from watching the older kids."

Another great change was to use Catholic colleges with great basketball traditions to name the teams in the league.

"The kids love wearing the Xavier or Georgetown or Villanova shirts," says Diokno.

The league is the basis for other SJB intramural basketball leagues including Grades K-two, girls in grades three-six, and a coed Friday night league for grades seven and eight. These programs extend the community feel by attracting 180 players annually.

In 2003, Dennis McCarthy and Colleen Meltzer (Dennis' sister) decided to open a snack shack to raise money for the school and included Starbuck coffee (supplied by John Flynn, another long-time parishioner) as a sale item.

This was another genius idea

said Dennis McCarthy: "Parents could drink their early morning cup of Starbucks coffee (along with a donut) and watch their kids play basketball."

From there, the unofficial Starbucks League nickname was born.

The current commissioner, Brian Heard, maintains that the league has also maintained its success because it stays very competitive. The league treats the regular-season games seriously. There are referees that have been refereeing for decades. SJB alumni dads Marty Alexa and Scott Keenum have been volunteering their time for over 20 years officiating games in the Starbucks League, along with Dennis McCarthy and John Flynn.

"The league would not be the same without our officials," says Heard. "These guys officiate at all sorts of levels – high school, college, and get paid real money for it. We pay them with coffee and donuts."

The season ends with a playoff and a final championship game.

The championship winners are awarded trophies.

During the playoffs, the kids' names are announced over the PA sound system to make the playoffs special and memorable.

"The idea is to have a league that is fun, but also competitive. And, really, the two go hand-in-hand – competition is fun," says Heard.

One current parent whose son plays in the league said, "My child is more excited to play for his Notre Dame team at SJB than his CYO games."

And whatever happened to Michael McCarthy? He's had a long track record in the local basketball world. He currently coaches the Georgetown Visitation varsity girls basketball team and once won (with his father Frank as co-coach) the Mid-Atlantic CYO Seventh Girls Championship with his sister on the team (in 1989). But, in some ways, it all started with him back in 1967, here at SJB and the Starbucks League.

OPT



Mr. Long regales the fifth and sixth grade with stories of John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry.

FUN

Con't from page 19

working with Mrs. Cooley and Monsignor Filardi over the last couple of months to prepare for their Baptisms. We welcome Eric and Reese into the Church, and we will keep them in our prayers.

Finally, our eighth-grade students heard about their high school admissions at the end of the month. There was lots of excitement and discussion about who would go where, and the hubbub hasn't died down yet. Within the next couple of weeks,



Eric Marcelin on the left and Reese Stephens on the right at their Baptism.

the eighth graders will begin wearing their high school gear to school. We are so proud of our eighth graders. Every student who applied was accepted into at least one Catholic High School.

OPT



Everyone has caught the Dr. Seuss spirit! What a fun day at St Elizabeth School! Thank you, Amelia Draper, NBC-4 meteorologist.



Lifelong friendships begin at St. Elizabeth School!



The St. E's Class of 2017 show their strong school spirit as we celebrated Catholic Schools Week! #SaintsInAction



To close out Catholic Schools Week, students, faculty, and parents of St. Elizabeth School, above, gathered for the annual 8th Grade-Teacher Volleyball Game. A great time was had by all!

At left, Mrs. Interdonato's and Mrs. Blakeley's Third Graders at St. Elizabeth School are having a ball on Dr. Seuss's Birthday!

GOT TALENT

Con't from page 23

sion. Endearing vocal trio, Reese Ratcliffe (2), Brinly Hornbostel (4) and Weston Ratcliffe (4) stole the show with their rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame." The colorful and vibrant Holy Trinity Choir shared the adult age group prize in a three-way tie with Curro and Wright.

Instrumentalists included violinist, Isabella Pham (8) and pianist,

Anthony Kodjo (11) both prize winners in their respective age groups. Other budding musicians were violinist, Christina Andebon, (13), flutist, Naomi Miatudila (12), and violinist, Noah Miatudila (11).

God gave Anthony Pullen (12) the gift of dance and to share it with others, he wore his sweatshirt hood! God creates ingenuity to give us courage! Saturday night HIS talented 'lights' shone bright on stage at Resurrection for everyone to appreciate and enjoy.

Judges for the contest were Resurrection's Music Director, Annick Kanter-St. Hubert Organist, Bill Wisnom, and Children's Christmas Pageant Director, Kat Halpern. Knight, Lee Pfeffer was the night's Master of Ceremonies and kept up a witty rapport with anxious participants. At *Resurrection's Got Talent*, God's talented 'lights' shone bright on stage for everyone to appreciate, enjoy, and hopefully spark others for next year's event!

OPT

INT'L DAY

Con't from page 30

Haiti, Azerbaijan, Japan, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and India!

After students visited the different countries, they performed a musical show that featured singing and dancing from all the countries they studied. Finally,

students performed dances from their culture (Columbian dancing, Brazilian Dancing, Indian Dancing, Philippine's, and Irish Dancing). It was a wonderful day and a great opportunity for students to learn about all the different cultures that make the St. Jude school and community so special.

OPT

SHORT

Con't from page 1

ishes. Like PCR, UCR provides a range of inclusive recreation and socialization activities for people with disabilities living in upper Montgomery County. Dedicated volunteers led by Executive Director Jenn Lynn (JennLynn@ucresources.org) work with families to expand opportunities for inclusion of loved ones in constructive and fun activities. What a blessing to the up county this group is. I note UCR because just as this edition of OPT is out, UCR is opening its new respite care program. This ministry will enable parents and caregivers to have a little time off from their loving but sometimes exhausting responsibilities while a trained volunteer from UCR shares in a fun filled afternoon with their loved ones. Congratulations to Upcountry Community Resources for providing us with another opportunity to open our hearts to this often-side-

lined segment of our community. Faith in action.

Opening our hearts is our reflection this time. As you read this, there are tens of thousands of immigrants living in Montgomery County who are coping with fear and anxiety because of words and actions coming from the new federal administration and others. They fear deportation. Some of these are sitting in pews very near you and a great number are children. Many immigrants are so frightened they will not leave their homes to go to work or shop. The anxiety of some is causing them to keep their children home from school. Social services agencies are reporting that immigrants, documented and undocumented, are declining to participate in food stamp, school lunch programs, health clinics and other essential services out of fear that they could be deported. Regardless of one's political or policy views about immigration, this emerging local crisis needs Christ's point of view...to feed the hungry, cloth the naked, visit those in need, welcome

the stranger.

The call for solidarity with our immigrant brothers and sisters falls profoundly upon American Catholics because of our history in the New World. Catholics came to colonial America in 1649 to escape persecution and practice their faith freely. Since the founding of our nation, our population and culture have been enriched by Catholics seeking freedom from tyranny and persecution, escape from famine and disease, and in a passionate search for individual freedom and opportunity. From its beginning, America has been a safe-haven for Catholics from all over the world and Catholic parishes have been welcoming and supportive spiritual homes. Many followed all the rules in emigrating here. Others faced life-threatening crises and fled to American shores by whatever means possible.

Immigrants always played an important role in our area's economy. My Filipino grandfather was a cab driver in Washington for fifty years. Today our area relies on

immigrants to bus tables, clean our homes and businesses, mow lawns, and contribute other fundamentals to our quality of life. The Irish who we celebrate this weekend contributed significantly to the development of our great eastern cities and their Catholic parishes.

The current surge in anti-immigrant sentiment is an affront to this sacred history of American Catholicism as well as our American values. The harm done to our brothers and sisters is not theoretical or conceptual. It is tragically real and hurtful. So, I encourage a Catholic, parish centered response to the growing anxiety of our neighbors. You may remember a previous emergency in our county in 2009. That was the beginning of the "great recession" which caused thousands, especially the vulnerable, to lose jobs and fall into poverty and despair. Our Catholic parishes responded with Christ like hearts providing food, shelter, financial assistance and effective advocacy to aid those impacted by the recession. Thousands benefited

you're your Catholic hearts then. Today's crisis is greater because not only are immigrants suffering physical need, but also the searing pain of rejection and discrimination stemming from harsh and hurtful anti-immigrant rhetoric and activity. Christ's urgent work now is to help heal their physical wounds as well as the ruptures to their hearts. Our response cannot wait for debates in Washington or consultations in cathedrals. As always it must be done in our parishes by those who are the hands, feet, voice and heart of Christ.

Here are a couple of local resources that will be helpful to your mission: *A Resource Guide to Faith Leaders for Welcoming New Neighbors* presented by The Faith Community Advisory Council of Montgomery County (www.montgomerycountyinterfaithmd.org); and the Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center (www.montgomerycountymd.gov/gilchrist/).

God Bless!
Chuck Short

OPT

St. Martin's School Girl Scout Speaks Out

By Catherine Cooksey

Did you know that more people are afraid of public speaking than they are of snake bites, flying, and even death? Nearly everyone is called upon to speak publicly at some point in their life, making public speaking an important life skill.

It was this awareness of people's public speaking fears and the desire to help people overcome it that led Girl Scout and St. Martin's parishioner, Grace Schuler, to start an afterschool speech club, Speak Out!, at St. Martin's School. Now, two years later, Grace has grown the program to include clubs at Mother of God School in Gaithersburg and St. Jude's Regional Catholic School in Rockville.

This year, approximately 30 eighth graders participated in Speak Out! The club meets once a month after school over a four-month period. The students learn about speaking in public and how to prepare for a speech. The students then pick a speech, rehearse it, and get feedback. At the final meeting, each student participates in a mini speech competition. This year, six club members put their public speaking skills to use, participating in Our Lady of Good Counsel High School's speech



Grace Schuler, creator of the Speak Out! afterschool club for public speaking, celebrates with club members, Aaron Milton and Nicole Fernandez, after they placed 4th and 6th at the Our Lady of Good Counsel High School's speech competition for incoming freshman. Photo by Grace Schuler.

competition for incoming freshman, and two of them qualified for scholarships.

Grace first developed an interest in public speaking in 7th grade. Students from St. Martin's School were serving as lectors at the children's mass on Saturday nights, so she decided to give it a try. She found that she enjoyed giving voice to other people's words. Later, this experience would give her the confidence to participate in Our Lady of Good Counsel's speech competi-

tion. Grace won first place and a 4-year scholarship.

For Grace's hard work developing and executing her plan to create afterschool public speaking clubs, she will be receiving the Gold Award, which is the highest achievement awarded to Girl Scouts. She is planning to continue the clubs next year and is actively recruiting other high school students who enjoy public speaking to serve as program presenters.

OPT



St. Martin School's team of eighth and seventh graders won second place at the DeMatha Catholic High School Academic Challenge. The competition is similar in format to *It's Academic* and quizzes students on subjects from math, science, geography, history, religion, to pop culture. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School



St. Martin's students celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday by dropping everything and reading. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School

Science Teacher Is District Winner in Lab Competition

By Catherine Cooksey

St. Martin's School was thrilled to learn that their science teacher, Mrs. Maria-Rose Cain, has been named one of 18 district winners in the Shell Science Lab Challenge.

The competition for middle and high school science teachers is sponsored by the Shell Oil Company and administered by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA).

Mrs. Cain's teaching philosophy is that education means "doing." Even with limited equipment and resources, she provides the students with multiple inquiry activities for



Maria-Rose Cain is a district winner in the Shell Science Lab Challenge. Mrs. Cain teaches middle school science and math. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.

each topic to engage them in the discovery of science. When there is not enough lab equipment, she increases the size of the lab teams, creates team demos, or has students rotate through a lab station in small groups.

As a district winner, Mrs. Cain will receive a \$1,000 Shell grant to purchase lab equipment and other science education resources, \$1,000 in science lab equipment donated by Carolina Biological Supply Company and \$300 gift certificate to the NSTA Science Store as well as other benefits provided by NSTA.

OPT

St. Martin's Welcomes Fr. Rick Gancayco

By Patricia Guillen

Father Rick Gancayco, or Father Rick, has been a great new addition to the St. Martin's community even just after four weeks.

He has been a priest for 25 years and is the new pastor at St. Martin's. His mother and father are from the Philippines, but he was born in Bethesda, Maryland. He has seven brothers, no sister, and he attended Little Flower, the Heights, and Georgetown Prep for his Catholic schools.

Before he became a priest, he joined the Navy to, just like most of his brothers, serve his country. In the Navy, he was a chaplain where he comforted people in time of crisis such as death or family crisis. After the Gulf War, Father Rick decided to become a priest.

In his journey into priesthood, Father Rick never doubted his decision but was completely sure that he wanted to be a priest. He was influenced by everything in his life to become a priest such as his mentors, teachers, family, and his time in the Navy. Father Rick said that priesthood is a vocation that God calls a person to follow and doing so leaves a person at peace.

Being a priest has brought Father

Rick to peace and happiness in all his years. He has worked in many missions and has served in many countries such as Bolivia, Nicaragua, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and the Philippines. He believes that his experience in those different countries and in the Navy will bring a new experience and knowledge to the St. Martin's community.

Father Rick is inspired by the dedication, generosity, kindness, respect, and Catholic identity St. Martin's has. Father Rick will help St. Martin's grow, and the St. Martin's community is very grateful to have him.

OPT



St. Martin's students prayerfully conclude Catholic Schools Week with a Living Rosary. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School

St. Martin of Tours Parish

201 South Frederick Ave.
Gaithersburg, MD

Rev. Msgr. Mark E. Brennan
Pastor

301-990-3203

St. Martin School
Anthony Sahadi
Principal

301-990-2441

Catherine Cooksey

Parish Editor

240-477-8706

www.smsmd.org

DR MARTIN

Con't from page 6

The parish invites and welcomes people from other parishes and congregations to join St. Francis parishioners for this mission. More information is available on the parish website at www.sfadw.org.

Rediscover Jesus Lenten Small Groups. St. Francis Parish is also celebrating Lent with Small Groups gathering to read, pray about, and discuss the book *Rediscover Jesus* by Matthew Kelly. Over 80 parishioners have joined small group discussions being held at parishioners' homes and at the parish during Lent.

Rediscover Jesus is also available to parishioners not in Small Groups.

33 Days to Morning Glory. St. Francis Youth Ministry invites

young adults to experience a journey to Marian consecration during Lent. They are exploring the teachings of four greats in Marian spirituality: St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and St. Pope John Paul II. Consecration is March 29.

The Light is On and Stations of the Cross. No Lent would be complete without regularly scheduled confessions, which are Wednesday evenings during Lent from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30. Stations of the Cross are every Friday of Lent—except Good Friday—beginning at 7:00 p.m., preceded by Evening Prayer at 6:40.

Lent at St. Francis is open to all. Come and bring family and a friend. You will be blessed.

OPT

Anthony Bosnick is Social Concerns Minister at St. Francis Parish.

FAITH

Con't from page 6

wisdom of Matthew 6:33: "Seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be given to you with it...." These things that have been given to us in the RCIA ministry have included:

- Christ-like and supportive priests with the right gifts needed at the right time that they were needed;
- self-less, caring, spirit-filled team members, most of whom came through the RCIA process themselves, journeyed with a family member, or were a sponsor;
- generous, giving sponsors from the parish to welcome and share their faith with those seeking to come into the Church; and, of course

- the wonderful, courageous catechumens and candidates whose witness, example, and stories continue to inspire us year after year.

Finally, we—as a parish and as Church—continue to "receive a hundred times more now in this present age" (Mark 10:30) from the many who come into the Church through our RCIA process. We now are being "fed" by them as they proclaim the Word to us in Liturgy, help us to praise the Lord through music, teach the children of the parish, and serve in so many other ministries.

So, if today you hear his voice....

OPT

Terry Davis is the RCIA coordinator at St. Francis Parish.

LOBBY

Con't from page 6

Senate Committee by its lead Sponsor on March 3 and hearings cancelled. A statement from MCC said, "This action effectively ends the chance of this issue passing in Maryland for the third straight year, although the Maryland Catholic Conference will be monitoring the House bill (HB 370) until the last day of session to make sure it does not pass.

- MCC is also supporting the "Trust Act," which sets parameters for State and local participation in Federal immigration enforcement efforts. A position paper by MCC states that "the Act does not alter the criminal justice system from running its normal course, nor does it defend any criminal activity."
- A third issue which MCC supports is the "Healthy Working Families Act." It allows all workers to earn paid sick and time for "medical, counseling, legal and relocation needs resulting from domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault." This leave is

paid for people working for businesses with over 15 employees, and unpaid for those with 14 or fewer employees. The legislation promotes worker and family security.

- The "BOOST Scholarship Program" is also supported by MCC. The program "helps eligible students to attend the school best fit for their educational needs by providing scholarship assistance toward attending a nonpublic school."

Some legislators made time to visit Catholics in Annapolis. Others did not. My own experience was with District 39, where I live. I stopped by the offices of the legislators with others from the district. Our legislators were in meetings so we left information on the four issues described above.

We joined hundreds of others at the MCC reception for the Senators and Delegates. Auxiliary Bishop Barry Knestout of Washington and Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore welcomed the Delegates and Senators and encouraged them to consider the legislation of importance to Catholics in Maryland.

OPT

St. Jane de Chantal



St. Valentine's Day Celebrations

All classes at the St. Jane de Chantal School celebrated St. Valentine by giving each other cards and sweets on Valentine's Day. There were parties in each classroom and Kindergarten hosted the annual Valentine's Day Ball. Kindergarten students, decked out in party dresses for the girls, and coats and ties for the boys, demonstrated their good manners, dancing skills, and kind hearts to their family members and classmates as they participated in the much-anticipated annual event. Everyone had a great time at the Ball!



Chinese New Year Parade Around the School

To celebrate the Chinese New Year, the St. Jane de Chantal kindergarten classes donned a real dragon costume and paraded around the entire school with noisemakers and kazoes. As the kindergarten dragon entered each classroom, the eighth-grade helpers distributed fortune cookies to each student in the room. A fun time was had by all as the entire school celebrated the year of the Rooster!



Pedals, Pipes, & Pizza - A Special Music Outreach Program

By Russel Weisman

On Saturday, February 4, youth of our parish participated in the "Pedals, Pipes, & Pizza" program. The day included breakfast, a kid-focused movie about the building of an organ, a demonstration of our church's pipe organ, show and tell of various shapes and sizes of organ pipes, a walk through the inside of our pipe organ's forest of over 2,000 pipes, and a pizza lunch. Support of this program, and other such programs, is generously provided by our Friends of Music benefactors.



A Spirited Day at St. Jane's Open House

What a successful Open House! Principal, Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton (far right), and Enrollment and Admissions Director, Mrs. Catherine Tomsheck (center), welcomed new families, current families, and excited students ready to celebrate Catholic School's Week and the school's Winter Open House. St. Jane was able to show off all the reasons why the Parish community loves being a part of such an incredible school! After such an excellent turn-out, enrollment for the next school year is limited.

DAR HONORS

Con't from page 7

awards luncheon on March 25th during the Maryland State DAR's annual conference. Their essays will now be judged along with entries by student winners from other mid-Atlantic states.

The DAR sponsors the annual

essay contest nationwide, and it is open to students in grades five through eight. This year's assigned topic was "Celebrating a Century: America's National Parks." Students were challenged to pretend they were writing in a journal while visiting one of the 58 national parks, and identify its location, why and when it was established, and what made the park one of our national treasures. Riley wrote

about Acadia National Park. Joanna described a fictional visit to Rocky Mountain National Park. Nora wrote about Glacier Bay National Park, and Jack described Shenandoah National Park. Chapter members were excited that fifth and sixth grade students entered the contest for the first time, with a total of 144 St. Jane de Chantal School students participating.

OPT

HAPPENINGS

Con't from page 7

and through eighth grade sang, danced, and played the violin and piano during the 2016 Winter Talent Show that took place on March 2nd. Dozens of acts wowed the audience, which included performances by students, faculty, parents, and guests. Earlier, members of the eighth-grade Talent Show Committee had interviewed the performers, and during the show before each act, they shared the personal musical experiences and song selections of each performer. It was clear to everyone in attendance that the St. Jane de Chantal School community is very talented!

Celebrating St. Blaise

On the feast day of St. Blaise, February 3rd, Fr. Keith Burney visited every classroom in the school. He explained the story of St. Blaise, a bishop and martyr of the fourth century. St. Blaise was popularly known as the saint who protects from ailments of the throat. During his visit, Fr. Burney blessed the throats of the students and faculty.

Annual Spelling Bee Winner Announced

De Chantal students in grades 3-8 competed at the school level of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. After many elimination rounds, Isabella Totia was declared the winner when she correctly spelled the championship word: aardvark. Emily Blackstone was runner-

up. Isabella now advances to the regional level Spelling Bee.

Geography Bee

This year, de Chantal welcomed the first annual Geography Bee for students in fourth through eighth grades. As the competitive match wore on, the ten competitors quickly dwindled down to two competitors battling for the number one spot. After many difficult questions involving international geography facts, along with a hushed crowd awaiting a champion, the first annual St. Jane de Chantal Geography Bee title went to eighth grader, Timothy Shaheen, who will move up to the next round of competition. Runner-up was fourth grader, John Broome. Congratulations to all the participants!

OPT

Praying for a Miracle at St. Michael the Archangel

The St. Michael the Archangel parish is known for many things, but one thing that draws people to this diverse community in Silver Spring, MD is the charismatic clergy. One in particular is Deacon Carlos Hernandez, who literally and figuratively wraps the love of God around you as he welcomes you with a big hug and points all things to Jesus.

On February 11, 2017, Deacon Carlos was involved in a very serious automobile accident. His condition remains stable but critical, as he is still in a coma. The St. Michael's parish needs your help in praying for Deacon Carlos, that together as a Catholic family we can plead to God to fully restore his health, and bless Deacon Carlos and his family with a miracle.

Deacon Carlos is a kind, hum-



Deacon Carlos Hernandez of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in Silver Spring

ble servant of God who spends his time caring and praying for others, and now it is time for us to care and pray for him. We encourage you to pray a nove-

na, such as to St. Padre Pio, and if you are able, to provide financial support to his family. Reverend Monsignor Eddie Tolentino has started a parish GoFundMe page so that we can help Deacon Carlos' family manage the expense of hospital bills and lost income: www.gofundme.com/deacon-carlos-hernandez. His family has also started a Go Fund Me page that has frequent updates on his condition.

During this Lenten season, we are reminded that darkness, fear, and even death are overcome by the power and glorious light of our Risen Savior. While we pray for a miracle, we know that Deacon Carlos is seen and loved by Jesus. We trust that He will hear our prayers, and we thank you for joining your voice with ours.

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Parishioners of St. Michael the Archangel attend the annual March for Life in Washington, DC.

St. Michael the Archangel Stands Up for Life!

St. Michael the Archangel in Silver Spring, joined the hundreds of thousands in Washington, DC for the 2017 March for Life. In keeping with the theme of "the power of one", St. Michael's stood together as a parish as they prayed, worshiped and marched that the dignity and value of life would be upheld.

St. Michael's engaged in several activities that included hosting a vigil Mass and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, participating in the Rally for Life at the Verizon Center, and cheering along Constitution Avenue during the

March.

The March for Life is not an "anti" event - it is a true celebration of the beauty that is found in each life. It means celebrating and standing up for the dignity of all people - the unborn child, the elderly, men, and women. In bearing witness to the culture of life, we are recognizing that God is found in each individual we encounter, standing as one Body in Christ.

St. Michael's will continue their pro-life activities throughout the year, and look forward to participating in the next March for Life on January 19, 2018.

OPT

Married Couples Flock to St. Michael's Marriage Retreat

More than 50 married couples from Maryland, DC, and Virginia celebrated World Marriage Day on February 11th by participating in a Marriage Enrichment Retreat at St. Michael the Archangel parish. During this day-long program, married couples enjoyed an opportunity to reflect on their love, learn practical tools for enriching their relationships, and renew the presence of Christ in their marriages. Topics presented during the day by expert speakers included: improving communication; understanding your spouse's emotional needs; fostering forgiveness and intimacy; and recognizing the presence of Christ in the sacrament of Marriage. The retreat day closed with a special Mass, which included a renewal of marriage vows for the retreat



Attendees of the Marriage Enrichment Retreat are led in prayer by Monsignor Eddie Tolentino of St. Michael the Archangel in Silver Spring.

the retreat and could not stop talking about it well into the wee hours of the morning. We especially liked the way all of the presenters focused on the spirituality of marriage and the importance of putting Christ at the center of our relationship. The concluding Mass and renewal of wedding vows were the capstone to a beautiful day. We look forward to attending this retreat again next year."

The success of the Marriage Retreat would not have been possible without the commitment and support of Monsignor Eddie Tolentino, Deacon Curtis Rodney and his wife, Debra, and Deacon Ron Ealey and

his wife, Kitty. In addition, over a dozen St. Michael's parishioners volunteered to help organize and support the event throughout the day.

OPT

participants.

One of the couples who attended the retreat remarked that it "...was nothing short of amazing and did wonders for our marriage. We left



Members of the St. Michael's Youth Ministry prepare breakfast bags as part of the parish's continuing efforts to serve the poor and homeless of Silver Spring.



Adults ages 18-35 prepare to receive the Young Adult Blessing

Young Adult Blessing Mass

St. Michael the Archangel celebrated its annual Young Adult Blessing at the 11am mass on February 19. After mass, the Young Adult Ministry hosted its monthly Coffee Hour reception, which is open to everyone in the parish. The Young Adult Ministry hosts a variety of events, with their main events revolving around mass. Their monthly events include bible study on the 1st Sundays, young adult fellowship on the 2nd Sundays, and parish Coffee Hour on the 3rd Sundays. They also host adorations every quarter and are active members of Silver Spring

Catholic, a regional Young Adult Ministry. Anyone interest in joining or learning more can contact: stmikesya@gmail.com.

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St. Michael's Parish

805 Wayne Avenue
Silver Spring, MD

Rev. Msgr. Eddie Tolentino,
Pastor

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Edwin Méndez, OPT Editor
301-589-1155

Resurrection

Father Guides in a Tumultuous World

Pastor Fr. Jeff Defayette visited Elizabeth Seton High School during Catholic Schools Week for luncheon and clergy topic, *How We Can Live the Call to Respect Others in a Tumultuous Society*. Pictured with student parishioners Anna Catherine Patino and Pride Kwekum.



TEA PARTY

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After weeks of writing our thoughts onto sticky notes, and talking about characters, plot, setting, and theme during mini-lessons, we wrote our own book reports and made creative book projects, like dioramas and movie trailers. To celebrate the end of this exciting unit, we have a Fictional Character Tea Party. Each student picked a character from their Newbery Medal Winner to become for an afternoon. They brought costumes and we played improvisation acting games to get us in character. As we sipped tea and munched on goodies (kindly provided by 5B parents), the students were only aloud to

interact with one another as characters from their book.

Things got interesting as we watched 5B transform into their new characters, from a Grandma, Biker, and an African healer, to a child with a club foot, a Holocaust survivor, and an arctic explorer and beyond. Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler even made a surprise visit! We went around the room and introduced our new selves, including our new names, where we were from, and what was something we liked to do. We continued to interact with teachers and each other and ended the day with more improvisation games. 5B is a theatrical and creative class, so interacting with the characters this way was a fun way to celebrate the end of an engaging unit.

OPT

SWEENEY

Con't from page 1

his seminary studies at St Kieran's Seminary in Kilkenny.

Father Sweeney has served as pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish, Silver Spring, pastor of St. Paul Parish, Damascus, and of St. Joseph Parish, Landover. He went on an educational sabbatical in Rome for one year after his three years as pastor in Landover and returned in 1985. Father Sweeney continued to follow God's will as parochial vicar of Holy Family Parish in Hillcrest Heights and in St. Gabriel Parish, Washington. He also served as the spiritual director of the Legion of Mary in 1962.

After his retirement from Our Lady of Grace Parish, Fr. Sweeney moved to St. John Neumann on July 16, 2012. He has been savoring his



Can't take away the humor! Father Sweeney happily saying a few words to the congregation during dinner. Photo by Jerry Kelley

retirement and enjoying being with the 50+ club as their Chaplain.

OPT



Spaghetti anyone? SJN was packed with people celebrating Father Sweeney and having a plate of delicious Spaghetti! Photo by Jerry Kelley

Countless Good Deeds Glorify God

Drs. Sharon O'Brien and Albert Klavon, received the 2017 Manifesting the Kingdom Award on Sunday, January 8, at the Mass for the Solemnity of the Epiphany in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC with His Eminence Cardinal Wuerl. Nominated by the Pastors of their parishes, the award honors those who have served the Church in an exceptional manner, revealing the presence of Jesus Christ, and reflecting in a particular way what it means to live the mission of the *New Evangelization*. Drs. O'Brien and Klavon are mainstays of the Parish community and wonderful role models to have in our midst. God is good to His people.



Drs. Sharon O'Brien and Albert Klavon, pictured here in January with Cardinal Wuerl, live lives we should all strive to emulate.

OPT

Music to Warm the Heart

Soprano Brooke Evers and pianist Susan Ricci-Rogel enthralled parishioners with Valentine's Day musical bon mots as part of the Living Arts Concert Series. Next up is Irish music from Laura Byrne and the Hedge Band, March 19 at 4PM.



St. Patrick

Where In The World?



Finalists in the St. Patrick's School Geography Bee held on January 25.

Jonathan Rossi and Preston Shoraka (eighth grade).

Aaron Siegle, the school champion, took home the prize for the third straight year! Aaron commented, "It's a great opportunity to represent St. Patrick's School at a state com-

petition. My Catholic education has greatly helped with my success." He would also like to thank fourth-grade teacher, Marianne Bonanno, for her leadership in coordinating the Geography Bee at St. Patrick's.

OPT

BEST WEEK

Con't from page 4

and placed handwritten prayers and notes in the pockets of the warm winter coats that were being donated to the needy of the Archdiocese.

Students also enjoyed two special

assemblies. The first one featured magician Brian Curry's "Reading Magic" which combined his love of children's literature with amazing magic tricks. The second assembly highlighted the Maryland Science Center's Traveling Science Crew which brings experiments and demonstrations to "explore the world

around us."

Lastly, students served at all Sunday masses as lectors, singers, and ushers and filled the church with notes of appreciation to the parishioners who always support our school. It was a great week of celebrating Catholic schools!

OPT

Our Lady of Good Counsel High School Appoints Andy Stefanelli Varsity Football Head Coach

Andy Stefanelli has been appointed Varsity Football Head Coach at Our Lady of Good Counsel High School. Stefanelli, a 1983 graduate of the school, has coached with the Falcons for 10 seasons. Over the past eight seasons Stefanelli has served as the Freshman Head Coach and Recruiting Coordinator, accumulating a record of 71-2.

Stefanelli began his coaching career at the youth level for the Rockville Football League in 2001. He took over a disbanded Bears program and rebuilt it into a championship-caliber program over the past 15 seasons. The Bears program has won multiple league and state champi-



Andy Stefanelli

for the Montgomery County Bearcats in the GYFL (a spring allstar team comprised of elite seventh and eighth-grade players) Stefanelli has led the reigning Bearcats to the GYFL championship three years straight. In addition, Stefanelli was selected to coach the eighth-grade Maryland Crab Bowl game since its inception in 2009.

After his years of playing at Good Counsel and leading his team as captain, Stefanelli went on to play collegiately at Western Maryland College

(McDaniel College) where he graduated in 1987. He was a team captain his junior and senior seasons. Andy Stefanelli and his wife Estelle reside in Rockville with their five children.

onships during his tenure. Stefanelli has also served on the RFL Board of Directors since 2003 and is currently the league's Vice President/Director of Football Operations. As the General Manager/Head Coach

OPT

St. Andrew Apostle

A Winning Team

Congratulations to the Saint Andrew Apostle Girls U18 High School team, this year's Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) Champions. Playing against Little Flower at John F. Kennedy High School in Silver Spring on February 19, they won 52-45 to capture the City Title. At the half, Little Flower led 22-21 but Saint Andrew's took control of the game late in the third quarter and never gave up the lead. Both teams came into the game undefeated. Keith Ballenger, a longtime coach at Saint Andrew's said, "It was two very talented teams going back and forth with the lead for most of the game. We were fortunate to win."

OPT



The happy champions – from left Dani LeBlanc, Lauren Boissonaire, Nicole Ballenger, Caelin Broder, Casey Leach, Molly Stickell, Coach, Keith Ballenger (not shown Maggie McDarby, Joyceling Quieirolo).

Shrine of St. Jude

Congratulations St. Jude for the Win!

Congratulations to the St. Jude 12U girls basketball team, who captured the 2017 Holy Redeemer Shootout Tournament held at Georgetown Preparatory School with a solid win over St. Peter's, Olney. The girls, coached by Wayne Tull, Sam Parsons, and Larry Young, capped their undefeated season with tenacious defense and terrific transition play to secure the win. Pictured are Brigid Gibbons, Tina Young, Amira Villanueva, Stephanie Hidalgo, Morgan Best, Alyssa Tull, Gigi Ruiz, Isabelle Flores, Kalkidan Alelegn, and Sequoia Santoro along with their coaches Larry Young, Sam Parsons, and head coach Wayne Tull.

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