



Parish Times

Special Edition
Catholic Schools Week

JANUARY 2014

Living the Faith Together

FREE

Together We Can!

By Chuck Short

Happy New Year! Each January, we celebrate and honor Catholic schools. Most schools have open houses during the month. This is an ideal time for those who are blessed with parish schools to visit and witness the remarkable work be done by dedicated administrators, faculty and staff. For many parishioners, the school is a building they pass on their way to Mass on Sundays. They may lack contact with the school because their children attend public or other schools, or have no children or their children are grown. Yet, parish schools are an integral part of many Catholic parishes. Their presence reflects the



Chuck Short

Continued on page 16

St. Bart's First Grade Learns the Real Lesson of Christmas

By Maureen Skelly



St. Bart's schoolchildren show sandwiches donated to Martha's Table. Photo by Maureen Skelly

In the busy Christmas season, it is easy to get swept up in the hustle and bustle, and to forget what Advent is really all about. This year, the St. Bart's School first grade brainstormed things they could do during the "Season of Giving" and were hard at work sharing their kindness with others.

On Thursday, December 12, they worked together to make sandwiches to donate to Martha's Table, an organization which serves the homeless and impoverished in Washington, DC. Students created assembly lines and, with the help of parents and teachers, assembled, bagged, and sent off 143 sandwiches! It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to see how capable they are. Best of all it was a meaningful and tangible act of service.

OPT

Brookewood and Avalon's Epiphany Celebration

By MJ Acevedo, 10th grader



Avalon's kindergartners perform as Mary, Joseph, and two angels in the Nativity scene.

After New Year's Day, most students finished their celebrating. However, the Brookewood and Avalon community found a great reason to celebrate even after January first. On January 4, both schools congregated at the Avalon School in Gaithersburg in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church to celebrate the feast of the Epiphany. The schools celebrated the Epiphany feast day, also known as the visitation of the magi, as a reminder of God's revelation to the world in the form of the child, Christ Jesus.

The evening began with a "Procession of the Magi" put on by Avalon/Brookewood kindergarten and Avalon's first grade. Afterward, Father Roberto celebrated mass which was followed by the first public performance of the newly-formed Avalon band. The band was led by Jennifer Tifford who both conducted the band and accompanied the pieces on the trumpet at the same time. The band's first performance was delightful and brought smiles to the faces of all the audience members. Following the band, Ms. Joy Stevans and Ms. Grace Gilday led the Brookewood singers in performances of songs of the season with songs such as "Jingle Bells" and "Deck the Halls," and lesser known songs such as "Masters in this Hall" (an Old French

Continued on page 40

What do Catholic schools do to help the homeless in the cold? More than you think.



Rev. Msgr. John Enzler

I hate to make small talk in the newspaper, but how about this weather?

It has been cold. I mean *really* cold.

Early in the new year, I was fortunate enough to spend a few nights with folks who run our homeless shelters. As you can imagine, this is a very tough time to be without a roof over your head. With the holidays over, some of the homeless who have family in the area are back on the street after a short reprieve. And the temperatures dropped in the first week to lows we haven't seen in decades.

George Jones has worked at Catholic Charities for more than seven years. He coordinates the day-to-day operations of our hypothermia sites – extra shelters that open when the temperature drops below 32 degrees. On the day I visited, he had loaded extra cots and blankets into his car, grabbed a piece of mail that arrived for a resident and

Continued on page 13

Washington Catholic Schools Receive Highly-Prized Accreditation

The Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Washington today were given high marks and commendation by evaluators from education accrediting agency AdvancED. Fifty-six archdiocesan elementary schools and Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a division of AdvancED. This new partnership

Continued on page 31

General Assembly Convenes for Maryland's 2014 Legislative Session

Maryland's General Assembly convened on January 8. The Catholic Church in Maryland continues to stand for the vulnerable members of our society and to advocate for the human dignity of all.

This year the Church expects lawmakers to address many issues ranging from minimum wage and sick leave to stormwater and juvenile justice, from increased educational assistance and the Maryland

Education Credit to immigration and protecting the health of pregnant women.

"This session in particular, we hope to see legislation pass which exemplifies the breadth of Catholic Church teaching expressed in both the Dignity of Work and the Dignity of Life. We also will work for a balanced approach to protecting the Chesapeake Bay without imposing undue financial burdens on our churches, min-

Continued on page 7

Blossoms in Spring

Save the date for the 18th Annual Patricia Sullivan Benefit Dinner for Potomac Community Resources:
Saturday, March 15, 2014.
See ad on back page for details.

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CBN-MC Monthly Breakfast February 14

Join us at Dave & Busters

The guest speaker at CBN-MC's Second Friday Breakfast in February will be Missy Carr of Montgomery County Food Trucks. Ms. Carr is a small business owner whose Go Fish food truck is a part of the growing food truck phenomenon throughout the area. She founded MOCO Food Trucks which has provided these small business owners the opportunity

to come together to better provide their customers with information on where their trucks will be serving their delicious food as well as to address regulatory concerns.

To register for, visit: www.cbnmc.com

CBN-MC's March breakfast will feature Evan Goldman of Federal Realty Investment Trust. **OPT**



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Catholic Lobby Night 2014

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Join Maryland's bishops and hundreds of fellow Catholics on Presidents' Day - Monday, February 17 - for the 30th annual Catholic Lobby Night in Annapolis and become Activated by Faith.

Lobby Night is an advocacy event that gives Catholic voters the opportunity to speak in person with their elected officials about issues.

Get briefed on issues of importance to Catholics - and then meet with your legislators to tell them that we all have a duty to serve the poor and vulnerable, build up the common good and respect human life and dignity.

Registration is required. The event and a light supper are free. Parking and shuttle bus services between a nearby church and the state capitol building are provided.

For more information and to register, visit: www.mdathcon.org/main.asp?page=1680

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Catholic High School Scholarship Competition

The Lucinda L. Jasper Scholarship Fund, Inc. (LLJSF) announces the 2014 Scholarship Competition. The LLJSF competition is open to all Archdiocese of Washington graduating Catholic elementary students who are going to an Archdiocese of

Washington Catholic high school. Interested students should access the application package at www.lljsf.org. Students must complete the application form and provide one teacher recommendation and school report. In addition, the student must submit a 1500-2500 word

essay. The total application is due March 31, 2014. Submissions are accepted only online.

For more information visit www.lljsf.org or contact Charmene Alston, Director of Applications, at 301-780-5313 or lljsf@aol.org.

OPT

Free at Last: True Freedom in the Spirit

Legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Honored at Annual Concert and Mass

Each year, the Mass honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. draws Catholics of all backgrounds and not only celebrates the memory of Dr. King, but also celebrates the rich history of black Catholics in the archdiocese. This year's Mass was held at Mount Calvary Catholic Church in Forestville with the theme, *Free at Last: True Freedom in the Spirit*.

The Mass was preceded by a special music program by the Archdiocese of Washington Mass Gospel Choir, directed by Kenneth Louis.

Cardinal Donald Wuerl, the principal celebrant and homilist, began his homily by referencing Pope Francis, Nelson Mandela, and Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., all recently the



Martin Luther King Jr.

subject of cover stories in the news media. Each were examples of the theme of today's Mass, he said. "How is it possible that these individuals have stepped forward and enriched all of us, helping us walk in the way of the Lord in a way that we can experience the glory of God?" The Cardinal referenced the Responsorial Psalm for the Mass and said these individuals simply replied: "Here am I, Lord, I come to do your will." (Psalms 40)

"With a conviction deeply rooted in his faith in Jesus Christ, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave true meaning and definition to two words that are oftentimes today overused and devalued. In his life

Continued on page 31



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Index

Catholic Business Network..... 2	St. Catherine Laboure.....32
Christ the King..... 9	St. Elizabeth.....32
Classifieds..... 40	St. Francis International School..... 5
Holy Cross..... 4	St. Francis of Assisi..... 37
Holy Redeemer..... 11	St. Jane de Chantal..... 6
Mary of Nazareth..... 12	St. John Neumann..... 34
Mother Seton..... 39	St. John the Baptist..... 17
Our Lady of Lourdes..... 7, 24	St. John the Evangelist..... 33
Our Lady of Mercy..... 27	St. Jude..... 15
Our Lady Queen of Poland..... 38	St. Martin of Tours..... 14
Resurrection..... 36	St. Mary..... 13
Seniors..... 42-43	St. Michael..... 30
Sports..... 40	St. Patrick..... 8
St. Andrew Apostle..... 16	St. Peter..... 35
St. Bartholomew..... 29	St. Raphael..... 31
St. Bernadette..... 10	St. Rose of Lima..... 18



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Catholic Schools Week Schedule

2014 theme is *Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service*

Sunday, January 26

Open House

1 pm - 3pm

Please join us for our Open House. Visit our classrooms, talk with our teachers and experience our Blue Ribbon education.

Continued on page 39

25th Annual Giving Tree Report

Once again Holy Cross Parishioners outdid themselves in thoughtfulness and generosity. Six hundred tags were taken and the abundance of gifts on the altar was a visible sign of the true Spirit of Christmas.

On December 15, over fifty volunteers sorted, bagged and delivered the gifts to eight organizations. Amazingly, this was all accomplished in less than two hours. The "thank you's" have been coming in and we will display these on

Continued on page 39

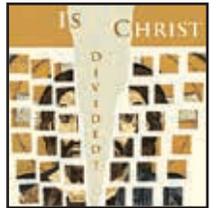
Christian Unity Service

20th Anniversary Observance • Sunday, January 2, 3PM

Holy Cross will host the 2014 Bethesda/Rockville area service in observance of the worldwide Week of Prayer for

Christian Unity, as it first did in January 1995. Msgr. Hill will preside and the homilist for the 20th anniversary service will be Bishop Richard Graham, Metropolitan D.C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The service will highlight the spiritual gifts that each participating Christian congregation brings to our area. Special music will be provided by the combined choirs of the participating churches under the direction



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Holy Cross School
Lisa Maio Kane, Principal
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Lurana Hogan, Parish Editor
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Continued on page 39

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL...

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OPEN HOUSE

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By Ismael Hernandez-Cruz, Cap Corp Volunteer

The Saint Francis Athletic Association gives children the opportunity to develop physically, socially, and spiritually

Many students enjoy playing sports and here at Saint Francis they have taken the opportunities to play provided by the Saint Francis Athletic Association! Currently in the middle of basketball season, conversation in the cafeteria on Mondays often centers around the games over the weekend.

However, basketball season is not the first sport season for the students. Soccer season kicked off the school year, running from August through October. Saint Francis had two teams: a varsity squad, which only lost one game, and a kindergarten through third grade team. "The most fun parts were having fun, scoring goals, and practicing with people from school, my friends," recalled Mario Camara, a seventh grader on the varsity team. Saint Francis also had a strong Cross Country which welcomed runners from other parishes not able to field their own teams.

Once the fall sports ended, basketball conditioning and practices began. The boys met at a local high school to train on the track. Coach Mike Parris, the varsity boys' coach, explained, "Sports are like life. They both require proper preparation and hard work. You can



The Saint Francis Lions girls' varsity basketball team.

have all the skills in the world, but in order to dominate and separate yourself from the norm, you have to be faster, stronger, and train to compete for at least two overtimes. Proper conditioning should not be an option, but a requirement!" The varsity and junior varsity levels of both the boys' and girls' teams then started practicing in November. That's right: junior varsity for both boys and girls! "It's special," Ayana Davis, a fifth grader on the team, described, "and exciting: we get to support Saint Francis as a basket-

ball team."

The beginning of December brought the beginning of basketball games. The teams typically played on Saturdays. Some games were in the morning, while some were in the evening. The Saint Francis players traveled around the area to play, in Upper Marlboro, Hyattsville, and Rockville.

Our most successful team so far has been our varsity boys' team, who are undefeated in league play. They have also played well in three tournaments already. The seventh

and eighth grade boys on the team are enjoying their success so far. Matthew Marshall, an eighth grader who has been playing since second grade, has appreciated the streak but still speaks of a thirst to do better. "I play basketball to play with others, have fun, and to be competitive. We've had a pretty competitive season, but we need to connect more as a team. It's been fun, but we need to try harder."

Our other teams are playing hard as well. As the season progresses, they battle more competitively and

with more skill than before. Elena Visoso, a seventh grader who plays small forward on the girls' varsity team, has enjoyed the tactical aspect of the game: "My favorite part is learning the different plays that we have and my positions in them." The two junior varsity teams are also improving as they play more games together as a team. Gio Garcon, a sixth grader on the junior varsity boys' team, said, "The best part of the season has been playing and having fun. Even if we lose, we can still have fun. As a team, we keep trying and trying. We don't stop trying."

As the season comes to a close, the players are looking forward to finishing the season strongly. Matthew Marshall, after describing a holistic analysis of the season, continued, "I'm looking forward to having competitive games, teamwork, and running through everything that we practice." Elena Visoso kept it simple: "I'm looking forward to trying to win and trying to do our best."

Right as the junior varsity and varsity seasons come to a close, another team begins its season: the rookie league boys' team! This league allows for younger players to get more exposure to the game and the opportunity to develop the fundamental skills. Its first game was only at the beginning of the month, and their games go until the first Saturday in March. And soon the spring sports will get underway as the Saint Francis Lions track and field program gets underway. **OPT**

Going First Class

By Ismael Hernandez-Cruz, Cap Corp Volunteer

A young teacher with deep roots in Montgomery County Catholic schools makes a difference in the lives of the children at Saint Francis International.

Ms. "W", as her students call her, grew up calling Washington, D.C. "home." Elisabeth Wraase attended the Woods and Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart for preschool and elementary and attended high school at Georgetown Visitation. Growing up, Ms. W sang in the choir for Our Lady of Mercy Parish and along with playing piano, these activities impacted her decision to take on Saint Cecilia's name for confirmation, to honor the patron saint of music. Ms. W enjoyed reading and going to the library. This interest as a child has flourished for her and she is now pursuing a master's degree in reading education.

Ms. Wraase's love for reading drove her to be an English major focusing on creative writing at Lafayette College, but her desire to teach developed later. In college, she student-taught at a local elementary school. After graduating, however, Ms. W participated in Teach for America, a program that places recent college graduates into high-need, low-income schools throughout the country. She taught



Elisabeth Wraase teaches First Grade at Saint Francis International School

first grade in rural North Carolina and loved watching her students succeed, specifically in reading. "I decided I wanted to continue with that vocation. So here I am," Ms. W remembers.

Now Ms. Wraase is back at home in D.C. metropolitan area. After receiving a Catholic education herself, she is a strong believer in its benefits. Being in a Catholic school, she says, "adds this element of faith into everything that you do, which I feel like is especially important. It was something that I didn't see in public schools. It adds a sense of community as well." Additionally, Ms. W wanted to teach in the Archdiocese of Washington, so she is now here with us at Saint Francis.

Ms. W is excited to be teaching at Saint Francis. She started the year with an activity to motivate her students in reading early:

reading How Rocket Learned to Read to the class. In the story, the dog, named Rocket, listens to many stories but then realizes that he wants to read them for himself. Ms. W begins with this book because the students can identify with Rocket. They still have the joy of sitting down and listening to stories, but the books are becoming meatier and harder to comprehend. "It starts the year off the right way," Ms. W says. "It gets the kids excited about reading instruction."

She has already (hopefully) started a fun tradition for the first graders: Polar Express Day! First graders get to come to school wearing pajamas and carrying their favorite blanket or stuffed animal. Once in class, they listen to the popular story The Polar Express and then watch the movie made about the book. Students finally participate in crafts. This holiday keeps the magic of Santa Claus alive in the first graders.

Coming from a Teach for America program where teachers are expected to have a big goal and a big mission, Ms. W has high hopes for her students. She sees them becoming critical thinkers, problem solvers, readers, and writers. To achieve this goal, Ms. W has and will continue to expose her students to as much text as possible, both in books and through media such as songs and videos.

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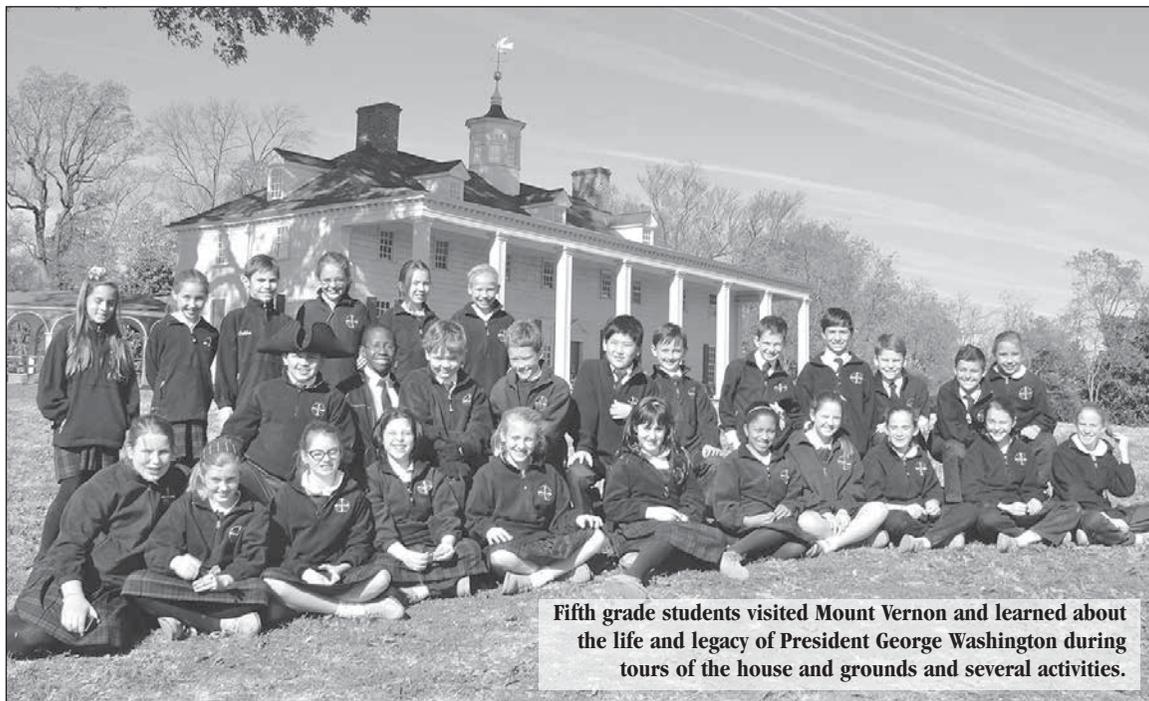


St. Nicholas makes his annual visit to SFIS to remind the kids to be good in preparation for Christmas

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See St. Francis International School Ad on Page 25



Fifth grade students visited Mount Vernon and learned about the life and legacy of President George Washington during tours of the house and grounds and several activities.

St. Jane School Students Travel and Learn

St. Jane De Chantal students have enjoyed myriad educational and fun activities so far this school year, with field trips, special projects, and community service taking center stage.

The eighth graders made their annual trip to Gettysburg last fall, enjoying a guided tour through town before learning about the conflict there during stops on the battlefield and Cyclorama. At their final stop--the cemetery where President Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address--the students put themselves in his shoes by reciting the famous speech from memory.

Second grade students also experienced part of Lincoln's life in a very real way when they visited his cottage in Washington, D.C. There, they viewed a movie and heard a story about his life and toured the house and grounds. Every one took home a stove-pipe hat made during the visit.

Fifth graders had their own presidential visit, spending a day at Mount Vernon and learning about the life and legacy of President George Washington. They toured the president's home and saw how he and his family lived, viewed artifacts in the museum, and saw several films (one complete with falling snow in the theater!) that brought the whole story to life.

The pre-K went on a field trip to Glen Echo to see the Puppet Company perform *The Nutcracker* shortly before Christmas. The class also enjoyed participating in its first Christmas Pageant and loved being the littlest lambs in the show. A few days later, the classroom was transformed into a winter wonderland and was filled with parents, grandparents, and other relatives and friends who joined the little ones in a singing and dancing party to celebrate the Christmas season.

The sixth grade began preparing for their annual musical. It's

always fun to try and guess which show will be performed--no musical has ever been repeated at St. Jane De Chantal. The 2014 sixth grade play will be Disney's *The Little Mermaid*.

Learning about the world around us goes to physical education and art class this year, where the teachers have teamed up to bring the Olympic Games to campus. P.E. class students chose four countries and students in grades three through eight were each assigned to one. During class, alternating captains lead their teams through games of volleyball, handball, basketball, floor hockey, and relay running, with teams earning points for their respective countries. At the end of the program, students will receive gold, silver, and bronze medals in a school closing ceremony. The Olympics are also carrying through to art, where students are working on themed projects to bring the games home to Bethesda.

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Cross Country Champions

St. Jane De Chantal's 100-member cross country team took first place in every meet of the 2013 CYO championship meet in October. Varsity and junior varsity boys and girls placed first in each of their races, competing against 22 other diocesan schools under Head Coach Catie Skibo and Assistant Coaches Bernard Durkin, Damon Steel, and Billy Kirvan.

First through eighth graders competed in one- and two-mile races throughout the season; the parish cross country team is just four years old and has already won six championship titles. They also developed a reputation for good sportsmanship and a willingness to work together and help others throughout the season.

Several students placed in the

top 20 for their divisions. In the 8U girls division: Ellie Priest, Mary Bailey, Kate Campbell, Claire Campbell, and Jenn Maxwell; 8U boys division: Colin Steele; 11U girls division: Brooke Lennon, Chloe Rickerby, Jessica Vincent, Maria DiBari, and Liza Goetcheus; 11U boys: Hamilton Sateri, Ryan Hunter, Will Kirvan, Hayes Goetcheus, Liam O'Connell, Robert Dimond, and William Coffey.

At the Varsity division we had Gen DiBari, Michaela Kirvan, Arianna Penney, Grace Carlson, Rose Dever, Veronica Vincent, and Michelle Aukward finish in the top 20. Finally for the Varsity boys we had Nick Lynch, Davis Goetcheus, Matthew King, Jack Ramsayer, Bobby Poch, and Andrew Lennon finish in the top 20.

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Spiritual Learning at St. Jane's

Students at St. Jane De Chantal enhanced their spiritual growth and learning through service projects, field trips, and special events last fall, growing closer to God while learning. The school choir took part in the parish Lessons & Carols shortly before Christmas, performing beautiful Christmas carols in between readings and songs by several other parish musical groups. They also presented the upbeat "Jingle Bell Jukebox" show for a crowd at school, and repeated the performance for residents of the Maplewood Park Place retirement community.

On December 6, the entire school heard the story of St. Nicholas and his famous selfless generosity. After that, each student placed one shoe in the hall outside their classrooms. Before long as just as the legend goes, they found their footwear filled with candy.

The Christmas season is more than a time for Santa Claus at St. Jane's. Students lived the mission of making it a season of giving, and the first grade coordinated a diaper

drive for infants. A school-wide coat drive offered much warm winter wear to the needy in the community, and every grade donated food such as rice, canned meat, and pancake mix to the Assumption Outreach Program of Assumption Parish in Washington, D.C.

In addition, students each assembled shoeboxes of soap, toothpaste, shaving gear, hats, gloves, and other daily and winter necessities for the homeless. More than 500 carefully-wrapped shoeboxes were delivered to the needy. And finally, the school again provided Christmas gifts that included toys, clothes, grocery gift-cards, and household goods, for a needy area family.

Fourth graders researched and wrote about individual saints last fall. After their reports were completed, they dressed up as their saints and presented to their classmates before participating in a saint parade around the school. They also processed into and out of the All Saints Day Mass in their costumes and answered questions during the homily.

Eighth grade students shared the Thanksgiving spirit by writing letters to members of the military serving overseas. Later, they visited the downtown Franciscan Monastery to learn its history. Then they stopped at the Blessed John Paul II Shrine for Mass and the Angelus and Veneration of the Blessed John Paul II relic.

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More St. Jane de Chantal News on Page 21

Montgomery County Catholics Bring Hope of Recovery to Africa

Catholics in Montgomery County are establishing links with "Recovery Africa" in order to bring a message of hope to Ghana, a country of 25 million people in West Africa. The hope comes from finding relief from the disease of addiction to alcohol and drugs. The approximately five million Catholics and other Ghanaians largely believe that addiction is traditionally a result of local forces. Recovery Africa encourages medically proven treatment and the practice of the 12-steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

In conjunction with the Catholic Archdiocese of Accra, Recovery Africa opened the House of St. Francis in August, 2012 in a low-income area near Ghana's capital city. It is a three-month residential facility with 40 beds. Reverend Sister Brigid Agbenyo is the spiritu-

al director of the House and says "I particularly love the children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder." To date over 200 clients and family members have received treatment. Recovery Africa also supports two Oxford Houses, the Mercy Center Rehab in Cape Coast and treatment programs at three hospitals. An Oxford House for women and children is expected to be operating later in 2014. Training is conducted by addiction professionals brought to Ghana by Recovery Africa.

The Recovery Africa programs in Ghana are being led by Dan & Agnes O'Laughlin, who are parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes; they spend half of their time in Ghana and the other half in Bethesda. Most of the funding for activities in Ghana comes from the St. Mary's College of California Class of 1963. The current objective is to

inform parishioners and others in Montgomery County about recovery efforts in Ghana. If you know of people who will be visiting Ghana, they would be welcome to visit the House of St. Francis. In 2012 and 2013, twenty-five students from Texas Tech and Georgia Southern Universities did service work with Recovery Africa in Ghana.

On March 20 a fundraising dinner will be held at 6:00 p.m. at the Rock Creek Mansion, Cedar Lane, Bethesda. Food and entertainment from Ghana will be locally prepared and served. Msg. Edward Filardi of Our Lady of Lourdes will lead the Invocation Prayer and Joe Monte, famed counselor at Albert Einstein School, will offer words of wisdom.

For more information go to <http://hopeful.webs.com> or contact Dan at 301-986-4983.

OPT

Call for Senate Action on Syrian Violence

Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S., auxiliary bishop of Seattle and chairman of the Committee on Migration of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), in testimony January 7, called on the Senate to seek an end to the violence in Syria and increase humanitarian aid and resettlement of Syrian refugees.

"The Syrian refugee crisis deserves the full attention and mobilization of the international community," Bishop Elizondo said. He pointed not only to the ongoing large-scale destruction, human suffering, and death inside the country, but also warned that a continued conflict threatens destabilization of the whole region because of the pressure it places on neighboring countries who have already absorbed some 2.3 million Syrian refugees.

Bishop Elizondo focused on the plight of 1.1 million Syrian refugee children. About 70 percent of them under the age of 12 have fled to neighboring countries, especially Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Most of them do not attend school. The girls face the risk of sexual violence or forced marriage. Boys face the risk of being recruited for the armed conflict back in Syria. Nearly 3,760 Syrian children have been found to be alone in the world, having parents who have died or parents from whom the children are separated, he reported.

Bishop Elizondo noted a special concern for minority groups in Syria, including Syrian Christians.

Bishop Elizondo urged the Senate to adopt the recommendations to pursue an end to the violence and to care for the displaced victims of the crisis, noting that the Catholic bish-

ops and affiliated agencies stand ready to help.

Migration and Refugee Services of USCCB (MRS) is the largest U.S. refugee resettlement agency, resettling one third of the three million refugees in the U.S. since 1975, and is a national leader in caring for unaccompanied refugee and migrant children. MRS works with over 100 Catholic Charities agencies across the country to welcome and serve refugees and unaccompanied alien children.

OPT

women and their unborn children, and that provide life-affirming assistance to women facing crisis pregnancies," said Andrea Garvey, Esq., who is the new associate director for respect for life for the Conference.

Again this year, the Conference will actively support educational issues and the needs of Catholic school students and families. "For every 70 students who move from a nonpublic school to a public school, Maryland and its taxpayers pay an additional million dollars per year. Right now Catholic school parents save their fellow Maryland taxpayers \$700 million annually by choosing Catholic schools for their children, without placing any burden on the public school systems. The Maryland Education Credit would boost nonpublic school enrollments by providing tuition assistance, while helping public school students with tutoring, special needs assistance and supplies. It would also provide assistance to lower and middle income families to be able to send their children to pre-kindergarten.

Now more than ever, Maryland needs our high-quality private schools and the students they educate," said Garrett O'Day, Esq., associate director for education & family life for the Conference.

OPT

SESSION

Con't from page 1

istries, schools and other nonprofits," said Mary Ellen Russell, executive director of the Maryland Catholic Conference.

In addition, justice in the workplace will be a focus for the Conference and General Assembly. Pope Francis, who continues to captivate the world through his powerful message to care for the least among us, speaks often of the importance of providing opportunities for meaningful work as a path out of poverty. "On the 50th anniversary of the War Against Poverty, the Conference calls on legislators to pass measures that help low-wage workers support themselves and their families,"

said Chris Ross, associate director for social concerns for the Conference.

The Conference also will closely monitor issues affecting the Dignity of Life, such as assuring healthcare access for the uninsured that respects conscience protections. In addition, "the Conference will continue to support measures that protect the health of pregnant

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Third graders and their teacher, Miss Hilley, proudly show off their giant toothbrush that motivated their school mates and parishioners at St. Patrick's to help the children in Haiti!

Monthly Outreach Project

The St. Patrick's School third graders spearheaded the October service project in support of Life Connection Mission, Haiti. Throughout October, the 3rd graders encouraged their school-mates and St. Patrick's parishioners to donate hygiene products, such as bar soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, and shampoo.

Led by their teacher, Miss Hilley, who created a gigantic toothbrush that stood 6 feet tall in the school lobby, the third graders set a goal to collect over 300 pounds of supplies for the children in Haiti. Not only did they reach that goal, but they exceeded it by well over 100 pounds. Because of the generosity of the St. Patrick's School

community, the children in Haiti will be receiving shampoo, soap, and toothpaste this Christmas and again in June when a group of St. Patrick's parishioners visits and serves the children in Haiti.

Congratulations to the third grade class for making a difference in the lives of other children!

OPT

First graders pose with Paddy the Badger (school mascot) after he visited and thanked all the children for selling, selling, and more selling this fall during the annual Innisbrook wrapping paper fundraiser. St. Patrick's students reached an all-time high sales record allowing for the school's Home and School Association to continue to provide fun and creative learning opportunities.



Special Guest!

He hopefully is only one of the many professionals who visit with students at St. Patrick's this school year to speak about the endless job opportunities that present themselves to strong and creative writers. Mike Kane, an executive producer for TLC, one of the Discovery family of networks headquartered in nearby Silver Spring, visited with our students and spoke about how he turned his passion for writing into an amazing career. He showed clips from some of the

programs he executive produces including "Extreme Couponing", "Hoarding", and "DC Cupcakes."

This writing speaker is the first of many assemblies to come supporting St. Patrick School's goal to enhance our writing program by sharing with our students all the wonderful opportunities they can have as gifted writers. It was an extremely fun morning that inspired our students to be the writers our teachers know they can be.

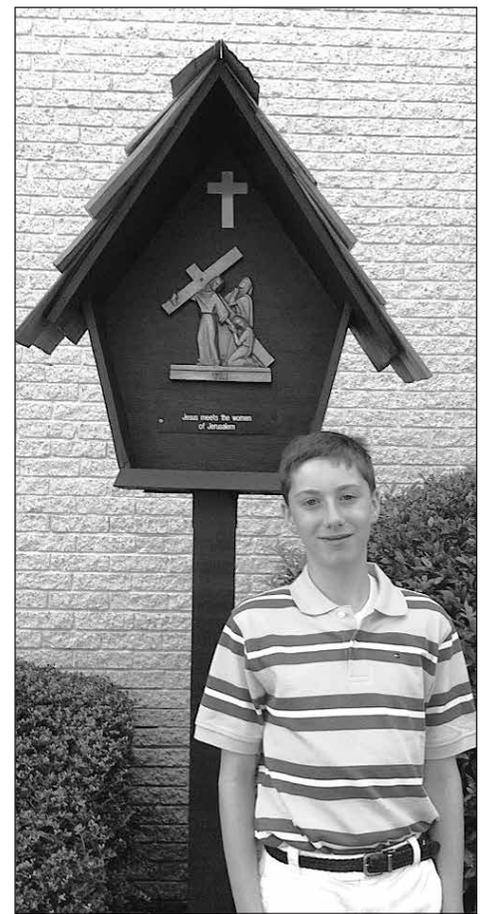
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Student Repair of Stations of the Cross

This summer Michael Perry, a seventh grader at St. Patrick's School, and his father took it upon themselves to repair and renew the condition of the Stations of the Cross outside of the church. They cleaned out the wasp nests and spider webs, replaced and painted the posts for each station, repaired the shingled roofs, and gently removed and repainted the bronzed figures.

Michael did this project in preparation for Confirmation because he believes that carpentry is a very important symbol in the Catholic Faith. He said that this project helped him feel closer to Jesus. Michael is an example of how the teachings of the gospel empower our children to do great things. Michael and Dad are finally done, and the Stations of the Cross look amazing! Great talent shared with our whole community!

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Seventh-grader Michael Perry proudly shows off one his great masterpieces!

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Catholic Schools Week 2014!

Faith and Service at St. Patrick's School

Students at St. Patrick's are looking forward to celebrating Catholic Schools Week

2014! Each day throughout the week of January 27, students will be celebrating their faith, academic opportunities, and seeking ways to serve their neighbors in need. Catholic Schools Week is a fun and spirited way for our students to celebrate the wonderful gift their parents have given them by making the sacrifice and commitment to send them to a Catholic school.

The children at St. Patrick's thank all of their teachers, parents, grandparents, priests, and the parishioners who are a part of their Catholic education and share in God's love of them and nurturing their love for learning, serving, and growing in faith.

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Pastor
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St. Patrick's School
Ms. Christie Anne Short,
Principal
301-929-9672

Parish Editor
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For prospective families in Pre- Kindergarten (4+) and Kindergarten-Grade Eight

Please visit us on Thursday, January 23 and Tuesday, January 28 at 9:00 a.m. to learn more about our elementary school (Kindergarten-grade 8). Limited spaces are available; please contact Miss Christie Anne Short, Principal, with any questions, 301-929-9672.

Please join us on Friday, January 31st at 9:00 a.m. to learn about our Pre-Kindergarten (4+) program that is in the process of starting for next school year (2014-2015). We are excited to provide small class sizes and options for full or half day to our families and neighbors. Please contact Miss Christie Anne Short, Principal, with any questions 301-929-9672.

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Civics Ministries

By Katie Holland, CTK editor

A brilliant idea was proposed to attendees at a recent nonpartisan Maryland statewide conference, Turning the Tides 2014. At this Saturday January 11th gathering in Annapolis, a Carroll County Commissioner, Richard Rothschild, threw out to his listening audience the challenge to set up Church teams to attend county council meetings and General Assembly committee sessions, to make comments as necessary, and as allowed.

His idea was to create a civics ministry within each Church, of all denominations, to effectively let councilmembers know that We Are Here, that we are listening, we know who you are and how you are voting and, that ultimately, we expect our leanings to be heard, or at least respected. It would go beyond marches, protests, rallies that groups such as the Maryland Catholic Conference hold to witness to the state General Assembly,

or that many join during the 40 Days prayerful assembly in front of area abattoirs. This would be a quiet but participatory presence. This would be a Truth to Power moment, especially before our alleged "Catholic" politicians, like state Delegates, state Senators, the governor, at some point, federal representatives in Congress (House and Senate). None of our Montgomery County councilmembers are listed anywhere as Catholic (but other religious "observers" could hold them as accountable by their ethical standards).

But Catholic or not, in Maryland or in the District (lines across which two parishes in this area straddle: Christ the King and Blessed Sacrament), the actions of elected political representatives should be held to account before their constituencies. We, in turn, should learn the Faith, know the Faith, live the Faith, spread the Faith. A real witness to the mantra Truth to Power.

OPT

Advent Concert 2013

By Katie Holland, CTK parish editor

On Sunday afternoon December 22 Christ the King continued its concert series with its charity Christmas concert, *A Service of Lessons and Carols*. A centuries old English tradition, the service narrated the whole of Salvation history through Biblical readings. Gregorian chant, traditional carols, and choral music.

Welcomed were all who wanted to participate as singers and/or Lectors: John Henderson, conductor; Paul Campbell, organist; Maggie Brown, Addie Mena, Kate Yeago, Kathleen Robinson,

Kathleen Schmidt, Laura Yackley, Tessa Betonio, Jaime Arreguin-Avila, Andrew Bolden, Eric Lewis, John Belkot and Alberto Gonzales making up the Choir; Anita Lee, Paul Hurley, Jose Mena, Janine Mans and Thomas Mans as Lectors.

Sponsorships ensure that for this and subsequent concerts Christ the King is able to continue prayerful, beautiful and uplifting concerts. Contributors have been and will be recognized in all concert Programs. Contact our Music Director, John Henderson at J.C.Henderson90@gmail.com for additional information.

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News of Note at Christ the King

March 1: MARDI GRAS! Saturday March 1st will be date for Christ the King's annual Mardi Gras Costume Ball (it is the weekend before Ash Wednesday and the actual Fat Tuesday). As before it will be held in the Msgr. John J. Dressel Colonial Room, from 6:30-10:30pm with dancing (til midnight), food, *those beverages* (for sale: \$3 wine, \$2 beer, \$1 soda/water) and fabulous raffle opportunities. Admission is \$10/person; raffle tickets will be sold through-

out the night at \$2 each, or 3 for \$5 (drawings at 10pm). Mark your calendar, ready your costume!

Lent: Christ the King will continue its concert series this Lent. The Lenten date will be announced at a later time. Contributors will be recognized in all concert programs. Contact our Music Director, John Henderson at J.C.Henderson90@gmail.com for additional information. A Day of Recollection is also in the works for Lent, date: TBA.

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Were You Once a Christ the King Parishioner?

By Katie Holland, CTK parish editor

Christ the King has installed a new In Memoriam plaque identical to the one erected by and in memory of parishioners in 1961 when we were established. We have opened the availability of these nameplates to all whose families or parents may have once been a part of the parish. You may want to consider having one of these bronze nameplates made in honor of your family. Nameplates take

about 3-4 weeks to be produced and shipped to the Church where it is then installed on the Memorial Plaque (and we notify you in the event you wish to attend the installation). You are invited to contact Christ the King's editor at the email and phone number listed on Our Parish Times' page for Christ the King or you may call the Rectory at 301 589-8616 Monday through Friday (office hours listed above).

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Epiphany Celebration

By Christine Tan, CTK parishioner

On January 5, 2014, approximately one hundred religious education students and their parents gathered in the Colonial Room to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. The assembly began with the recitation of the Angelus and the singing of two Epiphany songs: "We Three Kings" and "Sobre Campana."

The children then displayed their creativity by dressing for and presenting a Nativity pageant featuring the visitation of the Magi. The event concluded with an inspiring talk by Father



Parish children gathering at the manger

Roberto Amoruso, FSCB and the promise of "goody bags" awaiting the children after Mass.

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The Monthly Schedule at Christ the King

Rectory Office schedule: *Morning hours* Monday-Wednesday & Fridays from 9am-noon, Tuesdays NO morning hours. *Afternoon hours* Monday-Fridays 2-4:30pm by appointment only.

Mass schedule: Saturday 8:30am, 4pm, 5:30pm (Spanish); Sunday 8:30am, 10:30am, 12:30pm (Spanish), 4pm on 1st Sundays of the month (Tagalog); Thursday 7am; Monday-Wednesday & Friday 9:15am.

Confessions: Thursday 8-9am; Saturday 3-3:45pm

Rosary: Monday-Saturday 15 minutes prior to the daily Mass; Sunday prior to the 12:30pm Mass (Spanish)

Tuesday Knitting & Conversation Group meets in Springhouse assisted living residence next door to Christ the King for knitting caps and other such knitted articles to donate to preemies at Holy Cross

Hospital. They gather from 1:30-3pm Tuesday afternoons, except 2nd Tuesdays of the month, when our Pastor celebrates 2pm Mass for residents. New members are welcome, whether for knitting or just conversation - and you don't have to live at Springhouse to join!

Thursday Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament: 7:30am through 7pm with Benediction, except when a HDO falls on Thursday.

Thursday Bible Study Group meets Thursday mornings from 10-11am in classroom 7 of the Religious Education Building, using The Little Rock Scripture Series. New members are welcome.

Fourth Thursday of the month: Shepherd's Table in downtown Silver Spring kitchen serves a warm meal to the homeless every evening. Christ the King has been a supporter since the beginning providing volunteers to set up and

serve dinner every 4th Thursday of the month. Parishioners unable to go to the kitchen help by picking up pans at Church on the *first weekend of each month*, preparing a nutritious casserole (recipe provided) and returning the completed dish *the following week*. The Fourth Thursday Group of Christ the King volunteers set up from 4-5:30pm

Continued on page 28

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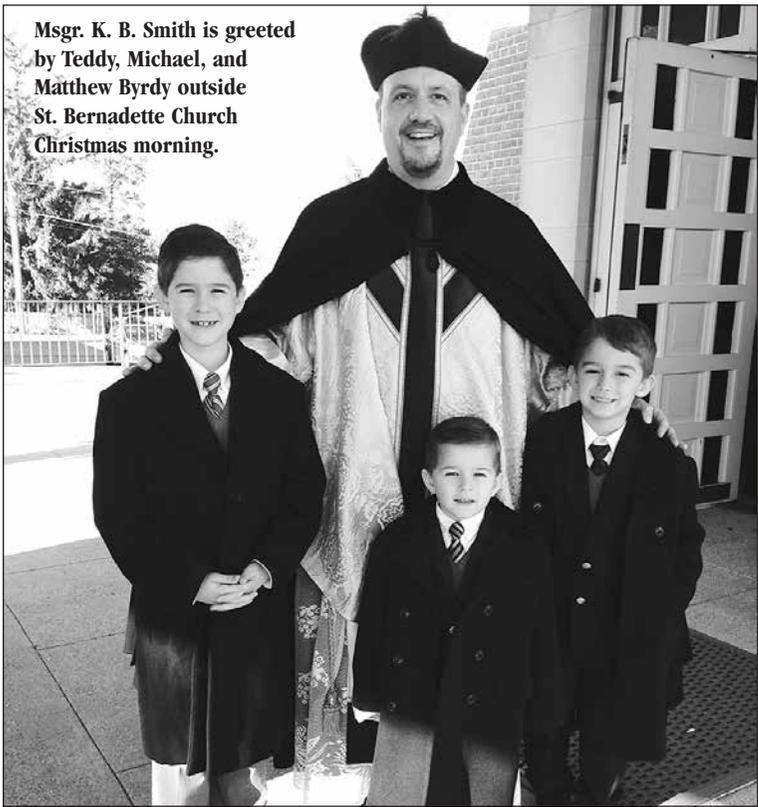
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Msgr. K. B. Smith is greeted by Teddy, Michael, and Matthew Byrde outside St. Bernadette Church Christmas morning.

St. Bernadette School Open House Planned

Kick-off to Catholic Schools Week

Located on the campus of St. Bernadette Church in Silver Spring, St. Bernadette School is a Kindergarten through 8th grade Catholic Elementary and Middle School under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Washington D. C. Schools Office.

Cheri Wood, SBS Principal, said, "This year our school-wide theme is *That We May All Be One*. We have much to celebrate at St. Bernadette School. I, along with Monsignor Smith, the faculty and staff, invite all to visit our school during the January 26th Open House, or call the school office for an appointment."

The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers as well as by the teacher. United with each other in religion instruction and in meaningful lit-

urgy and prayer, the students can further come to an understanding of the Christian life. "Elementary school is an important and unforgettable time, and for many of our students it is the most time they will spend at any one school." Wood said, "They will build moral conscience, wonderful memories and loving friendships during their years here. We feel blessed to have the opportunity to see the gift of their enthusiasm for learning and eagerness for life. In their wide-eyed wonder, we see the miracle of God's creation anew."

St. Bernadette School is the proud recipient of two Blue Ribbon Awards. In 2003, SBS was part of the first cadre of schools to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School. In 2001, they were recognized as a National School of

Excellence Blue Ribbon School. "We are a diverse community of learners with the opportunity to meet the challenges before us and achieve excellence through faith-based education. We hope that you will see the evidence of Christ's light in our students and community." Wood said.

Founded in 1947 with the sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, the school has maintained a Catholic identity and is built upon the traditions that foster the growth of each child. The school has been an integral part of the St. Bernadette Parish and the greater Silver Spring community for 60 years.

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St. Bernadette Parishioners Recognized for Spirit of Service

Several years ago, on the occasion of this 25th anniversary of ordination a bishop by Pope John Paul II, Archbishop Cardinal Wuerl acknowledged people from around the Archdiocese with a new award he called *Manifesting the Kingdom*. These people were cho-

sen for having by their lives and their work built up the Church and made Christ's presence known in outstanding ways. St. Bernadette parishioners, Dave and Mary Ellen Barringer were among those receiving the award Sunday, January 5, 2014 at a Mass at the Basilica of the

National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Among those in attendance were their son, Thomas, their pastor, Msgr. K. B. Smith, and several members of the St. Bernadette parish and school community.

Asked to recount the Barringer's walk of faith, Msgr Smith said, "They have worked most visibly in the Religious Education community and Boy Scouts here, but overall have been leaven in the loaf of our parish across the spectrum of our life and activity." He went to add, "In seeking to share their commitment to the faith, they first worked to deepen their own. The grace they found in this has led them both to be leaders among our parishioners who work together to grow in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son Jesus Christ."

The Barringers have been leaders in the men's and women's groups, respectively; continued to be strong in Scout leadership; and have led Bible study and other enrichment opportunities. Both have also served as lectors at weekday and Sunday Masses.

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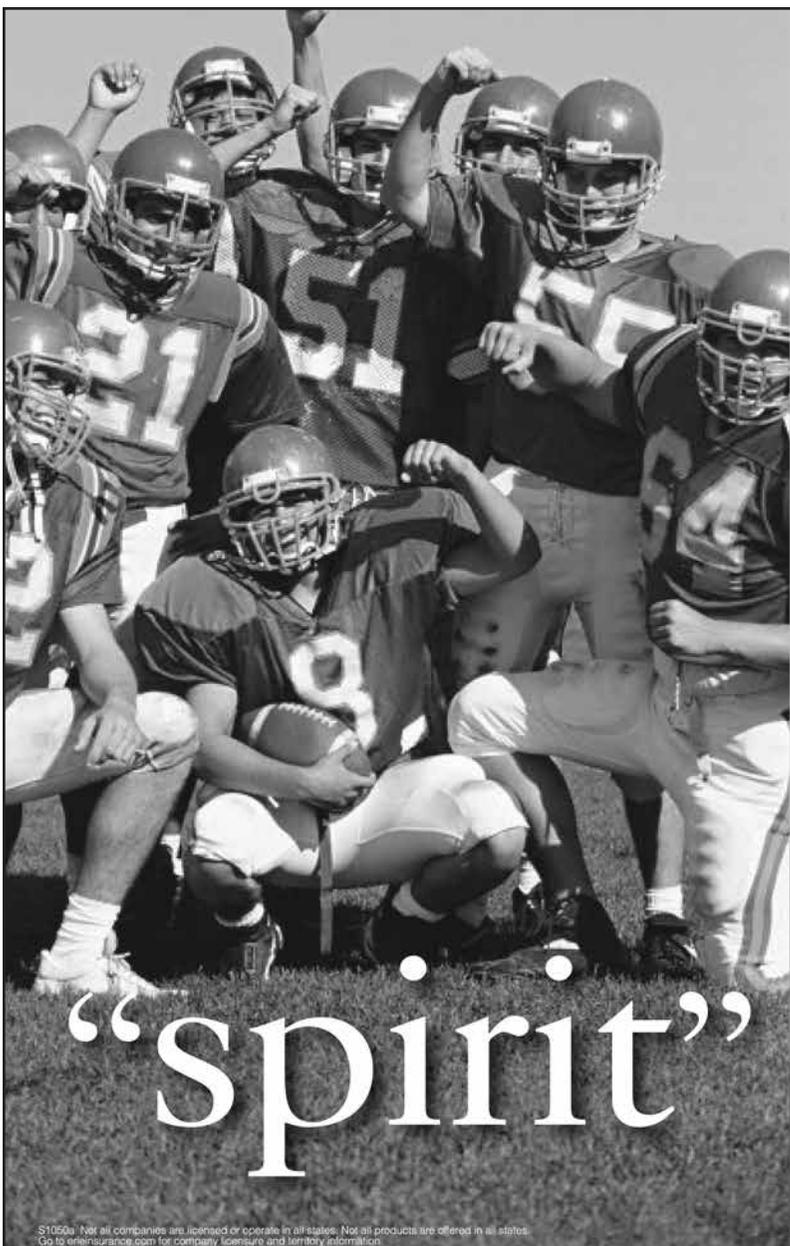


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Pastor

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St. Bernadette School

Mrs. Wood, Principal

301-593-5611

Clara Callahan, OPT Editor

callahan.clara@gmail.com

See St. Bernadette School
Open House Ad, Page 22

'Tis Better to Give Than to Receive

By Michelle Ardillo

This year Holy Redeemer School faculty and staff elected to forego their annual "Advent Angel" (Secret Santa) gift-giving to one another in lieu of assisting a local charity, A Simple House, in providing Christmas presents for those less fortunate. Teachers were assigned a child and given that child's Christmas wish list. On Wednesday, December 18, 2014, all of the gifts were wrapped and labeled. Dana D'Avella, HR Administrative Assistant and the "elf" who organized the wish lists and teacher assignments and set up the faculty room as "gift wrap central", said "The HR staff elves made Christmas morning so joyful for so many kids!" Seeing all of the gifts so beautifully wrapped and decorated truly brought home the adage "Tis better to give than to receive."

A Simple House began in Washington, DC, in 2003. It is composed of part-time and full-



Christmas gifts ready for delivery from Holy Redeemer Faculty to A Simple House recipients

time volunteers, and has locations in Washington, DC, and Kansas City, MO. The work of A Simple House takes place in the poorest neighborhoods of America, and it includes spreading the gospel through prayer, evangelization, and

good works. Volunteers at A Simple House aspire to the evangelical counsels and are formed by the teaching of the Catholic Church. More information about A Simple House can be found at www.asimplehouse.org.

OPT

HR Eighth-Grade Boys on a Mission

By Michelle Ardillo

Four eighth-grade boys from Holy Redeemer School and their fathers departed on December 18, 2013, for El Salvador to participate in a mission trip led by Father Michael Sliney and Brother James Wilson with the Legionaries of Christ. The Holy Redeemer contingency, part of the larger group thirty strong, included Tim Harper and two of his sons, HR alum JP and eighth-grader Timmy; Mike Kirvan and eighth-grader Finn; David Smith and two of his sons, HR alum Kyle and eighth grader Garret; and Terrell Roberts and eighth grader Johnny. Upon arrival at the airport, the group traveled from the San Salvador Airport, with armed guards, to the local town of Zaragoza, the central town where they stayed, prayed and ate. Holy Redeemer parishioner and parent Tim Harper said, "It was an oasis in the middle of poverty."

While the mission trip began on December 18th, preparation for it began much earlier. The missionaries were asked to collect shoes, clothing and soccer balls from their local school and church communities. As Mr. Harper said, "The response was tremendous. The various workplaces of the attending fathers, schools of the kids, and local businesses, all showed their Christmas giving spirit in fulfilling this request." Attendees each packed their two allotted checked bags full of shoes and clothing. The grand total of donated items included 900 pairs of shoes, numerous items of clothing and lots of soccer balls, and thousands of rosaries. Local sporting equipment giant Under Armour, and Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart provided some new clothing and shoes. Cash donations were used purchase



Left to right: Timmy Harper, Finn Kirvan, Johnny Roberts, and Garrett Smith on a mission trip in El Salvador.

more shoes and Spanish bibles.

The evangelization also began before the missionaries touched ground in El Salvador. In the DC areas, as they requesting and collecting donations, the boys and their fathers were constantly asked questions about the "Mission". Mr. Harper said, "People wanted to know about it and participate to help others. This was truly inspiring."

Mr. Harper shared an itinerary: "Each day of the six-day mission trip began with daily reflection and prayer followed by a breakfast. Each meal was filled with a "voluntary talk from an expert among us" directed by our leader Father Michael and then some wonderful words of encouragement led by Father Michael. We then descended on a local mountainside village. We visited people in their homes and let them know that someone cared about them. We would pray and sit with them. Our day culminated with soccer and arts with the kids. We led a Mass which turned out to be their Christmas Mass and Posada festivals. The villages would be fortunate to have a Mass once a month so our Mass was special. People said they prayed that we would return again (this group has been going for seven years). We sang Christmas carols at every stop,

including a wedding of seven couples."

The villages visited were very poor, mostly homes of dirt floors and indoor burning fires. Timmy Harper was asked to say one thing about his visit and he responded, "This is my second year going to El Salvador; people were so happy that we came back. They told us they prayed for our return. That made everything worthwhile." JP Harper shared, "What I noticed most was that people had nothing yet were so very happy."

The last day of the trip was spent preparing for the "Christmas Giveaway". Over Thirteen hundred people who had attended the mission group's Masses in the villages of Corinto, Carrelito, Brumas and Cimmaron were given tickets allowing them admission to this event where they could select from the items that had been donated. The people were amazed by the generosity of the United States. Everyone who attended received something for Christmas.

Mr. Harper also spoke about how Father Michael asked some of the non-Spanish speaking members of the mission group to lead a rosary in Spanish to those fourteen hundred anxiously waiting villagers. This vividly showed the power of this mission trip, having the missionaries get outside of their comfort zones to do what is not easy. "God works in mysterious ways," said Mr. Harper, "we went to give to others but we received far more than one could ever expect."

The group returned to the DC area on the evening of December 23, singing "Hark the Harold Angels Sing" as they landed at Dulles International Airport to the surprise and applause of all the passengers. Mr. Harper: "We were terrible at singing but very persistent."

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- ♦ 3 & 4-Year Old Half-Day Pre-K Program ♦
- ♦ Foreign Language Program ♦
- ♦ French & Spanish Beginning in First Grade ♦
- ♦ Guidance Counselor ♦ Registered Nurse ♦



For Further Information Please Call 301-942-3701, ext. 100

*In case of inclement weather, the Annual Open House will be Wednesday, February 12.

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." Luke 12:48

The JOY of Serving Others

Put Jesus first, Others second, and Yourself last. At Mary of Nazareth School, this motto is taught in every class throughout the year. Holiday celebrations including Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter are not only focused on goodies and parties, but also on bringing joy to others.

Giving up that hard earned Halloween candy is not always easy for nine and ten year old children.



In keeping with the spirit of giving, Mary of Nazareth School students deliver collected items to the residents of Jeanne Jugan Residence in Washington, D.C.

and needy positively, practically, and without judgment. It is a reminder of our own blessings and a means by which we can serve God."

Over the years, Project Linus has been a favorite for our fifth grade students and held that same promise this year. Our crafty kids designed fleece blankets to provide comfort and warmth to local children who are seriously ill. "The students were enthusiastic blanketers as they constructed their no sew blankets," said Ms. Janelle Thompson, Mary of Nazareth School fifth grade teacher. The Kindergarten students joined in this year and donated the ten fleece blankets they crafted to A Wider Circle – a Silver Spring based organization dedicated to ending poverty.

Meanwhile, our middle school students were busy collecting items for the Jeanne Jugan Residence, run by the Little Sisters of the Poor. Their collection consisted of everything from canned goods and paper products to shampoos and batteries. The residence is located in northeast D.C. and serves the elderly poor. A big group of Mary of Nazareth students and parents spent a Saturday morning delivering the items, visiting with residents, and putting on an Irish dance performance.

School wide service projects include the St. Martin's coat drive, Thanksgiving food drive for St. Martin's Pantry and Toys for Tots. We will also be collecting ties for A Wider Circle and books for the Purple Heart during Catholic School's week. Mary of Nazareth School believes that if serving others is taught early, it will lead to a lifetime of shared blessings.

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: Heather Long,
301-869-0940 ext. 6

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.

However, encouraged by the fourth grade service project, the students at Mary of Nazareth School donated over 30 pounds of that sugary goodness to a forward-deployed warship in the South Pacific, the USS Spruance. It was shipped to our service men and women overseas along with personalized letters of appreciation from our students in time for Veteran's Day. We also donated boxes of candy to the Fisher House, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda.

"It is important for our entire school community to serve others because it strengthens our relationship with Christ," says Michael Friel, principal of Mary of Nazareth School. "The service projects in which the Mary of Nazareth community participates impact the less fortunate



Kindergarten students Jack Burns, Katelyn Patti, Kurt Schlichting, Nash Kaufman, Ethan Gitau and Emma Antonetti take time from making their blanket to pose with their teacher Mrs. McGregor.



Mary of Nazareth

ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

† Proven academic excellence.

† Before and after care available.

† Serving preschool through 8th grade.

† Rigorous program rooted in the faith and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

† Low teacher to student ratios in core subjects of reading and mathematics.

OPEN HOUSE

1pm - 3pm Sunday, January 26, 2014

14131 Seneca Road, Darnestown, Maryland 20874
P: 301-869-0940
Principal: Mr. Michael J. Friel



Scan QR code to view our web-site
www.maryofnazareth.org

To the Mary of Nazareth School Community



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDING OFFICER
USS SPRUANCE (DDG 111)
FPO AP 96678-1203

12000
Ser DDG 111/160
11 Dec 13

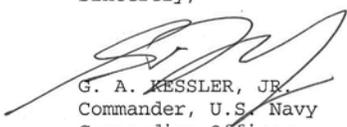
Students of Mary of Nazareth:

On behalf of the crew of USS SPRUANCE (DDG 111) I would like to thank you for the wonderful letters and candy that you sent my crew for Veterans Day. We hung the pictures throughout the ship and enjoyed all the treats and I cannot tell you how much it meant to us to know that people back in the United States were thinking of us while we are deployed.

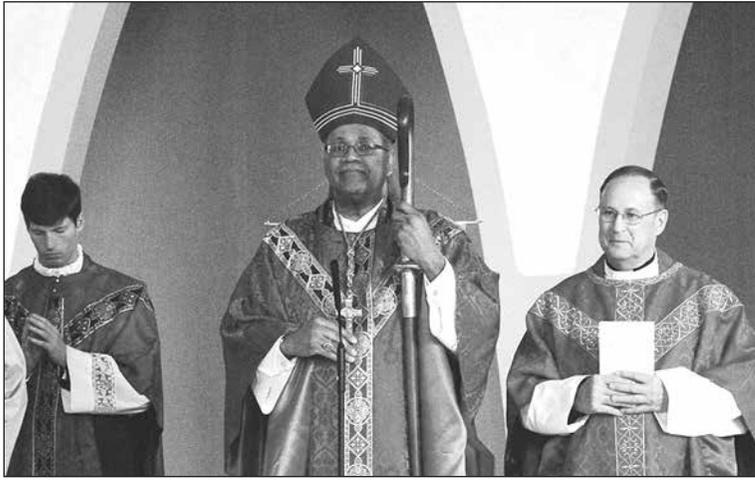
Being stationed on a forward-deployed warship is not an easy task. The sailors onboard SPRUANCE work hard every day defending America near and far. Their task is large. Their sacrifice is noble. While their contribution is great, it is the American people back home who really support the American way of life. People like you are the ones who keep our nation the greatest in the world. It can be through caring for others, giving your time to help the less fortunate, or even just holding the door open for someone else. Every time you help out a fellow human being, you are supporting the American way of life.

As we are deployed this holiday season, we will be thinking of our family and friends back home, but most importantly, we will be thinking of Americans like you that we work every day to defend. We will do our best to uphold our duty and support the great Constitution of the United States. We humbly accept your thanks as we continue to do our best to defend freedom and democracy around the world.

Sincerely,



G. A. KESSLER, JR.
Commander, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer



As part of the ongoing Parish Bicentennial Celebrations, Bishop Holley was the celebrant at a special Mass on December 15. A reception followed as parishioners gathered to meet the Bishop and thank him for the beautiful Mass. Monsignor Amey enthused "These Bicentennial Events continue to draw the parish together in celebration and have been very successful!"



NBC News 4's Tom Kierein visited St. Mary's on December 19th and addressed the entire school about weather and his job as Chief Meteorologist for the station. Kierein spoke about severe weather threats—complete with a pop-up book he authored – his decision as a child to be a weatherman and answered questions from students.

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



The BaconBots team from St. Mary's Robotics Club won second place in the qualifying tournament January 4, 2014 at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab in Laurel, MD. They will next compete in the Maryland State FLL tournament at UMBC in Catonsville on March 1, 2014. Great job!



The St. Mary's Schola Choir and Chorus were invited to sing at the National Christmas Tree on December 11. The group joined the band to perform a mix of classic and innovative Christmas songs. On November 24 the school's select Schola Choir collaborated with the cantor at the Franciscan Monastery for Sunday Mass. The entire chorus will return to the Monastery for another performance in February.

Casey Aiken
Attorney at Law
M&A
MOSES & AIKEN LLC
Attorneys at Law
Real Estate Settlements
Business Incorporation
Estate Planning
Lease Review
11333 Woodglen Drive
Rockville, MD 20852
casey@mosesaiken-law.com
301-881-4860
FAX: 301-468-6212
\$100 donated to CBN-MC
for each settlement or will preparation.

SAVE THE DATE • OPEN HOUSE
Sunday January 26 • 10am–1pm
Come kick off Catholic Schools Week and see why St. our Blue Ribbon school is an excellent choice in Catholic Education.

ENZLER

Con't from page 1

was preparing to visit three shelters in the next hour. It was 5 pm and he'd be working until 2 am at least.

A few days later, over in northeast DC, Augustine Frazier led me through his shelter, New York Avenue Housing Assistance Center. It was just a little after 6 pm on a night when the temperature was in the single digits. As we wound our way through the halls, we were greeted by many men grateful to be out of the cold. The shelter normally houses 360 men each night, but would be over to accommodate everyone who came seeking warmth. Augustine handed delivered warm clothing to one man, and promised to help another find a suit to go to church on Sunday. I wanted to tell him that the Lord doesn't care how we're dressed, just as long as we come, but I understood his desire.

The next night, at our Dinner Van program, volunteers joined me to serve hot meals and hand out coats to anyone who needed either. Students from Blessed Sacrament School were bundled up in layers upon layers, serving with smiles.

Catholic Charities is a critical part of the region's services to the homeless -- we provide more than 1,900 beds every night across the region. In Montgomery County, our work is focused in three different transitional housing programs that work with men and women

recovering from substance abuse. In southern Maryland, we run a shelter for homeless women and children or those fleeing domestic violence.

Its staff like George and Augustine, and their great teams, who ensure our shelters are open every single night, beginning the process of recovering and breaking the cycle of poverty too many families and people are locked into in our region. The volunteers from local schools like Blessed Sacrament, Holy Cross and Visitation who brave frigid temperatures to serve a meal send a distinct message of hope to everyone in that line – many of whom have forgotten what it feels like to have hope.

My work and encounters with our clients and staff have only reinforced my deep seated belief in the vital role of Catholic schools in the battle against poverty. The teacher who takes time to work with the student who is detached and struggling from a tough home life could be the difference maker in where that student goes to sleep later in life.

People are homeless for a thousand reasons. Sometimes it's a lost job or sudden health crisis. But often, it started years ago, when no one gave them the reasons they needed to find hope and develop the skills needed to thrive in our world.

Likewise, many of our great staff credit the role of their faith as they grew up in influencing a career in serving others. I know I count myself among those who can credit Catholic education with helping lead me to where I am today.

OPT

Celebrate Catholic Schools
St. Mary's School



Sunday, January 26, 2014

Mass 9:00 am

Open House and Tours

10:00 am–1:00 pm

600 Veirs Mill Road
Rockville, Maryland 20852

www.stmaryschoolrockville.org

301-762-4179

St. Martin's School News and Notes

December 19, 2013 – Longtime music teacher, Robin Blythe, retired after 19 years of service following the school's annual Christmas program. All the students and families sang a song to her and the school presented her with a marble clock engraved with "Thank You for the Gift of Music."

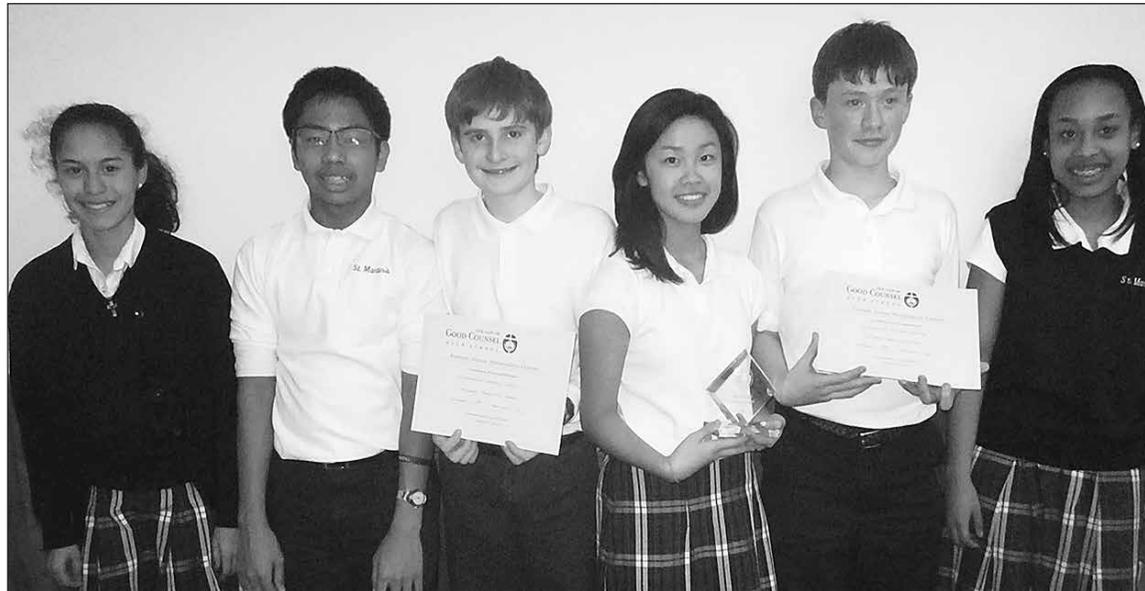
January 28, 2014 – Are you looking for a Christ-centered environment where your child can grow emotionally and intellectually? Then, come visit St. Martin's School during our Open House. From 9 am to 1 pm, 7th and 8th grade students will lead tours of the school. The principal, Mr. Andrew Piotrowski, and current parents will be available to answer questions. For more information, please contact the school at office@smsmd.org or 301-990-2441.

org or 301-990-2441.

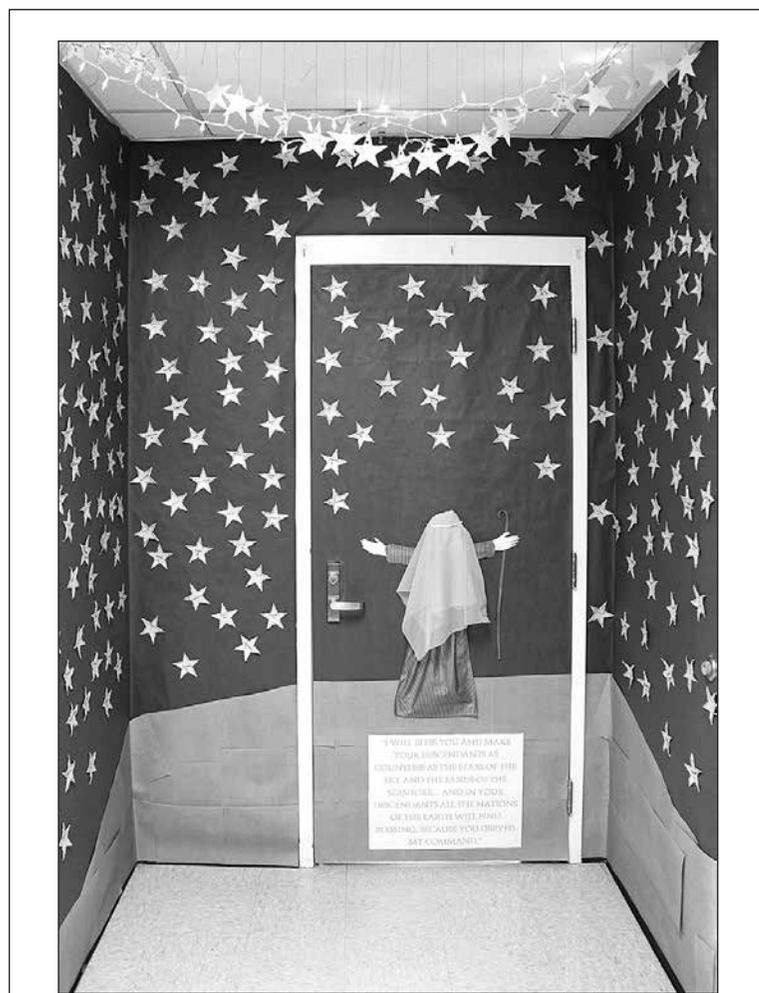
January 27 – January 31, 2014 – St. Martin's School celebrates Catholic Schools Week with a variety of fun activities, including bingo for students, a volleyball game pitting the 8th graders against the teachers and priests and Teacher Appreciation Day, which features a sit-down lunch for the teachers.

March 15, 2014 – Join us for an evening of fun and camaraderie at the annual St. Patrick's Dinner, Dance, and Auction. The event is held in the school's gymnasium and cafeteria. It includes a silent and live auction, dinner buffet, and music. To donate items for the auction or buy tickets for the event, please contact the school at office@smsmd.org or 301-990-2441.

OPT



Congratulations to our St. Martin's team who won a trophy for Second Place in the 40th Annual Good Counsel Math Competition, which included math teams from 15 grade schools. In addition, two of our students placed in the top 10 individual scores: Matthew Cain scored 3rd place and Matthew McVeigh scored 4th place out of the 90 students.



During the Advent season, each class decorated their classroom doors to representing a different symbol from the Jesse Tree. The door above was decorated by the 8th grade.

Reflecting on my first six months as Principal of St. Martin's School

By Andrew Piotrowski, Principal

Recently St. Martin's School has welcomed me and my family into their loving arms. We have relocated to Maryland and built a life here that is rich with beloved friends, rewarding hard work, and service to God. The students and faculty at St. Martin's School have shown me the kindness and generosity that they routinely share with each other and the world. Sister Sharon, our former Principal, did a phenomenal job of easing my transition, and the faculty taught me how to find joy in our daily operations. Father Brennan, our Pastor, showed me how the school supports the parish food pantry and the wonderful ways in which the church and school enrich each other. The children have inspired me by volunteering at the Lord's Table, our weekly offering of prepared food to the poor. Our students are leaders in outreach as well as in academics and extra-curricular activities.

St. Martin's School has an impressive record of academic achieve-

ment. Our pupils are engrossed in a rigorous and well-balanced curriculum that engages their minds and their souls. Their efforts bring the children a sense of accomplishment and immeasurable pride to parents and teachers. One of our sixth grade students won the 2014 City of Gaithersburg 23rd Annual Martin Luther King Essay Competition. This past year our team placed second in the 40th Annual Good Counsel Math Competition. Algebra and Geometry classes are available at our school for those students who wish to take on the challenge. The bulletin boards in our classrooms and hallways display our passion for education. We have several unique opportunities at St. Martin School that help the students earn high school scholarships and eventually become competitive in the global economy. Our constant efforts to improve instruction and incorporate technology into daily lessons are only part of our commitment to our little learners.

After school and on weekends, we also have fun! Our faculty and

parents' association are dedicated to the pursuit of over two-dozen extra-curricular clubs and activities. I have personally taken charge of the soccer club and cherish the time to guide youngsters' physical development. I provide the tools and exercises that constitute a game plan. It is up to my players to make use of these resources, set individual and group goals then reach for the sky. Each time they feel victorious it warms my heart.

We have instilled confidence in our students and created an atmosphere in which forward thinkers have the freedom to explore new horizons. Our students, parents, faculty and clergy are motivated to continue to improve. We are pleased with what we have accomplished and are always striving for higher test scores and better service to God. All are welcome to visit St. Martin's School on January 28, 2014 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and see what St. Martin School has to offer and know the warmth that has made this school into a community of excellence.

OPT

St. Martin's Generous Volunteers Recognized

By Catherine Cooksey

While the heart of any parish and school is its community of parishioners and school families, it is volunteers who serve as the vessels which keep all of the various parts alive and coordinated. This year, several deserving volunteers from St. Martin's have been honored for their dedication to the Parish and School.

Two special volunteers were honored by the Catholic Business Network. The Volunteer of the Year for St. Martin's was school parent, Maria McClure, in recognition of her many volunteer activities for the school, especially for organizing the tremendous effort to have the school included in the United Way and CFC campaigns. Eddie Galdamez of YNG Services, also a school parent, was the Business Partner of the Year for St. Martin's. He was honored for his remarkable work creating the school's new website and his continuing support for in web development and other online initia-

tives.

Archbishop Wuerl recently acknowledged men and women who demonstrate the presence of Jesus in their lives and have participated in an exceptional service to the Church with the Manifesting the Kingdom Awards. The awardee for St. Martin's was Craig Hostetler. Craig has served for years as a catechist for the young and, more recently, has worked on adult faith formation. Additionally, he volunteers at the St. Martin's Pantry and serves as pro-life witness near the abortion facility in Germantown.

In addition, St. Martin's science teacher, Arlene Hall, and her husband were awardees for their parish, St. Francis of Assisi. Both Mr. Hostetler and the Halls received their awards from the Archbishop during a special ceremony at the Basilica of Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Thank you to all of these wonderful volunteers for their dedication to St. Martin's Parish and School.

OPT

St. Martin of Tours Parish

201 South Frederick Ave.
Gaithersburg, MD

Rev. Msgr. Mark E. Brennan
Pastor

301-990-3203

St. Martin School
Andrew Piotrowski
Principal

301-990-2441

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

OPEN HOUSE

St. Martin of
Tours School

Tuesday, January 28

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Celebrating 88 Years
smsmd.org

See St. Martin of Tours School Open House Ad on Page 41



St. Jude Regional Catholic School News

We ARE St. Jude and You Can Be, Too! Come and Catch Our Spirit!!

When we say “We ARE St. Jude,” we mean that St. Jude Regional Catholic School (SJRCs) is more than a Catholic day school for grades pre-K through 8 in Rockville—we infuse the spirit of community in everything we do.

Come catch our spirit at our Open House on Wednesday, Jan. 29, from 9-11:30 a.m. and 6-8 p.m., or schedule a visit with us to see our classrooms in action. That’s where you’ll see what “We ARE St. Jude” really means:



We ARE...educators of the whole child.

SJRCs prides itself on providing a vibrant arts, music and community service education with a strong physical education program. Our sixth-graders experience the world first hand in Outdoor Education, our Drama Club gives our children a creative outlet beyond the classroom walls; and our students who may need an extra helping hand can draw on the expertise of a full-time resource teacher.

We ARE...academic excellence.

At every grade level, we deliver a curriculum designed to prepare students for the rigors of high school. Three-quarters of our fourth-eighth grade students attain honors



Photo by St John’s College High School

of achievement each marking period. Every single eighth-grader who applies is accepted to a Catholic High School and a majority of our graduates attend one. Our students are so prepared for their high school experience, that in 2013, three St. Jude graduates from the Class of 2009 became the valedictorians or salutatorians of their respective high schools. We couldn’t be more proud.



We ARE...compassionate toward others.

We turn our students’ hands and hearts toward good works—from collecting much-needed goods for St. Ann’s Infant and Children’s Home, to preparing bagged lunches for service men and women, to

gathering canned goods to feed the hungry. St. Jude children learn their role in the community of caring. Even within the school the spirit of lending a hand up is ever-present in the buddy system—every older child has a younger child to mentor, teaching the buddy good behavior in church, working on projects together, and watching over them in the halls and at recess.



We ARE...a community.

We encourage parents to become an integral part of our school through numerous volunteer positions—running the hot lunch program, planning events through the Home School Association, chaperoning a field trip, or monitoring the halls. We want parents to feel as at home at St. Jude as their children do.



We ARE...people of faith.

Ever mindful of our Catholic identity, SJRCs fosters a strong faith commitment and religious spirit, values, and morals. Students attend weekly mass, participate in annual Christmas pageants and plays, attend Rosary Group, and recite both the school prayer and other prayers throughout their school day. Additionally, priests from the Shrine of St. Jude, as well as nuns from the convent on the grounds, are involved with our students every day.



Learn more about St. Jude Regional Catholic School on our website—www.stjuderockville.org. Mr. Glenn Benjamin, principal, is available at any time to answer any questions you may have about the school or the application process. He can be reached at 301-946-7888 or Glenn.Benjamin@stjuderockville.org. **We ARE St. Jude!** Come join us!

Open House at St. Jude Regional Catholic School, Jan 29, 2014

Catch Our Spirit

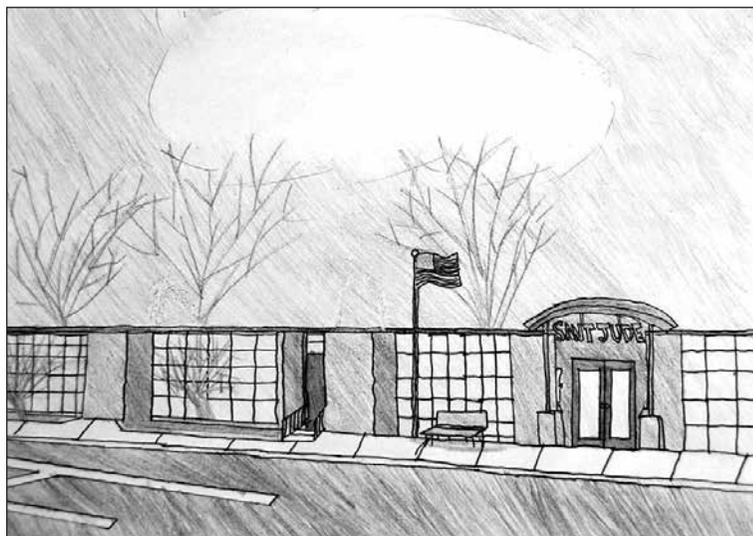
Catch the St. Jude spirit when St. Jude Regional Catholic School opens its doors to the community during Catholic Schools Week 2014. St. Jude Regional Catholic School will host an open house on Wednesday, Jan. 29, where prospective students, their families, and the community can learn about the school and its mission to provide high-quality, values-based education. Doors will be open from 9-11:30 a.m. and 6-8 p.m. Admissions information will be available at both times; teach-

ers will be available to speak to prospective families in the evening.

St. Jude Regional Catholic School serves students from 3 years old through 8th grade of all religious, racial, ethnic, and income backgrounds. Its location at 4820 Walbridge Street in Rockville is perfect for commuters as it is convenient to Veirs Mill Road, Connecticut Avenue, Georgia Avenue, and Rockville Pike.

For information on the curriculum, admissions policies and registration, contact the school office at 301-946-7888 or visit www.stjuderockville.org.

OPT



Artwork of SJRCs by Isabelle Scopelliti, sixth grade

Ten reasons to send your child to St. Jude Regional Catholic School...

St. Jude Regional Catholic School provides:

- a state-of-the-art computer lab
- on-staff resource personnel and school counselor
- an honor system
- strong parish CYO program
- after-school activities

- a hot lunch program
- specials in music, art, computers, and physical education
- daily recess for all students
- a well-established middle school (fifth-eighth grade)
- traditions spanning more than 57 years.

Gala Set for March 1

Put on your cowboy boots and saddle up as St. Jude Regional Catholic School invites you to its biennial gala – **Kickin’ It Up at St. Jude** – on March 1. Proceeds support the school and its mission to educate the whole child, delivering academic excellence within a Catholic community of faith.

Along with dinner and dancing there will be a silent auction. To attend this event, please pre-register on the school’s website, www.stjudesschool.org. Cost: \$55/person or \$100/couple before Jan. 31 or \$65/person and \$125/couple after Jan. 31.

There is still time to donate to the silent auction and/or take out

ad space in the 2014 Gala Program. Forms can be found on the school website or contact Ashley Bettis at ashleybb@outlook.com or 240-821-0107; Margy Crivella at 301-946-7888, ext 106 or margy.crivella@stjuderockville.org.

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

See St. Jude Regional
Catholic School Open
House Ad on Page 21

St. Andrew Apostle to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week

Many special activities are planned for the week of January 26th as St. Andrew Apostle School celebrates Catholic Schools Week. In addition to the annual open house where prospective new families have a chance to tour and learn about the family oriented culture of the school, there will be a community read day, student services projects and class art projects. The week will conclude with a student focused special all school Mass.

OPT

Save the Date

On February 8, 2014 St. Andrew Apostle School will host a Silent Auction and Adult Bingo night. With "Winter Olympics" as the theme, this event brings together the parish and school community for a fun filled and relaxing evening to support Catholic Education.

OPT

Lector Program at St. Andrew Apostle Embraces Youth

Prior to this year, children who wished to lector were relegated to children's liturgies, school Masses and special occasions. At a Scout Mass, Father Dan

Leary, our pastor, had a revelation: the children were well prepared and made excellent readers. Since then, our young people (starting in third grade) have had a greater role in serving as lectors for parish liturgies. Each week, the Word is proclaimed by one adult and one child. The adult lectors mentor the children, assuring their comfort level each week. Dr. Kathy Perencevich does a wonderful job in maintaining the schedule and training these young people to witness their faith as proclaimers of the Word.

This is a highly successful program and the hope is that these children will continue to lector as teens and adults.

OPT

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

301-649-3555

Parishioners Unwrapping the Gift to Discover God's Call

Have you ever wondered what unique purpose God is calling you to do in your life? Father Dan Leary, pastor of St. Andrew Apostle, is planning to hold a parish wide Called and Gifted Workshop on February 7 and 8.

Called and Gifted is a three part discernment process developed by the Catherine of Sienna Institute in 1993 that is intended to help lay Catholics discern their charisms. Charisms or spiritual gifts are graces of the Holy Spirit given at Baptism and Confirmation that directly or indirectly benefit the Church.

The first step in the process is a workshop intended for adults at all stages of life. At this workshop, participants learn the role of every Catholic and of the local parish in the mission of the Church to the world; the critical role of charisms in the life and service of other lay Catholics and in the life of the parish or Christian community; the signs

and characteristics of twenty-four common charisms; and how discerning and using their charisms can change their life and the life of others, their parish, and the world. They have the opportunity to take the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory, the first gifts inventory designed especially for Catholics. This is a simple paper and pencil test that gives the test taker the chance to begin the prayerful discernment of his or her personal vocation.

Those who complete the Called and Gifted Workshop may choose to have a one-on-one hour long Personal Gifts Interview, which is the second step of the Called and Gifted process. Interviewers trained by the Catherine of Sienna Institute will help participants look at their gifts inventory results, listen to their experiences of being used by God, help them recognize patterns in their life that may indicate the presence of a charism and help them choose one charism to discern.

Finally, in the Discernment in Depth step, participants will have an opportunity to practice what they have learned about discernment and experiment with one charism over a period of six to eight weeks. Small group discussion will allow the opportunity to talk about the experience and receive feedback from others who are also discerning.

Leah Moss, a parishioner who previously attended a Called and Gifted Workshop said, "The workshop gave insight into the movements of the Holy Spirit. It helped to identify and explain many of the gifts we see at work in the parish and community. But most of all, it gave me a lot to take to prayer and it helped me realize how many gifts the Holy Spirit wants to unfold in our parish to build up the kingdom of God."

Members of other parishes are invited to attend. Registration and additional information may be found on the parish website: www.standrewapostle.org.

OPT

Parish Organist Premiers "Magnificat" in Spain

Gabriel Ruiz-Bernal, Ph.D. organist and pianist at the Saturday Vigil and Sunday evening Masses, has composed a piece, "Magnificat" for choir and chamber orchestra. The piece was premiered in Seville, Spain on December 4.

Also on the program was J.S. Bach's "Magnificat". Both pieces were performed by the Orquesta Sinfonica Hispalense of Sevilla.

The work, commissioned by the University of Sevilla Concert Choir, was performed at the Teatro Lope de Vega.

Dr. Ruiz-Bernal is an adjunct professor at the University.

St. Andrew Apostle parishioners are looking forward to hearing the work when it is available in the United States.

OPT

SHORT

Con't from page 1

commitment of parishioners who sacrificed to build the schools years ago; nuns who taught and dedicated their lives to the schools; and the ongoing commitment of clergy, parents and faculty to maintain these important centers for Catholic education and future leadership. While things have changed for Catholic schools during the last several decades, there is no disputing their unique role in offering high quality education within a nurturing Catholic environment. Those who work and contribute to make them possible are wonderfully faithful and dedicated individuals and a blessing to our community.

Today, parish schools struggle to continue their mission. Excellent schools offering outstanding educational services are closing each year. Once there were 140 schools in the Archdiocese; now less than 100 remain. And this reduced opportunity for Catholic education is occurring as the population in our county has grown to more than one million. There are reasons for the

reduction in schools, the greatest is clear. The schools no longer have access to the devoted religious who taught not for money but for the love of God and children. Without their generous sacrifice, the cost of Catholic education has risen dramatically. The local parish was once able to fully support a school with affordable tuition. This is no longer possible. In order to sustain existing schools and grow Catholic education new and different policies and approaches are essential.

This challenge leads to our New Year's reflection. How much more effective can we as Catholics be in building the City of God when we work together toward shared missions in Catholic education, evangelization, social justice and other ministries. The City of Rockville recently held municipal elections. While the City has about 60,000 residents, only a fraction vote in the elections, less than 10,000. It takes only four to five thousand votes to be elected. There are three large parishes in the city, St Elizabeth's, St Raphael's and St. Mary's. Someone jokingly suggested that if the three parishes got together, they could handily elect the mayor and

all city council members! I'm not advocating for this, but in an amusing way, it illustrates the potential for expanded impact when parishes collaborate in a shared mission. The great task of building the City of God will more likely be advanced when parishes make collaborate. **A productive resolution for 2014 would be a sustained and substantial commitment by our parishes to seek and pursue new collaborations among parishes to advance the missions of the parishes and Church.**

Here are examples of some of successful collaborations currently thriving:

In education, there are several examples of parishes working together to support "regional Catholic schools". This has enabled a couple of new schools to be constructed and helped keep others open. Several parishes collaborated to build and operate Mary of Nazareth school in Darnstown. As enrollment decreased in the neighboring schools of St Camillus and St Mark, the two parishes collaborated to close the struggling schools and open a single, better resourced school, St Francis International

School in Silver Spring. This was not simply an exercise in closing an under-enrolled school, but rather a carefully planned initiative to create a single much better school than either of the two previous schools could hope to be.

There are several good examples of inter-parish collaboration in social concerns programs. Our Lady of Mercy, St Elizabeth's and St Camillus have joined resources to serve the large number of poor people in the Langley Park area. Working together they provide food, school supplies, clothing and other needs for the poor. In addition the parishes help by providing instructors of English classes for this largely Hispanic speaking area.

St Martin's in Gaithersburg collaborates with several parishes in the upper county area to provide a much appreciated daily meal for the homeless in its parish hall. This collaboration may be the oldest in place celebrating its twenty fifth year of service to the poor.

St Francis Assisi and St Patrick's began collaborating last year to emulate the inter parish model established twenty years ago by Our Lady Of Mercy y by collaborating

on the Upper County Community Resources Program. Based upon the PCR model, this program uses multi-parish resources and volunteers to provide services to disabled people.

Many of our parishes participate in the Montgomery County Archdiocese Legislative Network. This impressive and informed group of advocates are regular participants at meetings of the County Council and the County Executive urging support for policies and programs for the poor and vulnerable in our County.

These successful collaborations exist as a result of caring and engaged parish leaders gifted with vision and fired with passion for effective action. They have proven that by working together we can build the City of God right here in Montgomery County and are a great blessing to us. If we are to respond to Pope Francis's call to do more for the poor, collaboration is a proven tool.

God Bless!

Chuck Short

It pays to advertise in Our Parish Times

St. Johns' Connection with Mary House Demonstrates the "Ripple Effect"

Mary House is a community-based organization that provides transitional housing services, shelter, and support programs to homeless and struggling families. The philosophy at Mary House has always been to

help others as we ourselves would want to be helped, while providing a safe haven that allows families to reclaim their dignity. Mary House is run entirely on donations and grants.

St. John the Baptist school and

community has supported Mary House for many years. It began with a referral given to Principal Marianne Moore by one of her co-workers at a previous school. Ms. Moore carried that referral forward and SJB has since involved the school children through a special liturgy during which wrapped gifts are presented for delivery to the families at Mary House. This is warmly considered a "Shower for Baby Jesus."

This year, a parishioner and SJB school parent, Nancie Tassara, had an opportunity to nominate a child-based charity in the DC/MD area for a financial award through her employer. Nancie's employer GANTECH, annually invites employees to nominate a charity needing assistance and the employees vote on the charity they deem most worthy. Nancie approached Principal Moore for a suggestion and she suggested Mary House. This year, GANTECH employees nominated eight charities and two



Gifts for Mary House presented during Liturgy

received awards. Since Mary House received the greatest number of votes, it was awarded \$7,000 just before Christmas. Nancie met with Mary House founders Sharon and Bill Murphy to present the check and talked about how far reaching the SJB community's contributions

are to Mary House each year.

This is a wonderful example of "The Ripple Effect", when through word of mouth and charitable example, generous giving opportunities can be spread to worthy and deserving causes.

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Left to right: Nancie Tassara, (SJB Parishioner), Bill Murphy, Sharon Murphy – Mary House founders

St. John's School Remembers Gretchen Weichbrod

One year ago on December 19, 2012, St. John the Baptist School lost a very special friend – Gretchen Weichbrod, a dedicated member of the St. John the Baptist administrative team. She was the daughter of Rob and Kathy Weichbrod, the school's administrative assistant. Although we miss her every day, we know she is really still a continuing presence in our lives.

As a way to recognize Gretchen, the Hot Lunch Bunch, of whom Gretchen was a part, established the Gretchen Weichbrod Scholarship to be awarded annually in December to an SJB student who exempli-

fies Gretchen's qualities. The recipient would be chosen by a committee of faculty members.

This year, the first recipient of the award is Matthew Ober, an eighth grade student and son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Ober. Matthew, like Gretchen, is a faith-filled, cheerful and pleasant young man who is always ready to help even in the early morning or late afternoon. He works hard at his studies giving a consistent 100% effort. His care for others extends to teachers, classmates and younger students.

Matthew received his award at the annual Christmas Program on December 19.

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Matthew Ober accepts award with Missy Eaton, Hot Lunch Chair



Children as honor guards as Bishop blesses school renovations

Bishop Knestout Blesses SJB Renovation

On Tuesday, December 17, Bishop Knestout blessed the newly renovated areas of St. John the Baptist School. The day began with the students attending the 8:30 Mass con-celebrated by Bishop Knestout, Father David Brault and Father Cosmos, pastor and associate pastor of SJB.

After Mass the students processed to the school and lined the hallway of the school as Bishop Knestout blessed each of the rooms. Prayers of intercession and blessing were said at each room.

A state of the art Technology Center was the driving force behind the renovation. The new center

has 35 computer work stations and a SMART Board along with space to store the two laptop carts and an Ipad Cart. The Director of Instructional Technology, Anne Irwin, is excited to bring students to the lab to enhance their learning in various ways. She says, "The computer lab affords students opportunities to access knowledge and present what they have learned in new ways." Her goal is not to add to a teacher's workload, but to give teachers "new ways to assess student abilities and development." Students have been using the lab recently to run their own Egypt civilization, create a brochure about

urban sprawl, and publish poems online. These authentic, real-world activities encourage students to be independent and take risks with their learning.

Also included in the renovation were an Administrative Office Suite, a spacious Faculty Room, an efficient work room, and an enlarged Resource Room. Three other rooms – two classrooms and a small conference room - will be shared with the Parish for evening meetings and for Religious Education classes for both children and adults.

There is a virtual narrated tour of the new facilities at: www.sjbsilver-spring.org/school

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St. Rose Catechists Find Teaching Religious Ed Rewarding

By Mary Zoccola

Parishes depend upon volunteers in many ministries to carry out their mission. One such ministry is Religious Education (RE). At St. Rose of Lima Parish in Gaithersburg, numerous volunteers donate their time and treasure that makes up the fabric of RE.

At St. Rose, volunteers find teaching RE to be a rewarding experience. Volunteers cite sharing the word of God, watching their students grow in faith, and baptismal promises as just some of the reasons why they chose to volunteer in the RE ministry.

Sharing the word of God is

important to some catechists. St. Rose catechist Jane Rice says, "You feel like you are giving them something by teaching the word of God. You are giving them a strong foundation that's going to be there with them to help them through life."

The baptismal promise Catholic congregations make, as a community, to support children is why Sheila Shea is a catechist. "(At a baptism), the presider asks the parents and godparents if they will support the child and be examples and teachers of the faith. They all say 'I do,'" said Shea. Then, Shea says, the presider looks out to the congregation and asks them to support the child, the parents and the

godparents in faith. "We (the congregation) respond with a resounding, 'we will,'" Shea said. "We make a promise to further the faith of that baptized child. That promise is why I am involved in religious education."

For other catechists, watching the children grow in faith is especially rewarding. "At the beginning of RE this year, we had a girl in our class who so clearly didn't want to be there, didn't want to participate, wasn't going to engage in discussion," said RE catechist Laura Wallerstedt. As time went on, Wallerstedt said that she and her co-catechist didn't want to push the student to share her thoughts; they

simply included her in class discussion. Slowly, the student began to participate in class. Recently, the student suggested that the class have a book club, with the Bible as an obvious choice for reading. "(A conversion story like) that is what I love about being a catechist," said Wallerstedt.

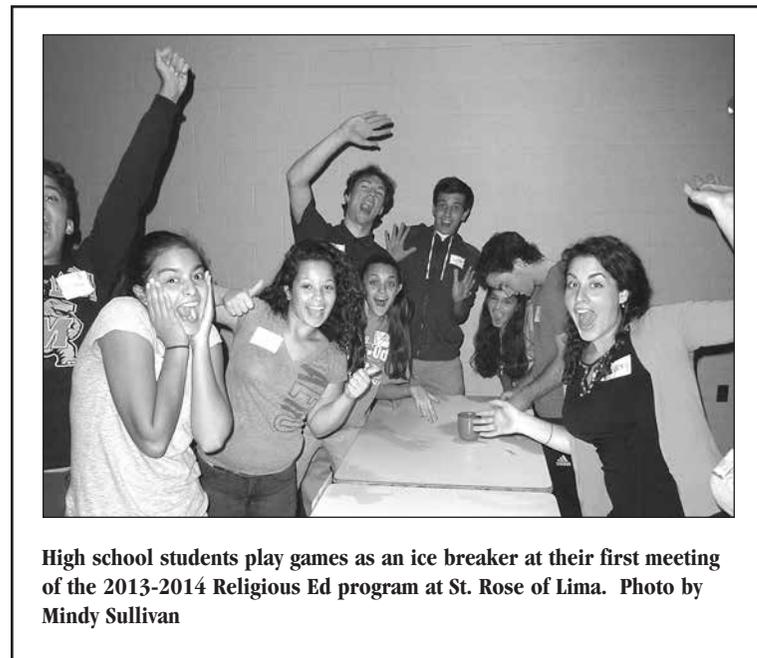
Catechist Nadia Skiscim agreed with Wallerstedt's sentiments regarding the development of faith. Last year, there was a boy who didn't believe in God and openly expressed his doubts, Skiscim explained. However, his comments of disbelief evolved into information-seeking questions accompanied by a greater curiosity. "Now,

his parents say he enjoys religious education and he cooperates with the class nicely," Skiscim said.

"Some kids will really impress you with what they know (about God)," Steve Dubin said, adding that it is rewarding to watch children grow in faith. Dubin is in his second year teaching religious education.

Finally, some catechists want their students to learn to appreciate faith, in and of itself. Fifth-grade Catechist Nancy Kelly has been teaching fifth graders for two years now. "My hope for the kids is they would come to realize what a gift their Catholic faith is."

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High school students play games as an ice breaker at their first meeting of the 2013-2014 Religious Ed program at St. Rose of Lima. Photo by Mindy Sullivan

Access to Faith Helps Those with Special Needs

Children and adults with special needs can find help with developing their Catholic faith via a diocesan program called Access to Faith.

Six years ago, Access to Faith was founded to address the needs of Catholics who, because of their special needs, required assistance to access the Sacraments according to Sheila Shea, who has been instrumental in the inception and development of Access to Faith.

Access to Faith began with a parishioner who was preparing for his Confirmation. The parishioner's family supported him in receiving the Confirmation sacrament. "Since that first member, we have assisted in the sacramental preparation of 18 additional parishioners," Shea said. Additionally, Shea is a proponent of bringing inclusion to Catholic religious education and special needs.

The Access to Faith model for instruction depends on individual needs. For example, if appropriate, a 1:1 model of instruction has been used for participants in Access to Faith. Additionally, some of Access to Faith students have been non-verbal and have required sign language or picture/voice output devices to communicate. A small faith community model where persons with similar needs are gathered for instruction has been employed, as well. A parent-based model where the parent co-teaches in a 1:1 setting is another way that Access to Faith has worked to meet the need of its participants. "Ultimately, our goal is to modify materials, provide resources and to assist individuals in meeting their particular needs," Shea added.

St. Rose Offers Religious Ed Classes in Spanish

For those who are more comfortable worshipping God in Spanish, St. Rose offers Religious Education (RE) in Spanish for elementary school age children and the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA).

Ivonne Salazar is the coordinator of St. Rose Religious Education for the Hispanic Community. "We follow the RE standards for the Archdiocese of Washington," Salazar said.

Classes generally feature lesson accompanied by a gospel reading and an activity. A bi-lingual Sadler curriculum is used for lesson planning. All of the Spanish-speaking Catechists are certified by the Archdiocese of Washington; classes are taught in Spanish.

Spanish catechists enjoy teaching. Second grade catechist Claudia



Ivonne Salazar (far right) explains a RE lesson to an assistant, while Gustavo Salazar (far left) looks on. Photo by Mary Zoccola

Lemus said she enjoys transmitting the faith and the word of God. "I want the kids to understand that getting to know God is something fun and is part of our daily life," Lemus said. In addition, Catechist Augusta Aurora Fonseca says that she hopes that her RE class will teach children

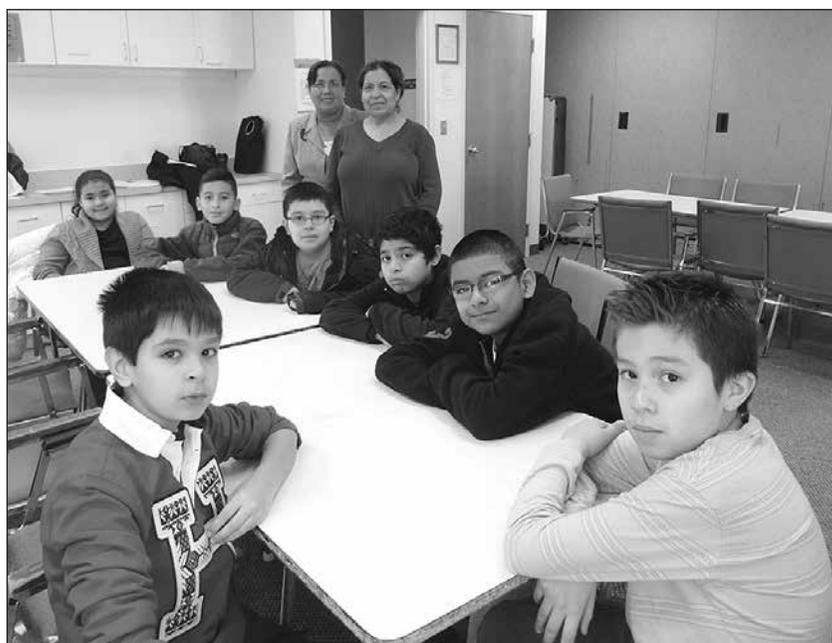
to respect God and other people.

Parental participation is part of Spanish Religious Education, as well. "We worship with the parents every three weeks," Salazar explained. Topics at parent meetings include prayer, Bible readings and the occasional movie that features Catholic testimonies. "The meetings are a good opportunity to share the mission of God," Salazar says.

Consistency between the English RE and Spanish RE is important to Salazar. "Every three weeks we meet with English religious ed teachers to ensure that what is taught is the same, in both English and Spanish," Salazar said.

Additionally, Salazar meets regularly with Msgr. Langsfeld to keep him apprised of the happenings for both religious Ed programs.

Currently, the Spanish RE program has a total of 124 students in the Kindergarten to Fifth grade classes. A separate RCIA class taught in Spanish has 12 students



Augusta Aurora Fonseca (left) and Marta Nunez (right) pose with their group of fifth grade students. Photo by Mary Zoccola

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St. Rose of Lima

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Gaithersburg, MD

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More St. Rose of Lima
News on Page 19

St. Rose of Lima



Children take a break during a practice session for the Christmas Eve play. Photo by Kwan Ho

The King & I

The December event for the UpCounty Community Resources Group was a trip to the Olney theater to watch "the King and I" on the 15th. Seventy-six members of the group enjoyed the matinee show

followed by dinner at Sol Azteca Restaurant located just down the road in the Olney Town Center.

The UpCounty Resource Group is an organization of persons who understand that diversity in our community enriches us all. Our mission is to promote opportunities for individuals with, and without, developmental differences in a community that values each member.

If you would like more information about our group and upcoming events, contact Sylvia Jones at 301-762-6564 in the evening.

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Register for all events at: academyoftheholycross.org/admissionsevents



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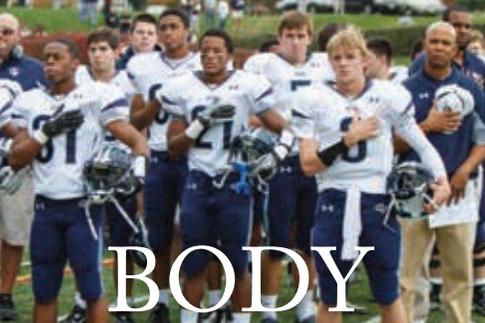
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LLS Student of the Year Candidates (L-R): Samantha Heavner, Margaret Capizzi, Leah Barteldes

Three Holy Cross Students Selected as LLS Student of the Year Candidates

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's National Capital Area Chapter has named three students from The Academy of the Holy Cross Student of the Year Candidates – Leah Barteldes '15 (St. Peter's parish in Olney, Md.), Margaret Capizzi '15 (Our Lady of Lourdes parish), and Samantha Heavner '15 (Shrine of St. Jude parish). No other school had as many candidates in this year's selection of 16 high school students in the National Capital area.

The Student of the Year Campaign is a six-week initiative in which nominated students participate in a fundraising competition to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's, National Capital Area Chapter. Candidates will raise money in honor of a teen patient hero who is currently battling or is in remission from a blood cancer. The candidate who raises the most money at the end of the six weeks is named Student of the Year. The campaign runs from January 16 to February 28, 2014, culminating at the Grand

Finale Gala celebration on February 28, 2014 where the winners will be announced. Scholarships are honored. The Student of the Year will receive a \$5,000 scholarship to a college or university of his/her choice. In addition, three students will be awarded Citizenship honors with the Community, Leadership and Mission Awards. Each Citizenship Award winner will receive a \$2,500 scholarship to a college or university of his/her choice. Every candidate who reaches the minimum fundraising requirement of \$10,000 will receive a scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.

The students are forming teams and making plans for their fundraising efforts. Fellow AHC students are stepping up to join their teams to make sure each of the candidates is successful.

LLS is the world's largest voluntary health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research and providing education and patient services.

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Folger Fellows (L-R): Catherine Lamoreaux, Madeline Pence, Katherine Axelsson, Madeline Hollingsworth

Four Holy Cross Students Participate in Folger Fellowship Program

Students from The Academy of the Holy Cross are often selected to participate in the High School Fellowship Program at the Folger Shakespeare Library.

This year, all four Holy Cross students who applied for the fall program were accepted into the 16-student class – Katherine Axelsson

Continued on page 28

St. Jane de Chantal

Faith Formation Students Shine

St. Jane De Chantal Faith Formation students have learned a lot this year, both about Jesus and God, and about living as Catholic citizens.

Children contributed to So Others Might Eat (SOME) and the Center for Children and Families with shoe boxes filled with toiletries for the homeless. The boxes were part of a service project students undertook as a group.

In December, Faith Formation

students in grades kindergarten through 5 participated in a Christmas pageant, acting out the story of Jesus' birth.

Religious education teachers are participating in catechist certification courses this year, beginning with a class in the Christian moral life. It's carrying through to class, where students are learning what it means to be an everyday disciple through prayer, worship, study, and service learning.

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Cardinal Weurl dedicated St. Jane de Chantal's new Lively-Fulcher pipe organ, which has greatly enhanced the Mass experience for parishoners. The organ contains 2,141 pipes inside a carved white oak case. It was enthusiastically welcomed by the parish community that enjoys it every week.



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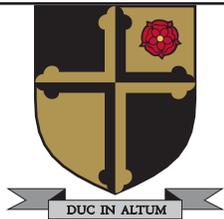
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Young Adult Epiphany Mass Participants

The Epiphany – Celebration of All God's Children

By Robert Jones

This year, St. Francis of Assisi Parish celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany with a special Mass in honor of all God's children at the regularly scheduled Sunday 5 p.m. Youth Mass. Father Bill Gillum, a visiting Capuchin Franciscan Friar, was the celebrant, assisted by Deacon Dan Finn. Twenty six young adults with differing abilities from the parishes of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Patrick's, St. Peter's, Blessed Sacrament, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Rose of Lima participated as altar servers, lectors, and readers of the prayers of the faithful, greet-

ers, ushers and distributing bulletins. Joining in celebration were many other persons with different faiths and beliefs.

Traditionally, the Epiphany signals the end of the Christmas celebration with the commemoration of the visit of the three wise men, or Magi, who followed a star from the east in search of the Savior. They came bearing gifts as homage to the new King. In some ways, this is what every family does when a new child is born. In some ways, this is what every family does when a new child is born. The birth is usually a very private affair but after a short period of time, the new child is presented to the world when family and friends join in celebration of their new gift.

Each of us is a gift from God delivered through our parents. We arrive helpless and depend on the kindness of others to teach us, to help us grow, to show us the way. No one can do this on their own; it takes a community. The Church is such a community. Every member is a gift – the theme of our special Mass on the feast of the Epiphany.



Deacon Dan Finn delivering homily at Epiphany Mass

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Shrine of St. Jude

Biannual Tot Sale, March 8

If you are in need of gently used items for babies and children, don't miss the biannual Spring Tot Sale, set for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, March 8, in the Thaddeus Room of St. Jude Regional Catholic School.

Come shop for gently used spring/summer children's items, including clothes, games,

bikes, as well as the items that every new parent or grandparent are looking for, i.e., cribs, playpens, carriers, toddler beds, strollers, etc.

Proceeds go to support St. Jude Regional Catholic School. For more information, go to www.stjuderockville.org. Donations gladly welcomed.

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Cupcakes For Life Fundraiser

The St. Jude Pro-Life Committee and women of the Shrine of St. Jude parish sponsored a Cupcakes for Life fundraiser in mid-January to provide a bus to transport students to the 2014 March for Life. Parishioners participated by baking, selling, purchasing, and enjoying hundreds of delicious cupcakes.

In addition to the cupcake sales, generous donations were made by the Sodality,

St. Joseph Manyanet Knights of Columbus Council #5567, St. Jude Pro-Life Committee, and many individual parishioners, earning the bus rental with enough left over for sizeable donations to St. Jude Regional Catholic School and St. Ann's Infant home, in honor of recently deceased parishioner Anne DeCourcy, longtime benefactor of St. Ann's.

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Focus on Pope's Call for 'a Poor Church for the Poor'

The 2014 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering will focus on the message and vision of Pope Francis: Becoming 'a Poor Church for the Poor.' The gathering will be in Washington, February 2-5, 2014. In his first audience, March 16, 2013 Pope Francis told members of the media, "How I would like a Church which is poor and for the poor."

The Gathering will include an opening plenary address by John L. Allen Jr., former senior correspondent for National Catholic Reporter, associate editor at the Boston Globe and Vatican expert for CNN and National Public Radio, February 2. Michael Naughton, professor of Catholic studies at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, will give the Monday morning keynote. Naughton coordinated the 2012 reflection by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, "Vocation of the Business Leader." Michel Roy, secretary general of Caritas Internationalis, will offer brief com-

ments following Naughton's keynote.

The Social Ministry Gathering is sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and 15 national Catholic partner organizations, including Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Catholic Charities USA, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Rural Life and the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities.

On February 4, attendees will participate in Capitol Hill visits, during which state delegations will advocate several issues with members of Congress. Legislative priorities will include challenges for families, the minimum wage, the impact of migration on children, technological warfare, peace in the Holy Land, criminal justice, human trafficking and economic inequality.

The registration form and more information is available online: www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/

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Project Rachel Ministry

Having unresolved feelings after abortion? Do you feel like God could never really forgive you and you surely cannot forgive yourself? Project Rachel Ministry, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington, is hosting support groups for women who have feelings of shame, guilt, sadness and other difficult emotions over their abortion experience.

Spend time with others who faced an

unplanned pregnancy and found themselves having an abortion. In this support group you will experience the safety and encouragement you need to heal and become whole.

Support groups are forming in various locations. For additional information, contact Julia Shelava at 301-853-4565 or ProjectRachel@adw.org. All contacts are confidential.

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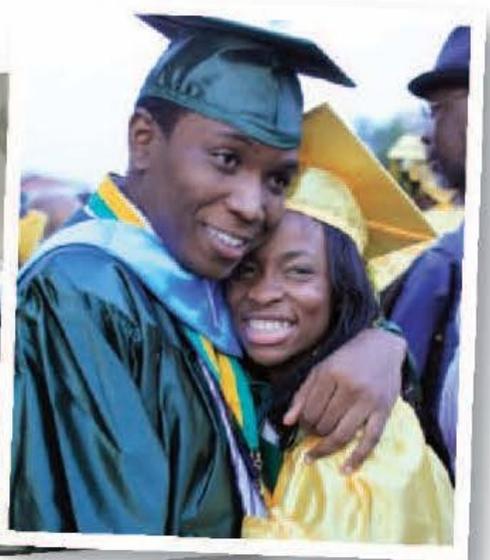
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Our Lady of Lourdes School provides a solid foundation in the Catholic faith, fosters academic excellence and educates children to be successful leaders who serve the world.



EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE
Tuesday, January 28
9:00 – 11:30 AM and 1:00 – 2:30 PM

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Seventh and Eighth grade students begin work on the America 4 Boston Prayer Canvas.

Catholic Schools Week Plans are Coming Together at Our Lady of Lourdes School

On Sunday, January 26, the students of Lourdes will attend the 9:00am Mass in uniform. The elementary and middle school choirs will sing at the Mass, and students will share letters of thanks with those in attendance.

On Monday of Catholic Schools Week the middle school students will display their

Science Fair projects for during the day and evening. Parents who are physicians and scientists will visit the Science Fair so that the students can discuss their projects with experts in the field.

Tuesday students, teachers, administrators and parents will welcome visitors to our Open House. Eighth graders will take the visitors

Wednesday is Teacher Appreciation Day, and parents will provide a wonderful lunch for the teachers, and cover classrooms while teachers take a mid-day break.

Thursday is Student Appreciation Day, and teachers will provide the children with a special secret activity in the afternoon. Rumor has it

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
7500 Pearl Street Bethesda, MD

Msgr. Edward Filardi, Pastor
301-654-1287

Patricia Kilroy McGann, Principal
301-654-5376

Continued on page 36

Elizabeth Seton High School

5715 Emerson Street, Bladensburg, MD 20710 www.setonhs.org

Please join us for these exciting events and important dates:

Seton Sings – Saturday, February 8, 2014

A choir workshop for young ladies in 6th–8th grades!
For more information please go to www.setonhs.org/setonsings

Transfer student applications due Tuesday, April 8, 2014

Spring Open House – Thursday, May 1, 2014 from 6-8 pm



“Through the spiritual and moral support I have received from Elizabeth Seton High School, as well as the models of faith from both the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity, I have grown so much in my faith. I have been steeped in the importance of faith in everything I do thanks to the Catholic education I have received.”

—Anna Misleh '11 (St. John's University)

Justice for Immigrants

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops Campaign for Immigration Reform supports these five basic elements for Comprehensive Immigration Reform:

1. Provide a path to citizenship for undocumented persons in the country.
2. Preserve family unity as a cornerstone of our national immigration system.
3. Provide legal path for low-skilled immigrant workers to come and work in the United States.
4. The U.S. should treat asylum seekers, refugees, and other forced migrants with respect and dignity.
5. Address the root causes (push factors) of migration, like persecution + economic disparity.

Good explanations of the Catholic bishops' position on Comprehensive Immigration Reform can be found in the testimony of Most Reverend José H. Gomez, Archbishop of Los Angeles, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Comprehensive Immigration Reform, February 12, 2013: www.justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/CIRTestimony12Feb2013.pdf

Are you looking for ideas for how to bring attention to the issue of migration and immigration reform at your parish? Below is a list of some ideas you can use or offer to your staff or human concerns group to create awareness and educate on migration and the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

1. Ask your pastor to consider bringing in a speaker from the Justice for Immigrants Speaker's Bureau to raise parish awareness about the need for immigration reform
2. Ask your pastor to incorporate support for immigration reform into a homily
3. Ask that a prayer for migrants be included with the General Intercessions
4. Advertise a parish-wide book reading of "Rescuing Regina" then host a discussion session
5. Offer a film screening and discussion on immigration and/or trafficking
6. Post an over-sized map of the world in a prominent place and ask families or youth to place a pin on their ancestral country of origin with their family name or picture
7. Ask parish members to contact their legislative representatives and ask them to work for comprehensive immigration reform

OPT

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www.stjohnschs.org

Men's Discernment Retreat

On Friday January 31 through Sunday, February 2, Cardinal Donald Wuerl invites men in their 20's - 40's who are considering a call to the priesthood to attend a discernment retreat at Blessed John Paul II Seminary (145 Taylor Street, N.E.) led by priests of the Archdiocese of Washington.

The weekend will offer time away from your daily routine and will provide an opportunity for prayer and reflection to examine God's call. It will cost you nothing more than your time. Registration is now open at www.dcpriest.org, or email vocations@adw.org for more information.

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Our Lady of Mercy



First graders proudly pose with assembled bags for the school-wide shelter project. Pictured from L to R are Jake Phillips, Carly Dougherty, Jamie Baker, and Rebecca Vance.

Mercy December Prayer Partner Service Project

After collecting an assortment of toiletries, Mercy students decorated and filled bags for distribution at the Dorothy Day House and other local shelters. Bag contents included shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hair brushes and combs, soap and lotion. Students filled over 100 bags. **OPT**



Sixth grader Sammy Quinn helps her second grade prayer partner Ella Tetteh decorate a Christmas bag for a school-wide shelter project.



Sixth grader Peter Phelan helps his second grade prayer partner Connor Lee decorate a Christmas bag for a school-wide shelter project.



Mercy Sisters Support Catholic Charities

Mercy second graders proudly pose with the Teddy bear they raffled off for Catholic Charities. Annually, second graders sell raffle tickets for the auction which was open to K-8 students. Principal Joan Hosmer drew the name of the lucky winner at the class Christmas party. All proceeds went to Catholic Charities.



First grader Olivia Haddad and fifth grader Luke Rhoa lead the production line.

Mercy Students Commit to Help Others

In a major school-wide project, Mercy students are actively participating in Catholic Charities "Cup of Joe" breakfast program, coordinated by Deacon Jim Nalls and Kevin O'Brien. Each month students pack healthy breakfast bags for low barrier emergency shelter residents. Fifth and sixth

graders guide their younger first and second grade prayer partners as they assemble bags for residents of Dorothy Day House, a shelter for abused women in Rockville. Students packed 864 bags in 30 minutes.

OPT



Fifth graders Grace Slater and Lila Herndon help first grader Eloise Quinn.



Second grader Peter Clancy helps prepare breakfast bag.

Congratulations

During the year of 2013, one hundred twelve children and 16 adults were baptized at Our Lady of Mercy. Congratulations to the newly baptized and their families, friends, sponsors and staff that made this possible.

Kevin Rogan and Steve Riley were honored for their service to the church the by the Archdiocese of Washington. They received the

Manifesting the Kingdom award on January 5, 2014. Steve Riley is the executive director of Potomac Community Resources which serves the developmentally disabled and their families. Kevin Rogan is a member of the Parish Council, teaches Mercy's eighth grade Confirmation class and is an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

OPT

Our Lady of Mercy Parish
9200 Kentsdale Drive
Potomac, MD

Rev. Msgr. William English
Pastor
301-365-1415

Our Lady of Mercy School
Ms. Joan Hosmer
301-365-3104

Gerry Burgess, OPT Editor
301-330-5676

Father Rick Curry Speaks at Our Lady of Mercy

By Judy Walser

Our Lady of Mercy presented an evening with Georgetown University Professor Father Rick Curry, SJ on December 3. He

regaled the audience of more than 100 people on his topic, "Social Justice: What's in it for ME?" In his talk, Fr. Rick shared his personal experience of living without an arm since birth, and how his disability led to establishing the National Theatre Workshop of the Handicapped in 1977. The NTWH was a non-profit organization that trained persons with disabilities in the business of baking and professional theatre.

In addition to teaching in the Catholic Studies Department at Georgetown, Fr. Rick is currently in the process of establishing Dog Tag Bakery in Georgetown. The bakery

will offer great tasting baked goods to the public while teaching baking and business skills to wounded veterans and their spouses. At the same time, the veterans will be pursuing a



Pictured with Fr. Rick are Sister Pat Mensing, SSJ, OLOM Pastoral Associate for Social Justice and Social Concerns and Fr. Rick's assistant, Adam Mortillaro

course of study to help them pursue further employment or start a small business of their own. The bakery is scheduled to open in the spring of 2014. It will feature a café, baking area, and a stage which will allow the veterans to share their stories with the public.

OPT



Ryan Breckstein chats with a Byron House resident.

Christmas Blessings at Byron House

Second graders from Our Lady of Mercy School enjoyed giving Christmas cards and singing some Christmas favorites to residents at Byron House, an assisted living facility on the school's campus.

OPT



Second grader Andrew Olsen and a Byron House resident enjoy each other's company.

FELLOWSHIP

Con't from page 20

'14, Madeline Hollingsworth '14, Catherine Lamoreaux '14 (Christ the King parish), and Madeline Pence '14 (St. Jane de Chantal parish). The Fellows met twice weekly between September and December. The opportunity allowed the participants to more deeply explore Shakespeare's plays and benefit from the Folger Library's resources.

The program – led by noted scholars and theater practitioners – investigates a wide range of approaches and theories to the study of Shakespeare. It includes academic seminars, practical theater education, reading and writing assign-

ments, and theater performances. Students meet scholars, directors, actors, designers, and stage combat choreographers. Participation includes reading plays and related material each week, writing a series of papers as well as a final researched essay and independent project exploring Shakespeare, and presenting a final acting project at the end of the semester.

"It was a different approach to learning Shakespeare," said Madeline Hollingsworth. "We examined the works from a variety of perspectives to develop our own conclusions." Madeline has loved Shakespeare from an early age and was very pleased to be part of the course. Her sister Lindsay Hollingsworth '11 attended the program when she was a senior at Holy

Cross. Madeline enjoyed the entire experience, but was most pleased to meet Dr. Barbara Mowat, director of research at Folger Shakespeare Library, and editor (with Paul Werstine) of the Folger Shakespeare Library editions of Shakespeare's works. Madeline hopes to become a writer and was encouraged by her conversation with Dr. Mowat.

The students were grateful for their strong writing foundation from the Academy's English department as they researched and wrote several papers during the course. "Our papers were graded," said Madeline, "Because of Holy Cross, we all knew how to write, and we all did well on our papers." Katherine Axelsson noted that they were able to provide help to the other students for their papers dur-

ing the peer review. "We were very well prepared because we're so familiar with the writing process," Katherine said.

Madeline Pence remarked that she enjoyed the "broader experience," especially the opportunity to see the theater performances and explore the acting side of the class. "I wanted a new theater experience," she said. To conclude the program, the students in the class will perform scenes from Shakespeare plays.

The students who participated in the program came from a variety of high schools. Holy Cross was the only school with four students. "We represented ourselves well, I think," said Katherine. "I was surprised that all four of us were picked, but I think it was cool," she said.

Madeline Hollingsworth appreciated having fellow classmates in the class. "It helped me come out of my shell a little easier," she said.

The four participants noted that the experience was rewarding and also helped them to manage their time during a busy senior year first semester. All have gained insights, into Shakespeare and themselves personally, that will be beneficial in college and beyond.

OPT

SCHEDULE

Con't from page 9

with serving and cleanup 5:30-7:45pm. Parishioners wanting to join for either timeslot may contact Liz Weiss at, 301 588-6726.

First Fridays Holy Hour: 9:45-10:45am in the Chapel (winter months) or Church (during more seasonal times).

First Saturday: WorkCenter meets at Christ the King every first Saturday 9:30-11:30am in the Rectory meeting room. There is no fee for participants. All mentors are volunteers from different walks of life who provide mutual support in preparing for interviews, mentoring in rethinking career paths, providing professional contacts (starting from their own business network), reviewing CVs and resumes, organizing meetings and seminars on networking and financial business management issues, organizing lectures and seminars with professionals and sharing experiences to guide the personal development of the individual. The group welcomes those who work for companies in active hiring to attend the meetings to offer advice and to talk about employment opportunities at their companies. For both job seekers and potential volunteers, contact Stefano at rattigno@yahoo.com.

First Sunday: Young Adults brunch occurs immediately after the 10:30am Mass on the first Sunday of each month, the group of 20-somethings cook up breakfast and prepare Mimosas for other Millennials.

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Archdiocesan Women's Conference

On Saturday, March 8, from 8:30AM to 3PM, women from across the Archdiocese will gather for a day of prayer and fellowship at Trinity Washington University (140 Michigan Avenue, NE). The topic for this year's conference is *Women's Voices for the New Evangelization: In the Home, at Work, and in the World*. There will be two keynote addresses, one in English and one in Spanish, followed by Mass, lunch, adoration and confession time, and afternoon breakout reflections. The cost is \$20. For more information, contact Mary Hamm at mhamm@adw.org or 301-853-5499.

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St. Bart's Youth Group Leadership Changes Hands

The growing St. Bart's Youth Group has had a change of leadership. Sarah and Sean Kayser, who have been the Youth Group leaders since 2012, will be moving to West Virginia, where Sean has accepted a new position. The Youth Group has experienced terrific growth, both in numbers and in spirit, under the Kayser's leadership, and they will be missed at St. Bart's.

Taking over from the Kayser's, however, will be Maria Kaufmann and her husband, John Archer, who Sarah Kayser describes as "very knowledgeable in their faith and joyful, amazing, loving people."

Maria has her Master's in Sociology and John is currently working on his Doctorate in English at Catholic University. Both are experienced in ministry and working with youth.

Maria told OPT that she and John were excited about leading the St. Bart's Youth Group and intend to "continue Sarah and Sean's vision of sharing the *good* things of life!" She said that they hoped that the Youth Group members would "learn that our Faith is not about rules but about experiencing *true* happiness and *really* growing into the best-version of themselves."

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St. Bartholomew Youth Group Leadership (L-R): John Archer, Santi, Maria Kaufmann, Maria, Sarah Kayser, Sean Kayser.

St. Bartholomew Parish
6900 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20816
Rev. Joseph Sileo
Pastor
301-229-7933
St. Bartholomew School
Kathleen Miller
301-229-5586
Frank Maguire, OPT Editor
202-512-8226

See St. Bartholomew School Ad on Page 23

Christmas at St. Bartholomew Parish is Holy and Joyous



Christmas Eve Children's Mass at St. Bartholomew

Fr. Mark Knestout, Pastor of St. Bart's, talks with assembled children at Christmas Eve Mass.



Vivaldi's Gloria at St. Bartholomew Parish

Carole Wysocki, St. Bartholomew's Music Director, conducts a performance of Antonio Vivaldi's "Gloria," on Saturday, December 7, an annual event at St. Bart's to benefit Mt. Carmel House, a permanent, supportive housing program for women in DC. Solists included Jeanne Hisle, Julia Constable-Allen, Carol Rollie Flynn, Vin Kelly, John Martino and Daniel Villar. The concert also featured the St. Bartholomew Choir with members of the Poolesville Presbyterian Choir.



"Twelfth Night" Dinner for Volunteers at St. Bart's (above)

On Saturday, January 11, Fr. Mark Knestout (center) and the St. Bartholomew's parish staff honored and thanked parish volunteers at a "Twelfth Night" dinner.

Sweets with Santa (at right)

Sweets with Santa at St. Bart's on Saturday, December 7, featured a story by Fr. Mark Knestout (pictured), caroling by St. Bart's School students, hot chocolate and coffee, sweets, crafts, letters to Santa and Santa himself!



St. Bartholomew School Christmas Pageant

Pre-K Students Perform at St. Bartholomew School's Annual Christmas Pageant, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas."



St. Michael's Christmas Bazaar

St. Michael rang in the Christmas season this year with an expanded two-day Christmas Bazaar complete with fancy gift baskets for silent auction, religious articles for sale, boutiques of men's and women's clothing, a terrific raffle, sports goods and more! Santa came with gift books for the children and food was sold throughout. The revamped bazaar was co-chaired by June Dublin and Peggy Hannah who worked all year collecting items for sale, organizing volunteers, and



Volunteers assisting at the SMC Bazaar 2013



Baskets for Silent Auction

soliciting sponsors.

The committee of parishioners working the bazaar not only had fun; they worked diligently to sort and tag items beforehand. Excess donated items and those that did not sell were given to neighborhood charities. The event was a financial success as well as another opportunity for St. Michael's fellowship and outreach to our dynamic diverse neighborhood. If you missed St. Michael's Bazaar then plan to attend the next one, December 6 and 7, 2014.

OPT



Fr. Saulo Vicente and the Pacheco family on the occasion of the baptism of their son, Rai Pacheco. The feast of the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ, St. Michael's church was graced with baptizing seven children.

On the Road to Discover a Rich Catholic Heritage

The second of two installments about St. Michael the Archangel Solality's Year of Faith Pilgrimage Series

The Year of Faith Series culminated on November 17, 2013, with a bus trip to historic religious sites in southern Maryland, birthplace of Catholicism in the colonies. As with the other pilgrimages, the group began their journey with prayer as they left Silver Spring for Leonardtown. The group of over 20 Sodalists and other parishioners joined in praying the "Prayer for the New Evangelization" for renewed faith and a deepened relationship with Jesus Christ. They recited "A Family Prayer for the Year of Faith." As true Sodalists dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, they prayed the Holy Rosary and meditated on the Glorious Mysteries. A heavy fog covered the highway, and the sky was grey. By the time of their arrival at their first destination - St. Aloysius Church - the sun beamed with a refreshing glow as if to welcome the group.

Because they had ample time before the 11:00 a.m. Mass at St. Aloysius Church, they took pictures in front of the church and, discovering a beautiful outdoor shrine to Mary, walked along a narrow path along the side of the church to take photos there. The pastor Father David Beaubien greeted the pilgrims and explained the items displayed in a glass case in the vestibule. They include a brass crucifix from the 1766 church and other artifacts. Also in the vestibule are framed artistic renderings of the first church and the second building constructed in 1864. The group immensely enjoyed the celebration of the Mass. Their presence in observance

of the Year of Faith was announced by the cantor and, at the conclusion of Mass, Father Beaubien publically welcomed them as well. The St. Aloysius family warmly greeted the group with applause and several members spoke to them and made them feel at home. On departing St. Aloysius, the group reflected on the perseverance of this Catholic community as witnessed by the Rite of Initiation for the parish's catechumens which was celebrated at the Mass.

After a delightful lunch and fellowship at a lovely restaurant in Leonardtown, Café Des Artistes, the band of pilgrims continued to historic St. Mary's City. From the highway they could see the Brick Chapel, the birthplace of religious freedom in America. After a wooden structure was destroyed by fire, the Jesuits built a brick edifice in about 1667. The travelers had read about the Brick Chapel during their journey and learned that after archeological excavation, the sacred building carefully had been rebuilt and in 2009 was ceremoniously unlocked with Cardinal Wuerl helping to open the doors. Now the pilgrims could see the landmark, which was striking against the open field and sky. They walked a distance from the Visitor's Center to the Brick Chapel, built in what was then the capital of Maryland, and arrived at the building. Along the way, they took in the immense Chapel field with its as yet untold story about the people who lived on this land. At the Brick Chapel (closed on Sundays), the pilgrims read the informational panels of the outdoor pavilion and took photos in front of the church doors. In a mood of reflection on the walk back to the bus, the visitors considered that the Brick Chapel stands today as an affirmation that our faith has survived and thrived despite the time when practice of the Catholic faith was prohibited.

A final wonder awaited the pilgrims as the bus took them along a single-lane highway to what seemed the edge of the world. In fact, they arrived at Newtowne Neck and the home of St. Francis Xavier Church which is over 350 years old. At the water's edge, the church is located on a peninsula between

Continued on page 32



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St. Michael's Parish

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301-589-1155

Joanie Heavey, OPT Editor
301-5891155 ext. 21

MLK

Con't from page 3

they take on their true meaning and worth. These words, 'prophetic' and 'countercultural' come so readily to mind because we have just listened to the words of Isaiah, the Prophet, whose whole life, mission and ministry was countercultural."

"The title, 'prophet' is given to one who proclaims God's Word, testifies to God's will and challenges his hearers to walk in God's ways. The word, 'countercultural' speaks to us today of living the life of the Spirit, trusting in God's presence, believing in his Word and working to manifest his kingdom in a world that simply looks elsewhere for its inspiration. Today, as we celebrate Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we see alive with true meaning those words, prophetic and countercultural, defined in his life, his mission and his ministry."

At the end of the Mass, the winners

of the essay contest co-sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of Black Catholics and the Catholic Schools Office were recognized and honored. Deacon Al Turner, the director of the Office of Black Catholics, called each student forward and Cardinal Wuerl presented them with an award plaque. The essays were based on the theme of this year's celebration, *Free at Last: True Freedom in the Spirit*, and were given to the following students:

• **First Place:**

Katie May, St. Elizabeth Catholic School

• **Second Place:**

Maria Marius, Mother of God School

• **Third Place:**

Sophie Wagner, Holy Redeemer School, College Park

• **Honorable Mention:**

Ryan Krawczewicz, St. Bernadette School

OPT

ACCREDITATION

Con't from page 1

has provided schools with a more demanding research-based process that incorporates strategic planning and Catholic standards into school accreditation.

Accreditation is a rigorous process used to validate that schools in the Archdiocese of Washington uphold their Catholic identity, ensure high academic achievement, provide safe and nurturing learning environments and work to continuously improve. In 2011, archdiocesan schools transitioned their existing accreditation with Middle States to the Southern Association of College and Schools in partnership with AdvancED. The decision to change was based on the effectiveness of the comprehensive accreditation process offered by AdvancED that recognizes the relationship that exists between Catholic schools and the archdiocese and incorporates Catholic identity into accreditation requirements.

The Archdiocese of Washington is home to 96 archdiocesan and independent Catholic schools. AdvancED's accreditation covers the 57 archdiocesan schools. Independent Catholic schools are accredited individually though other national accrediting agencies.

This past week, the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Washington and archdiocesan schools hosted an accreditation team of evaluators from AdvancED. This team included 14 school leaders from around the country, many of whom are Catholic school superintendents. The team members reviewed self-evaluations and plans for continuous improvement from the Catholic Schools Office and archdiocesan schools. The team looked for evidence to ensure that schools in the Archdiocese of Washington meet AdvancED's rigorous standards for quality schools and school systems.

The four day-long evaluation visit included 267 interviews with

staff from the archdiocesan pastoral center, pastors, principals, teachers, support staff, parents, board members and other community stakeholders. These interviews were used to discover how school leaders and stakeholders work together to meet the spiritual, academic, social, emotional and physical needs of the students in the Archdiocese of Washington. Team members visited almost half of all archdiocesan schools covered by AdvancED accreditation. During these school visits, team members interviewed school leaders and observed instruction in 259 classrooms. The team spent time reviewing school and archdiocesan data and other evidence that shows how Catholic schools achieve excellence in our academic and faith programs.

At the conclusion of the evaluation team's visit, the lead evaluator shared the findings of the team. The Archdiocese of Washington was commended for providing a well-managed and active learning environment that offers support and feedback while maintaining high expectations. The team made recommendations for continuous improvement that include increasing training and support for initiatives with a significant connection to technology.

"AdvancED recognized that the Archdiocese of Washington is deeply committed to meeting the unique mission of Catholic schools," said Tom Burnford, Secretary for Education for the Archdiocese of Washington. "With the leadership of Cardinal Wuerl and the talented staff across our schools, it was clear to the evaluation team that the archdiocese is invested in forming students in the Catholic faith while holding high expectations for academic excellence."

"This process has allowed the archdiocese to take a deeper look at how we are doing in our mission to educate and pass on the faith," said Superintendent for Catholic Schools, Deacon Bert L'Homme. "I am proud of the achievement and commitment exhibited by our schools during this process."

OPT

St. Raphael School News

By Nora Stephens

St. Raphael School students are back at their desks after a wonderful Christmas season. Now that we are a full school, we closed out December with our biggest Christmas pageant yet. Family and friends enjoyed a joyous musical celebration before we left for break. Carols old and new were sung and danced to, and the afternoon concluded with a Nativity play performed by the kindergarten class. Nothing can bring the joy of Christmas into one's heart better than our littlest students telling the story of Jesus' birth.

Coat Drive Resounding Success

Our school participated in the Coats of Many Colors Drive in December. Our goal was 100 winter coats, but St. Raphael School doubled that by collecting 200! Seeing the coats pile up each day in the lobby of the school was an inspirational sight and powerful reminder of the true meaning of Christmas. Tucked inside the pocket of each coat was a note of encouragement or a prayer written by an SRS student.

Hoop Dreams Angels Style

January days may be long and dark, but the activity level is high in the hallways of St. Raphael. Basketball season is underway, and our school is fielding many CYO teams. We have many student-athletes who participate in a variety of sports, but CYO is special because it gives our students an opportunity to officially represent their school by proudly wearing the St. Raphael colors! St. Raphael Angels jackets sold like gangbusters at the school store, and we are showing our spirit. We celebrated the kickoff of hoops season with a spirit day in early



Third grade teacher's aide Lisa Malay faces off against third grader Timmy O'Connor before the teacher student basketball game on Spirit Day at St. Raphael School. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia

January. Students wore their jerseys and participated in fun, competitive events. The highlight of spirit day for everyone is always the students vs. staff basketball game. The Trumpet Room was loud and proud during that friendly match.

Under the Sea

Rehearsals are already underway for our school play, "The Little Mermaid." Actors are busily learning lyrics, lines, and where to stand on stage, but there is plenty of time. Practices continue through the spring, and the production opens on April 11.

March for Life

The eighth-graders will be accompanying the parish youth group to the March for Life on Jan. 22. Students will travel to the National Mall to participate in this wonderful example of social activism.

Gearing up for Catholic Schools Week

Catholic Schools Week is fast approaching, and our volunteer committee, teachers, and students are working hard to make it a fantastic week, focusing on the theme of faith, knowledge and service. The school is decorated beautifully each

year in a way that reflects the theme, and the festive decorations give the school an extra boost of energy. Parents are honored with refreshments on Monday for making the financial sacrifice to send their students to Catholic school. Tuesday is Teacher Appreciation Day, where we celebrate our dedicated faculty and staff for their tireless devotion to our children. Wednesday is about service: the children make sandwiches, which are delivered to area homeless shelters. They also write letters of appreciation to members of the armed forces currently rehabilitating at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Thursday is Clergy Appreciation Day. The priests are given letters, cards and a small gift from the students. The week culminates on Friday with a Student Appreciation Day. Children get an out-of-uniform day, a small gift, and an early dismissal from school. Later that night, Catholic School Week officially closes with a boisterous Family Fun Night in the Trumpet Room

We are incredibly proud of our school and grateful for what a Catholic education gives our children. The faith, knowledge, and service that we hope to demonstrate during this special week are the heart of our school community. OPT

St. Raphael Parish News

By Nora Stephens

St. Raphael Parish is very blessed. We have an incredibly robust volunteer community and a dedicated staff that spend much of the months leading up to the Christmas season working on projects that benefit the less fortunate among us.

This year, our Advent Giving Tree project was a tremendous success. Starting the first Sunday of Advent, two enormous Christmas trees are on display at the back of the church. Each tree has "ornaments" made of tags that request a specific item that someone needs. There are big boxes beside the tree where people can drop off the special gift requested on the tag as well as donated gift wrap. Each week at Mass, the boxes are overflowing.

This year, 20 organizations were the recipients of the gifts that were requested, including our twin parish,

St. Martin of Tours in Washington, D.C., Children's Hospital, many homeless shelters, and other agencies that serve the disadvantaged and ill. We collected more than \$5,000 from the Alternative Giving Project this year, and those funds were split among four organizations.

Sadly, our Mother Teresa Luncheon had to be canceled because of inclement weather. This was such a disappointment for everyone involved, as it is truly one of the most special days of the year at St. Raphael. While we were unable to bring our special guests to the Trumpet Room for a holiday meal, we transported the donated roasted turkeys and baked hams, as well as the 130 guest gifts, to the convents of the Sisters of Mercy for distribution. This year's gift included a rain poncho, wool socks, personal hygiene kits, and Christmas candy in a tote bag.

It is a gift to have a parish so rich in spirit and so dedicated to service. We are the ones who truly benefit from the opportunity to help those most in need. OPT

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Centering Prayer

By Eileen McCabe, St. Elizabeth Parish Volunteer

Meditation has been practiced since antiquity as a component of numerous religious traditions and beliefs. We in the Catholic Church say we “meditate” when we engage in silent prayer. But for many, meditation goes much further. Meditation in centering prayer is done with a much more conscious effort at letting go of our control over our thoughts, external distractions and also gently letting go of all worries, concerns and matters that currently control our emotions, leaving the mind, as it were, an open temple to welcome the Holy Spirit and to receive His advise, help and the blessing of our daily lives.

Here at St. Elizabeth’s we have begun a group that meets once a week to practice silent meditation as an expansion of our prayer practices. We call our meditative experience “Centering Prayer,” a way of letting go of our control of our conscious minds and silently letting ourselves be happy just being in God’s presence. This could be compared to a happily married cou-

ple content to sit together on their porch without saying anything—just enjoying each other’s company.

Our groups, one of which meets on Sundays at 7:30 pm, the other on Wednesdays, also at 7:30 pm, follow the method described by the Trappist monk, Thomas Keating, who formed a group called Contemplative Outreach which is practiced now throughout the world. It was originally begun by the Trappists in response to the call from Vatican II for lay persons to return to the contemplative dimension of the Gospel.

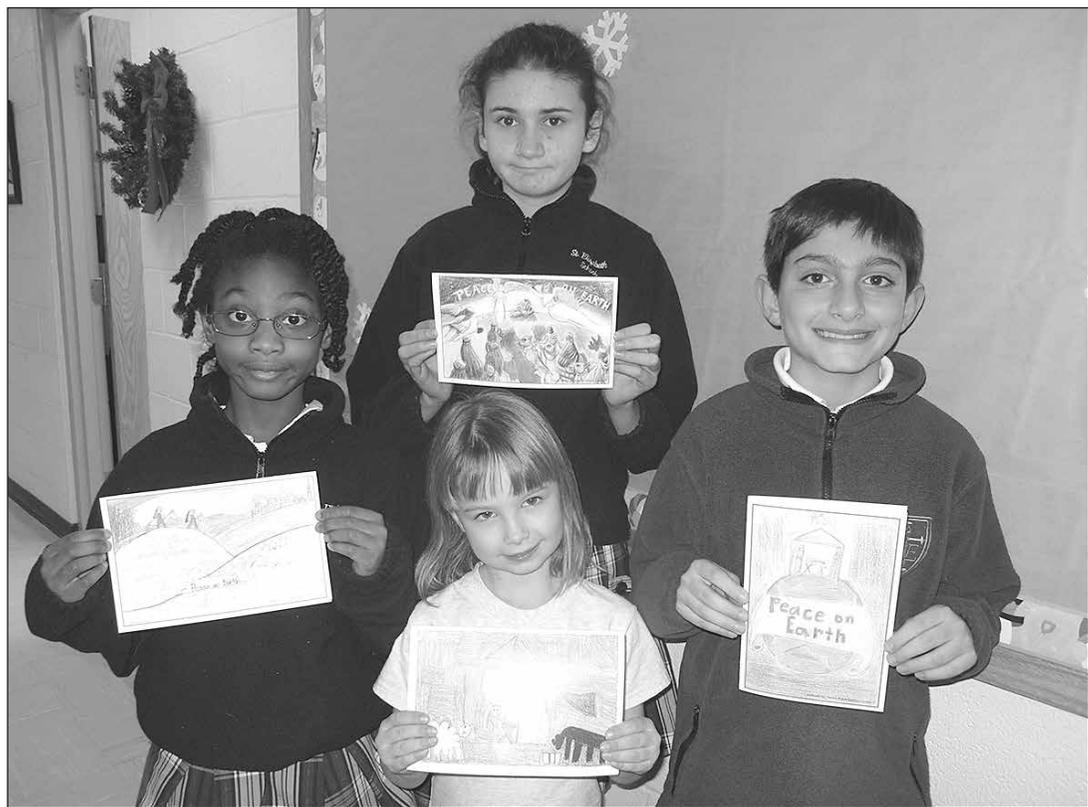
Our Wednesday has a smaller group with lots of opportunities for questions and discussion. The Sunday group combines prayer sessions with a contemplative walk in an attempt to combine prayer and action with a social get-together once every month or so for a pot-luck dinner and a film, currently on the Old Testament. This month’s will be on David.

Many of our group have already expressed gratitude for learning how to pray in this manner. If you are interested in joining us, call Eileen at 301-438-0422.

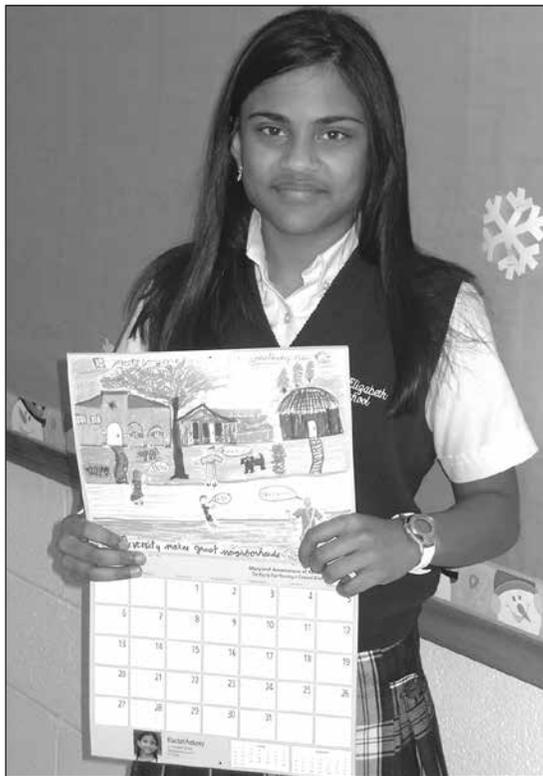
OPT



Happy Birthday, Pope Francis! On Tuesday, December 17, 2013, the students and staff of St. Elizabeth School honored the Pope’s birthday with a prayer service and birthday festivities. Six hundred fifty white and yellow cupcakes, (the Vatican colors), were enjoyed by all. A special birthday package was made and mailed to Vatican City for the Pope on his special day.



St. Elizabeth School is honored to announce our student winners of the 2013 Catholic Standard Christmas Card Contest. Pictured L-R (back): Olivia Evans, Grade Two, 3rd place; Maddy Giuliani, Grade Seven, 1st place; Sarkis Pakhchanian, Grade Five, 1st place. Pictured (front): Madeline Knarr, Kindergarten, 2nd place. This year, the Christmas card theme was “Peace on Earth.” St. Elizabeth School is so proud of our talented artists!



Congratulations, Rachel Antony, Grade Eight, whose artwork was chosen to appear in the 2014 Maryland Association of Realtors’ calendar. Rachel’s picture depicts the benefits of cultural diversity in our neighborhoods. The St. Elizabeth School community is proud of you, Rachel!



Congratulations, Katie May!

The St. Elizabeth School community, the Office of Black Catholics, and the Catholic Schools Office would like to congratulate Katie May on being named the FIRST PLACE winner in the 2014 Archdiocese of Washington Martin Luther King Jr. essay contest. Katie will receive her award at the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mass from His Eminence, Donald Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington. The celebration will be held on Saturday January 18, 2014, at 4:30 pm at Mt. Calvary Catholic Church, Forestville, Maryland. We are so very proud of you, Katie!

HERITAGE

Con’t from page 30

St. Clement’s Bay and Breton Bay. The group was privileged to have as a participant in the pilgrimage an elder Sodalist, Mary Campbell, who was baptized many years ago in the very church the group now entered with awe. A parishioner and the niece of Ms. Campbell was our guide. Before our host could say that she would get the keys from the pastor, eagerness overwhelmed the group at the sight of the quaint and unusually shaped church. Someone tried the door

which, to the amazement of all, it was open. In the vestibule was a large statue of St. Francis Xavier in a pose of exhortation with the Cross in his hand. As everyone entered, they were in awe of the beauty and simplicity of the small church, as well as the evident care the parishioners have bestowed on this historic treasure, which was recently restored. Individuals prayed before the tabernacle, remarked on the shrine of Mary where she wore a most stunning shade of blue like the sky, and viewed the unique pews which each had a latched door.

With the day ebbing away, the pilgrims reluctantly boarded their

bus. They received a message from the pastor Father Thomas Crowley thanking the group for visiting the church. The parishioner from St. Francis Xavier who was such a gracious host said farewell to the group, asked everyone to return, and bid the group a safe journey home. With so many gifts poured out upon them by the Lord and through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the group began their return trip with a prayer of thanksgiving for everything they had experienced on the pilgrimage. They were encouraged to share their experiences and new knowledge with others.

OPT

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SJE students gather for a photo at the 2013 March for Life on the National Mall.

St. John's Parishioners Honored for their Volunteerism

Cardinal Wuerl Honors Carla Haywood

On Epiphany Sunday, January 5, 2014, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception one of St. John the Evangelist's own, Carla Haywood, was presented with a "Manifesting the Kingdom" award from Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington.

Some 204 individuals from parishes and Catholic organizations across the Archdiocese of Washington were honored for their exceptional service to their local church. This was only the second time that the "Manifesting the Kingdom" award has been given out in the Archdiocese of Washington since Cardinal Wuerl became archbishop in 2006.

Each pastor in the Archdiocese was invited to nominate an individual or couple to receive the award. In addition, nominations were sought from major superiors of religious communities as well as from corporations and those who serve the Church from outside of the parish structure.

Mrs. Haywood has been an active parishioner at St. John the Evangelist and continues to wear many volunteer hats in the community. She currently serves the head of the parish's Liturgical Committee, on the Confirmation



Carla Haywood with her daughter, Betsy.

prep team, as a Eucharistic Minister, as Vice President of St. John the Evangelist's Home and School Association, and as an eighth-grade room parent.

Catholic Business Network – Montgomery County Honors Peg Daly

On Friday, November 22, the 20th annual Catholic Business Network – Montgomery County (CBN-MC) Gala was held. The dinner is the annual fundraising event of the year at which the CBN-MC honors each Catholic School's volunteer of the year. The 2013

Volunteer of the Year award went to Peg Daly, honored for her many hours of service to the SJE community, especially through her gift of time and talents in leading our parish's young adults in preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

The Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County is an independent, non-profit organization of businesses and individual professionals working together to live out their faith in the marketplace and develop and maintain business relationships through an annual series of programs and monthly networking events. Through it's an annual scholarship program and various fundraising events the CBN-MC generously provide additional financial support within the Archdiocese of Washington to further the education of our young people.

Mrs. Daly has also been active in the parish community for more than 25 years. In addition to her work with the Confirmation prep team, she sits on the Pastor's Advisory Council (PAC) and quietly serves the school and parish in countless ways behind the scenes.

Congratulations to Carla and Peg and thank you for your continued dedication to the SJE community!



Peg Daly, holding her award with her husband, Tim, at the CBN-MC Gala.

SJE Students Advance to Geography Bee Championship

Congratulations to the following students for advancing to the Geography Bee school championship: Eighth grade: Colleen Hathway and Owen Johnson; Seventh grade: Joe Bromley, Matthew Johnson, Chris Martinez, and Abel Temketem; Sixth grade: Alex Goutier and Teresa Knestout; and Fifth grade: Eamon Lalley and Maura Mockeridge.

The championship will be held January 15 after school. The winner from SJE takes a qualifying test. If he/she has one of the top 100 scores in Maryland, then he/she will com-

pete at the state level in the spring. Owen Johnson has been at the state level for the past three years. As an eighth grader, this is his last year to qualify in the competition for grades 4-8.

The state winner goes onto the national championship, sponsored by the National Geographic, held in Washington, DC this summer, which will be broadcast on ESPN. Best of luck to all!

For more information, check out the following link: www.national-geographic.com/geobee/

OPT



A member of the a cappella singing group called Sixtus serenades Cubby LaHood, founder of St. Joseph's House, as husband Dan LaHood looks on with a bemused grin.

Musical Benefit for St. Joseph's House

On Saturday evening, January 25 at 7 pm join us at the Rosensteel Council Knights of Columbus to enjoy the music of three very talented musical groups: Sixtus, the a cappella singing priests; Crooked Hat; and Jay Cooley Jazz. \$50 admission (\$25 children) includes food and beverages and will help support the beautiful work of St. Joseph's House, a

home day care and respite center for children with multiple disabilities.

For information go to News and Events on the St. John the Evangelist parish website (www.sjeparish.org) or contact: Mary Brogan at thebrogans1@verizon.net/301-351-5966 or Margie Cuff at margiecuff@gmail.com/301-949-1715.

OPT

SJE Celebrates Faith, Knowledge and Service

The theme of this year's Catholic Schools Week is "Faith, Knowledge and Service," celebrating the fact that Catholic schools are top performers for our nation. With traditionally high academic standards and high graduation rates, supported by strong moral values, Catholic schools and their graduates make a positive contribution to American society. Daily events at St. John the Evangelist include:

Sunday, January 26: Celebrating Grandparents and Significant Senior Citizens

What a great way to kick off a week of fun with a 10:15 am Liturgy followed by Brunch with a variety of delicious breakfast foods lovingly made by parish volunteers.

Monday, January 27: Celebrating Service

SJE students can come to school dressed in their PJs and raise money through dollar donations to participate in a Dance-A-Thon (Grades

4-8) or Read-A-Thon (Grades Pre-K-8). Proceeds go to the school's Endowment Fund.

Tuesday, January 28: Celebrating Our Future Careers

Eighth graders serve as substitute teachers in each grade for one morning period. Students can come

Continued on page 34

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They Ran For Priests

By Therese Recinella

EDITOR NOTE: Each year, a group of people from around the Archdiocese train for the Marine Corps Marathon or 10K as members of the Run for Vocations team. As they train, they offer up their prayers and sacrifices for Archdiocesan seminarians — our future priests — and raise money for a special fund that covers unexpected costs the seminarians may have, such as travel for a family emergency, unusual medical expenses, or spiritual enrichment opportunities (e.g., World Youth

Day). This year, eight members of our parish participated in the 10K and raised \$2,477.76 for our seminarians. Thank you James and Nicholas Morrison (our parish's two seminarians), Mark and Christine Murphy, Ron and Mary Lu Hunt, Martin de Ribeaux, and Therese Recinella, who shares her experience below.

I have never participated in any running events in my entire life. Not Ever! So why now? Four years ago I received a medical diagnosis after years of searching, misdiagnosis and misdirection. It

took three years to fully recover my health. And I was blessed to not have any surgery nor take any medication. I wanted to express my gratitude to God for restoring my health. A friend told me about Run for Vocations. I figured, why not? I could support my church and our seminarians and priests...while praying. I began training with a walking group, dragging myself out of bed in the morning before work and on Saturdays too. I walked all spring, summer and fall. I took my pink Garmin running watch and my blessed chord rosary that I had received in Liseaux at the Basilica of St. Therese while on pilgrimage. I prayed that rosary power-walking around King Farm, my neighborhood, in the Kentlands, at high school tracks...powerwalking and praying. Run for Vocations day started at 4am. When I presented myself down at the Mall before the race, I said no way am I ever doing this again. But as the day wore on, I actually ended up running some of race, finishing well within the allowed time. After the race, I changed my mind and went back to power walking with my pink Garmin on one wrist and my chord rosary on the other. Hope more people will join us next year.

OPT



Power Walker/Runner, Therese Recinella, with rosary on the right wrist, pink walking watch on the left, finishing the annual 10K Run For Vocations event in Washington, DC.



SJN Pastor, Father Thomas LaHood, and Father Andy Davy with members of the SJN John Paul the Great Vocations Society

Pray for Us

By Rus Wester

The parish's John Paul the Great Vocations Society gathered for a meal attended by two favorite guests: Our Pastor, Father LaHood and our home-grown Priest, Father Andy Davy. Father Davy has the distinction of growing up in and receiving all his sacraments in SJN parish, discerning his vocation and entering seminary and being ordained at SJN.

A special gift presentation was made to both Priests, thanking them for their perpetual support of Vocations.

"Our Vocations member, Christine Murphy, made two beautiful rosaries and presented them on behalf of our group," said Society coordinator, Mary Beth de Ribeaux. "Christine has been designing and creating these lovely sacramentals for several years, but these particular rosaries were quite remarkable. The center medal is a likeness of our Vocations committee Patron, Blessed John Paul II and the crucifixes were actually blessed by John Paul II when he was Pope. As Christine handed the gifts to our guest Priests, she begged for their prayers for the Vocations group and SJN parish." Thank you, Christine.

OPT



Santa and Mrs Claus are helped by the Bauer Family elves to distribute gifts and prizes to every child attending the December 2013 breakfast with Santa at SJN.

A Great Christmas Recipe

By Rus Wester

In a large, highly-decorated room of red, green and white, combine the following ingredients:

Ingredients:

■ 200+ children, parents, grandparents and guests

■ A lot of Knights of Columbus and their families

■ A wonderful breakfast of fluffy pancakes, yummy scrambled eggs, hot sausage, chilled milk/juice and hot coffee prepared by head-chef Mike May and his team of Knights cooks

As you enjoy the hospitality of the day, provided by SJN Youth Group and Spouses of the Knights, introduce Santa Claus and his helpers into the mix. Sprinkle a goodly

amount of holiday songs provided by the Father/Son Solbach carolers. Then stir in oodles of gifts and prizes provided by the Ron Bauer Family (Ron, Raelene and Marla). Go ahead and finish by encouraging Knight Terry Waters to supervise the children in cracking open a piñata filled with Christmas delights from the Knights.

Now, you can mix this recipe up on your own or just show up for it all next year when the Knights again host Breakfast with Santa in the parish. See you there!

OPT

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\$2.5 MILLION

\$2,000,000

\$1,500,000

\$1,000,000

\$750,000

\$500,000

"Expanding Our Home"

Our Capital Campaign is a great success! The Parish Funding Goal set back in the summer of 2013 has resulted in pledges surpassing \$2.5 MILLION.

Actual count through December 30, 2013 shows parishioners have pledged a total of \$2,504,524.00.

Thank You, Parish!

SJE CELEBRATES

Con't from page 33

to school dressed in outfits fitting their future career choices.

Wednesday, January 29: Celebrating Our Future Leaders and Our Nation

SJE students get served a special rigatoni luncheon and come dressed in wacky-tacky get ups. The day ends with the third Annual Faculty/Staff vs. 8th Graders basketball game at 2 pm. Go SJE!

Thursday, January 30: Celebrating Our Students

The students enjoy a spir-

ited Student Appreciation Day Assembly after lunch. Homeroom teachers divide their classes into thirds using A, B, C. for each group. Students dress according to the theme chosen by their team captains and challenge each other with silly games and song and cheer competition. What will the theme be this year -- Winter Olympics? Undersea creatures? Super heroes?

Friday, January 31: Celebrating Our Teachers

SJE salutes of their wonderful teachers with a thank-you luncheon served by 8th grade students and prepared by grateful parents.

OPT

Saint Peter's Students and Faculty Are Full of the Spirit of Giving throughout the Year

It's common, during the holiday seasons, to reach out to those in need. The faculty and the students of Saint Peter's parish school routinely participate in opportunities of service and outreach that touch our local and our global communities. Fall 2013 was a very busy time. School had only been in session for a few weeks before events got underway.

In October the faculty "paid" for a dress down day to support the Lee Denim Day for breast cancer research and awareness. A check for \$250 was sent to the Lee Denim Day Foundation.

Early in October the Student Council sponsored the "Operation Baby Bottle" project which supports women in crisis pregnancies and women and infants in need. Students filled baby bottles with loose change. Baby bottle totals exceeded \$5000.

October also happened to be the month that Saint Peter's students took their annual mini Help-the-Homeless walk-a-thon to support Shepherd's Table in Silver Spring.

Tag day (casual dress) fees of more than \$400 plus 6 large bags and boxes of much need supplies such as shampoo and socks were delivered to Shepherd's Table.

October charitable events finished up with the annual Halloween Basket raffle to support the Holy Childhood Association mission and relief efforts. Proceeds from the raffle exceeded \$1000.

Saint Peter's students were on a roll and kicked off November by supporting the Archdiocese of Washington "Coats of Many Colors" project with a large donation of gently used and new coats.

Our annual participation in the St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital Math-a-thon began with about 250 students pledging to complete a math workbook in exchange for donations from friends and family. Saint Peter's is a valued partner of St. Jude's. This year's donation was approximately \$2400.

The parish Thanksgiving food drive received enthusiastic support from the students who

donated large quantities of boxed and canned goods and monetary contributions for turkeys so that the parish could prepare Thanksgiving food baskets for delivery to Montgomery County residents.

December opened with a special project to help the victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Several students with ties to the Philippines requested permission to make rubber band bracelets in the colors of the Philippine flag to sell as a fundraiser for the typhoon victims. By the end of the 3-week sales period, over \$800 had been raised to help support the victims of the disaster in the Philippines.

Students are encouraged to think of the needs of others throughout the school year. Projects planned for the second half of the school year include a Winter Fun Raffle to support the Holy Childhood Association, several tag days for special causes and a buddy day activity to make rosaries.

OPT



Student Ambassadors escort the younger students into the building.

Saint Peter's School Ambassadors and Safety Patrols

Warm Smiles and Warmer Hearts

"Neither snow, nor rain, nor gloom of night" – just like the United States Post Office, The Saint Peter's School Ambassadors and Safety Patrols will not let these conditions keep them from their assigned duties. Whether bundled up in down jackets, wool hats and mittens or draped in full length rain ponchos, our Third, Fourth and Fifth grade School Ambassadors along with our Seventh grade Safety Patrols are in front of the school bright and early each day to assist with morning drop-off.

Whether opening car doors or

helping our little ones with oversized backpacks, these dedicated students always greet each car pool with a warm smile and a friendly "good morning." Our youngest students are then escorted into the building, hand in hand, by the School Ambassadors. Appreciative parents can drive away knowing their little ones are taken care of and protected. Our Ambassadors and Safety Patrols remind us each day what it really means to be a community of service and compassion and the importance of starting each day with a smile!

OPT

St. Peter's Spiritual Life Committee

This December, St. Peter's Spiritual Life began the Christmas season by practicing random acts kindness for each day of Advent. The students made the Christmas season about loving others in the process, sharing God's love with others by practicing acts of kindness for each day of Advent. It gave the students the opportunity to talk about different ways they could demonstrate God's love by putting their faith in action. The intention was to be truly "present" with each activity by simply practicing one random act of kindness. The students chose



Students sing Christmas Carols with residents at Solana Assisted Living Community

creative ways to bring a smile to others through a selfless act.

This opened the door to discuss the importance of service and volunteering in our community. One example of service was reaching out to a local assisted living facility. The students visited Solana Assisted Living Community to sing Christmas carols. Thirty students packed the dining area to sing traditional holiday favorites. They continued by making their way to Alzheimer's residence for more Christmas Cheer. Students were then invited to a small reception where they visited with residents and enjoyed a holiday treat of cookies and punch. "We have been working on carols and wanting to

do things for the community and thought sharing with seniors would be a nice way to start," said Mary Kate Whitcomb.

Sandy Reed, the contact person for The Solana Assisted Living Community, was impressed by the students and invited them to return for a visit. The trip was such a success that the students are planning to return in late January. They are partnering with the residents and will make blankets for sick children at Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C. The experience was an amazing lesson in how selflessly giving to others, you end up being blessed yourself!

OPT

St. Peter's Third Annual National Geographic Bee

Students at St. Peter's School came back from the Christmas holiday anticipating the excitement the National Geographic Bee generates. The seventh grade students prepare for the competition by making detailed maps of the United States and the World and practicing mock Geography bees during their Study Skills classes. In December all of the seventh grade students take a

The third place winner was Ryan Gleason, the second place winner was Haley Krause and the first place winner was Sarah Russo. Sarah will next take a written test;



Geography bee finalists

rigorous ninety question written exam provided by the National Geographic Bee. Ten finalists emerge from this competition. This year's finalists included: Diana Black, Julia Bowers, Justin Bustamante, Chase Horich, Ryan Gleason, Haley Krause, William Lewerenz, Ashlyn McDonald, Sarah Russo and Declan Slattery.

On January 10, while the fifth through eighth grade students cheered them on, the ten finalists competed in the double elimination Bee. Saint Peter's principal, Mrs. Whelan, moderated the competition and presented the awards.

up to 100 of the top scorers on this test will compete in the Maryland State Bee to be held April 14, 2014. The winner of the state bee will represent Maryland in the 26th annual National Geographic Bee Competition to be held the weekend of May 19-21 in Washington DC.

The winner of the national competition will receive a \$50,000 college scholarship, a trip to the Galapagos Islands and a lifetime membership in the National Geographic Society. We wish Sarah well as she embarks on the next step of the competition.

OPT

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Resurrection Winterfest 2013 a Huge Success

Organizers of the annual Winterfest at Resurrection Church called the two-day event a “huge success” – with approximately \$38,000 being raised for the parish.

“It was just great all around, one of the best in the 12 years of the event,” Winterfest 2013 Chairperson Phyllis Bottegale said of the Dec. 6-7 festival, the parish’s largest fundraiser of the year.

More than 75 vendors and crafters were on hand, giving attendees abundant choices for all kinds of handmade and crafted Christmas gifts, homemade baked goods and many, many interesting and useful items, including many in the popular Silent Auction.



Among the many vendors at Resurrection’s annual Winterfest was Jennifer Alahouzos, left, and Kathy Hobbs, who displayed hand-painted ornaments and other items. Photo by John Small



Chris Alex was one of the many volunteers working at Resurrection’s Winterfest 2013, surrounded by balloons as she took bids at the popular Silent Auction. Photo by John Small

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Also, as part of the event and during the Christmas season, the parish’s Alternative Gift program raised \$8,717 to help support the parish’s Twinning with a parish in Gros Morne, Haiti. A group from Resurrection will be making its annual trip to Haiti from Feb. 11-18, and the money raised will be used to support a number of sustainable lifestyle projects there.

Among the many parishioners

working with Bottegale in putting together Winterfest 2013 were Co-Chair Bill Ratcliffe and their right-hand man Phil Kane; chairs of the Silent Auction, Mark and Kathy Hinken and Pat Piferski; chairs of the Big Six Raffle Committee, Kelly Maltagliati and Sue Berger; the bake sale team led by Catherine and Chuck Halpin; Mary Lou Ponton and Joan Guyther, chairs of the Wine Pull; Tina Peachman, chair

of the Treasure Chest; members of Knights of Columbus Council No. 9808, who provided Breakfast With Santa and other great food throughout the event; as well as members of other parish committees and numerous adult and youth volunteers.

Winners of the raffle prizes were: John Steger, the “Sleep Under the Stars” handmade queen-size quilt; Mickey Curro, the Vizio 47-inch, LED-HD television; Ken Roach,

the Xbox One-Day One Edition; Eileen Emswiler, the \$500 cash prize; and Maria Alvarenga, the iPad Mini.

“This year’s Winterfest was a wonderful event that was enjoyed by many folks young and old,” Bottegale added. “Having events like this brings the community together near and far. We look forward to this great holiday gathering every year.”

OPT



St. Nicholas Visits Religious Education Classes

St. Nicholas, played by Resurrection catechist Kevin Hassett (back row center), paid a surprise visit to some 240 youngsters in religious education classes Dec. 15-16 at the parish. Assisted by his elves, St. Nick distributed treats to the youngsters, recalling the secret gift-giving practices of the 4th century legendary saint, whose feast day is celebrated Dec. 6. Youngsters shown here were in the kindergarten class of catechist Julia Shawhan (third from right).



Keeping Christ in Christmas

Winners of the “Keep Christ in Christmas” poster contest at Resurrection Church were Isaac Thomas, Maegya Mensah, Julia Wright, Christina Anderson and Sarah Sheppard. Wayne Brown of the Knights of Columbus Council No. 9808, which sponsored the annual contest, presented the winners with \$25 gift certificates. The contest was for youngsters in kindergarten through eighth grade, and the winning entries were displayed in the church’s commons area.

Weekend Retreat for Separated & Divorced Men & Women

January 31 – February 2

The Dominican Retreat House in McLean, Virginia will be holding a weekend retreat for separated and divorced men and women. Directed by Msgr. John Enzler, the retreat – Finding Light in the Darkness: A Journey of Healing and Hope – begins Friday evening, January 31, through Sunday midday, February 2.

The weekend will include talks and discussions, private prayer time, daily Mass, the opportunity for reconciliation as well as private

rooms and all meals.

Topics will include:

- Surviving
- Acceptance & responsibility
- Guilt & Grief
- Coping & Healing
- Anger & Forgiveness

There is healing in hope and hope in healing! Share your journey – there is strength and healing with others. Separated and Divorced Catholics are welcomed in the Church. Pope John Paul II’s encyc-

lical letter *Familiaris Consortio* (1981) states: “I earnestly call upon pastors and the whole community of the faithful to help the divorced, and with solicitous care to make sure that they do not consider themselves as separated from the Church, for as baptized persons they can, and indeed must, share in her life.”

Reservations are required; the total cost is \$175. To register, please call 703-356-4243.

OPT

CSW at OLOL

Con’t from page 24

that there will be popsicles involved.

Friday students, teachers and parents will celebrate Mass with Monsignor Filardi with special prayers of thanksgiving for all the blessings that we experience in our Catholic school.

Throughout the week, students of all ages will prepare small gift bags for children who come to the Children’s Inn at NIH. These children come and spend several weeks at the Inn while they receive treatment at NIH. It’s always nice to be

welcomed with a goody bag of toys to play with! Students will also complete an America 4 Boston Prayer Canvas during the week. There are 300 squares on the canvas, and each can be painted with a short prayer and a picture in red, white and blue. The Prayer Canvas will join others from all over the US at Fenway Park in Boston, where they will cover the field. Canvases will then be displayed throughout the city of Boston. Seventh and eighth graders are currently working on the canvas, and during Catholic Schools Week will assist younger students as they complete the Prayer Canvas.

OPT

Advent Projects Focused on Sharing Treasure, Time and Talent

By John McCarthy

This Advent our parishioners took seriously the words of the Son of God – “As often as you did it for these least ones, you did it for me”. They contributed \$25,096 to various charity projects and gave Christmas gifts to over 600 needy individuals. The many projects that provided the opportunity for giving were: Alternative Christmas, Spirit Tree, Christmas Stocking Help Line and our Haiti Medical Mission’s year-end appeal. In addition, there was a tremendous volunteer effort to make the annual Christmas tree sales a success – a project that raises funds for operation of the parish. Our Pastor, Father John Dillon, commented on this outpouring of giving – Oh how good is the good God “(a favorite quote of his from St. Julie Billiart the foundress of the Sisters Notre Dame de Namur).

This was our 13th year of participating in the Alternative Christmas program. Individuals can purchase a card from the participating charity, in terms of the service provided to the charity. The card can then be given to a friend or loved one, as a present and in their honor. This year \$11,355 was raised and the monies were distributed to the nine participating charities. Thank you to the



Co-coordinator Carol Lindsey at Alternative Christmas Card display after Mass

dedicated work of Co-coordinators Pat O’Connor and Carol Lindsey and their helpers.

Our Medical Mission to Haiti has been serving the poor people, of the Leon, Haiti, area for 18 years. A special appeal was announced the weekend of December 14 and by the December 31, \$12,443 was collected. These funds will help in continuing the mission for another year. All the members of Our Haiti Committee participated in presenting delivering the appeal message at the Masses, on the 14th and 15th, and were available, after Mass, to answer questions and accept dona-

tions. The Alternative Christmas program also provided an additional \$3150 to the Medical Mission.

The Spirit Tree has been a tradition at St. Francis for the last 22 years. This year there were approximately 500 cards for individuals from Assumption Parish, Washington, DC. All the cards were taken from the tree in less than 10 days!

Many volunteers signed up to help with the “big sort”, including Girl Scouts and their leaders, teens from the high school youth group, students and confirmation candidates needing service hours, fami-

lies teaching their children how to volunteer, and long-time parishioners who have helped for more than 20 years. Due to the winter storm on December 8th the “big sort” was postponed until Monday which meant that many of those who volunteered were not able to help. The job of sorting the numerous gifts was done by a smaller group of dedicated volunteers and the packages got off on time to Assumption

Parish.

This year’s Religious Education Christmas Stocking Help Line service project provided gifts, to children and families, served by Catholic Charities in Montgomery County. Families from the St. Francis Religious Education program provided gifts (clothes, toys and other items) for more than 100 children and teens

OPT



Spirit Tree Coordinator Bobbie McLaughlin among some of the packed presents ready for transport to Assumption Parish



The BNP Carolers in action

BNP Carolers Lifted up the Christmas Spirit

We were graced again this year with the talents of the Filipino First Friday vigil adoration group, on December 14. They sang beautiful traditional and popular carols, both English and Filipino. All the members are graduates of BNP, which stands for stands for Banal Na Pag-aaral, or Holy Study. This is a joyous, and uplifting, annual event after the morning Mass on the second Saturday of December.

Special Needs Catechesis at St. Francis of Assisi

By Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education

The Religious Education program at St. Francis strives to work together with parents to ensure that catechesis is available in a way that best meets each child’s needs. Some children benefit most from RE classes, assisted by an aide. Our program is blessed by the service of adult and teen volunteers who provide this individualized support. In addition, our parish is pleased to offer catechetical sessions specifically designed for children and youth with developmental differences.

Monthly Special Needs Classes has been offered at St. Francis since 2010 and participation has grown every year. This year, a team of five catechists collaborates with parents to guide and support participants through specially prepared lessons which include time for prayer, as well as small group and individualized catechesis. Classes are held on Sunday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 pm, giving families the opportunity to share in the 5 pm Sunday Mass. For more information, or if you are interested in serving as a catechist, or aide, for children with special needs, call my office at 301-258-9193.

OPT

Christmas Tree Sales Successful – Thanks to Many Volunteers

By Wayne Burnside, Chairman, Christmas Tree Sale

Once again St. Francis had a very successful Christmas tree enterprise as we earned a very nice profit of \$11,336. In addition, through the generosity of our customers, we were able to raise \$840 for a needy family. This year 68 different volunteers braved the elements, to enjoy our long held tradition of beer, fire, and chainsaws, with other St. Francis parishioners.

The fellowship enjoyed by all the volunteers is equally as important as making money for our parish. A special appreciation goes out to Gary DeBalso, Brian Petit, and our wreath decorator Kathy Stepowany, whose tireless efforts ensured our success.

OPT



Above, volunteers Gary DeBalso and Paul Lauria helping a happy customer, parishioner Pam Kelley and daughter Emily Below, display of wreaths decorated by volunteer Kathy Stepowany



More St. Francis of Assisi News on Page 22

St. Francis of Assisi Parish

6701 Muncaster Mill Road
Derwood, MD

Rev. Rev. John J. Dillon
Pastor

301-840-1407

Rose Attig and John McCarthy

OPT Co-Editors

240-447-2286

jfmamm@gmail.com

See St. Jude Regional Catholic School Open House Ad on Page 21

Pic 1-Laura G. Kafka-Price, Ph.D. - performing artist, voice teacher, musicologist, author, and instructor at the Peabody Preparatory - made a special appearance at the Our Lady Queen of Poland & St. Maximilian Kolbe Christmas concert on December 29, 2013. The other singers performing in the concert of Polish carols, "koledy", were Kasia Roberts, Aleksandra Bilinski, Victoria Stanislawek, and Alicia Coleman. They were accompanied on the keyboard by Parish organist Janusz Bilinski, who organized the concert. Julia and Mireille Lechlitter accompanied them on strings.



Sisters Mireille and Julia Lechlitter play at the OLQP Parish concert on Dec. 29, 2013.

OLQP Parish youth from the drama group, organized by Dorota Ponikiewska and accompanied on the keyboard by Marcin Pekala, recited poems and sang "Koledy" at the OLQP Parish Dinner on January 5, 2014. The youth included A.J. Szemiel, Milena Munoz, Kamila Adamczyk, Natalia Hlasko, Alicia Coleman, Victoria Stanislawek, and Olga Dzierzanowska.



Parishioner Walter Zachariasiewicz, who celebrated his 102nd birthday on November 7, 2013, receives "Oplatek" wishes from Maria Zminda at the OLQP Parish Christmas Dinner on Jan. 5, 2014.

OLQP Parish Polish Saturday School students reenact the Nativity Play, "Jaselka" with the three kings bringing gifts to Baby Jesus.



Parishioner Dr. Lucas Kulczycki, who celebrated his 102nd birthday on August 19, 2013, is pictured with parishioners Janina and Marian Mols, and Anna Khabyev at the OLQP Parish Oplatek on Jan. 5, 2014.

QUESTION
a b o r t i o n SM

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

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

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Students of the Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish Polish Saturday School star in the Christmas 2013 Nativity Play, "Jaselka", directed by Eva Chlebowska and Wieslawa Wisniewska. They were accompanied by Violetta Bazyluk on guitar and Janusz Bilinski on keyboard.



Our Lady Queen of Poland
9700 Rosensteel Avenue
Silver Spring, MD
Rev. Jan Fiedurek,
S. Chr. Pastor
301-589-1857
Bojenna Buda, OPT Editor
301-495-3377
bbudadc@gmail.com



Rev. Jan Fiedurek, S.Chr., Pastor of Our Lady Queen of Poland & St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Silver Spring, blessed the Christmas wafer, "Oplatek", before the start of the Parish Dinner on January 5, 2014, at the Knights of Columbus Hall. Multigenerational parishioners, friends, and clergy shared the "oplatek", and exchanged good wishes before sitting down to dinner and, later, singing koledy.

SCHEDULE

Con't from page 4

Monday, January 27

Awards Assembly
8:30 am
Students earning academic and character honors will be recognized.

Career Day

9:30 am
Career Day activities will highlight local professionals as speakers on two panels for the upper grades: one panel will address careers in the sciences and another panel will address careers in the humanities. Students in lower grades learn about careers in a small group setting.

Tuesday, January 28

Coffee in the Classroom
8:30am -10:00 am
Parents of students presently enrolled in Holy Cross are invited to observe their children during class. This is a great opportunity to take a peek at next year's class.

Wednesday, January 29

Mass
8:30 – Join us as we celebrate Catholic Schools Week Mass led by our First Grade Scripps National

Spelling Bee
9:30 - Come see our ten finalists compete in the final round of the school competition.

Band Concerts
2:00 – 2:45 and 7:00 - 7:45 – Our school band will offer two performances of instrumental music.

Thursday, January 30

Student Appreciation Day
Students will enjoy a fun filled day which will include a pizza lunch and Bingo

Friday, January 31

Teacher Appreciation Day
12:15 Dismissal

REPORT

Con't from page 4

Sundays in Lewis Hall.
May you have a very Blessed New Year knowing that you have brought joy to so many.

Gratefully,
Holy Cross
Social Concerns Committee

SERVICE

Con't from page 4

of James Dennis Siranovich and the Trinity Lutheran Church Handbell Choir. A freewill offering will benefit Interfaith Works. A reception will follow the service.

The 2014 theme is: *Has Christ been divided?* (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:13). The World Council of Churches and the Vatican provide a common text for worldwide usage for the annual event. Recently, Pope Francis spoke on the hope for Christian unity:

“Certainly, there are and there will be difficulties, which will require further patience, dialogue, and mutual comprehension, but let us not be afraid! Unity is not primarily the result of our efforts, but of the action of the Holy Spirit, to which we must open our hearts with trust in order that it might lead us along the paths to reconciliation and communion.” All are welcome and encouraged to join in the January 26th celebration of song, scripture, and prayer in fulfillment of the Lord’s will “that all may be one.”

OPT

Respect Life Corner

Join others on Monday mornings from 8 to 10 a.m. for a peaceful prayer witness on the sidewalk in front of the Executive Park offices on Wisteria Dr. Please visit: www.PrayForGermantown.com.

Keep praying! Three babies were saved from abortion in the past two weeks at Germantown Health Services and late-term abortionist LeRoy Carhart.

There are resources for women in crisis pregnancies or who are suffering after abortion available online at www.adw.org/service/pregnant_help.asp. These include Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington’s Sanctuaries for Life and the Archdiocese

of Washington’s Project Rachel ministry for women and men suffering after an abortion; Isaiah’s Promise, which provides support for parents continuing with their pregnancy after a devastating prenatal diagnosis; the Gabriel Network, an interdenominational, church-based outreach to women facing crisis pregnancies; and pro-life pregnancy centers and maternity homes.

Please call the Archdiocese of Washington’s Department of Life Issues at 301-853-4555 or email mcarper@adw.org with any questions. More information can also be found on the Archdiocese of Washington Life Issues Facebook page.

OPT

High School Youth Group

Mark Your Calendars – Sunday, January 26. The 4th Annual Chili Cook-Off will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Parish Center. See flyer!

The Youth Group is collecting toiletries for visitors of St. Martin’s Soup Kitchen on January 26.

Please contact Jill Brodrick, mspyouth09@gmail.com for more information.

OPT

Adult Bible Study

Class is at 7:45 p.m. in the Parish Center with Fr. Evans on Mondays, Feb. 3, 7, 10, and 24. Topic is “The Church, Our Spiritual Home.” Bring your Bible and Catechism. Text of Cardinal Wuerl’s Pastoral Letter will be provided.

OPT

Fourth Annual Mother Seton Chili Cook-off!

Sponsored by the High School Youth Group
Sunday, January 26, 8:30AM to 2:30PM

Come and enjoy tasting the different kinds of chili and cast your vote for the Peoples Favorite. The cost is \$5 per person / \$15 per family. Last year there were 25 participants – that’s a lot of chili for just \$5.

All money raised will benefit the High School Youth Group -- to fund retreats and other Youth Group activities.

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Mother Seton Parish

19951 Fr. Hurley Boulevard
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Fr. Lee Fangmeyer
Pastor

301-924-3838

Joyce McCarthy
OPT Editor

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EPIPHANY

Con't from page 1

Round) and "The Snow Lay on the Ground."

At the end of the singing portion of the evening, the congregation joined in singing carols with the students. The sing-a-long put

everyone in a festive mood as the cookie and punch reception started in Glastonbury Hall. The reception gave families the opportunity to gather and wish each other a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. It was a special way to commemorate the feast of the Epiphany, to end the Advent and Christmas season, and to begin a joyful, new season.

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2013 Flag Football Champions, Alabama Ducks. Pictured (L-R): Luka Brizhik, Thomas Stevens, Akosa Olisa, Andres Rivas, Brandon Riddle, Ian McDonald, Evan Owan, Anthony Sofia, Thomas Scherer, Zachary Magrogan, Joseph Minutoli, Chimezie Offurum, and Grayson Schrock



2013 Flag Football Super Bowl Champions, Extreme 14. Pictured (L-R): Colleen Koch, Alejandra Almeida, Lilly McCarthy, Katherine Vo, Elizabeth Venable, Julia Nonnenkamp, Caroline Brown, Corinne Davis, Alexandra Puglisi, Alexandra Opdenaker, Lauren Walker, Nyawa Allieu, Meaghan Doyle and Arianna Checchia



Holy Child CYO Invitational Basketball Tournament 2014 – Varsity—All-Tournament Team: Julie Brisbane, Little Flower; Caroline Ambrosi, Little Flower; Eve McGloob, Holy Redeemer; Ellie Kiernan, Holy Redeemer; Julia Strittmatter; Our Lady of Mercy; Kelli Jenkins, Our Lady of Mercy; Courtlynnne Caskins; Our Lady of Mercy; Liza Christopher, Blessed Sacrament; Sheila McGuinness, Blessed Sacrament; Kirsten Knauf; Our Lady of Good Counsel; Katie Skoff, Our Lady of Good Counsel; Julianne Greenville, St. Mary's, Aileen Hannan, St. Mary's.

Ghana's 57th Independence Day

Join the Catholic community of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish (1006 Larch Ave. in Takoma Park) on March 9 to celebrate the Ghana's 57th Independence Anniversary. The day will feature traditional singing, drumming, dancing, prayers of thanksgiving, and petitions for a successful development of our beloved country.

Meet diplomats and many prominent fellow Ghanaians in the Archdiocese of Washington and beyond. The program begins at 4:30 p.m. in the church. Dress code is optional, but would be colorful if you wear your choice of kente cloth. For more information, contact Rev. Francis Aning Amoah, 301-681-7663, x20.

OPT

Bioethics and the Family

**Pontifical John Paul II Institute Continuing Education Series
January 22, 2014 – April 30, 2014 (6:30pm - 8:30pm)
McGivney Hall**

The Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at The Catholic University of America announces the spring 2014 continuing education course, Bioethics and the Family.

This course will study the personal character and meaning of the body as a foundation for bioethics. The main lines of an ethics of personal and family life, in which the human person as a created whole, corpore et anima unus, "is in the unity of body and soul . . . the subject of his own moral acts" (*Veritatis splendor*, 48) will be developed. As John Paul II said, in the body is found "the anticipatory signs, the expression and the promise of the

gift of self, in conformity with the wise plan of the Creator" (*ibid.*). This understanding of the human person allows the examination of particular bioethical issues, including the ethics of reproductive technologies, embryo transfer, abortion, death and euthanasia, cloning, and stem cell research.

The course meets on Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 p.m., beginning January 22, in McGivney Hall (620 Michigan Ave. NE Washington) and carries continuing education credits for the Diocese of Arlington.

For more information, email information@johnpaulii.edu or call 202.526.3799. The class fee is \$150. Registration is required.

OPT

Young Adult Day of Service

The Archdiocesan Office of Young Adult Ministry is hosting the DCCatholic Day of Service on Saturday, February 1, for young adults ages 21-35. Parish YA groups are hosting service sites throughout the city in mid-morning and will meet up at RFD Restaurant and Bar (you must be 21 to enter) afterward for lunch, fellowship, and a reflection by Msgr. John Enzler of Catholic Charities at 1:00PM. Learn about the various service sites and sign up to volunteer at Facebook.com/DCCatholic/events or email Jonathan at DCCatholic@adw.org.

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If you do not see something that fits your interests, contact RSVP for other options at rsvp@montgomerycountymd.gov or (240) 777-2610.

OPT

Hypothermia and older adults

Tips for staying safe in cold weather

Frigid weather can pose special risks to older adults. The National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, has some advice for helping older people avoid hypothermia—when the body gets too cold—during cold weather.

Hypothermia is generally defined as having a core body temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit or lower and can occur when the outside environment gets too cold or the body’s heat production decreases. Older adults are especially vulnerable to hypothermia because their bodies’ response to cold can be diminished by underlying medical conditions such as diabetes and by use of some medicines, including over-the-counter cold remedies. Hypothermia can develop in older



adults after relatively short exposure to cold weather or even a small drop in temperature.

Someone may suffer from hypothermia if he or she has been exposed to cool temperatures and shows one or more of the following signs: slowed or slurred speech; sleepiness or confusion; shivering or stiffness in the arms and legs; poor control over body movements;

slow reactions, or a weak pulse.

Here are a few tips to help older people avoid hypothermia:

■ Make sure your home is warm enough. Set the thermostat to at least 68 to 70 degrees. Even mildly cool homes with temperatures from 60 to 65 degrees can lead to hypothermia in older people.

■ To stay warm at home, wear long underwear under your clothes, along with socks and slippers. Use a blanket or afghan to keep your legs and shoulders warm and wear a hat or cap indoors.

■ When going outside in the cold, it is important to wear a hat, scarf, and gloves or mittens to prevent loss of body heat through your head and hands. A hat is particularly important because a large portion of body heat can be lost through the head. Wear several layers of warm loose clothing to help trap warm air between the layers.

■ Check with your doctor to see if any prescription or over-the-counter medications you are taking may increase your risk for hypothermia.

■ Because heating costs can be high, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has funds to help low-income families pay heating bills through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Applicants can call the National Energy Assistance Referral (NEAR) project at: 1-866-674-6327, e-mail energy@ncat.org or go to the LIHEAP website <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/liheap-brochures>. NEAR is a free service providing information on where you can apply for help through LIHEAP.

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SOAR Spring Trips!

Registration begins at 8:30am on Monday, February 3 at 8:30AM

The Montgomery County Department of Recreation has released its Spring 2014 Senior Outdoor Adventures in Recreation (SOAR) travel program for active adults age 55 and over. Unless noted, all transportation is provided on restroom-equipped motor coaches. You may register for a SOAR trip in any of four ways. The fastest and easiest way is to use the internet and go to RecWeb at: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec. (Please note: First timers must register and receive a PIN prior to registering for a trip online. It usually takes 2-3 days to receive our PIN # once you complete the online information.) You may also mail your trip application, fax it to 240-777-6818, or walk in to the registration office at 4010 Randolph Road. If you have questions about the registration process, please call 240-777-6870. If you have questions or require more information about a specific trip, call the SOAR Coordinator at 240-777-4926.

Cherry Blossom Cruise and Lunch

Trip No. 370934 Wednesday, April 2
Cruise along the Potomac River and enjoy a relaxing lunch (included) on the Spirit Cruise Line as you enjoy the sights of Washington with the Cherry Blossoms in bloom. The Captain will narrate the many historic sites as you sail down the Potomac River. There will also be light entertainment by the crew who will sing and dance (along with those who would like to participate). Fee: \$82. Leave 10:00 am; Return 4:00 pm

Walking Tour of Historic Dover, Delaware

Trip No. 370935 Wednesday, April 9
Trip No. 370936 Thursday, April 10
Walk historic Dover with a local guide. Experience colonial history, see the village green laid out by William Penn and the site where 30 delegates ratified the Constitution, making Delaware the first state. Tour Delaware's State House and hear stories of Colonial times and the Underground Railroad. Finish with a guided tour of the Victrola Museum and hear a history of the company that became RCA. Lunch at Festival Buffet is included. Fee: \$65. Leave 7:15 am; Return 5:30 pm

Guided Tour of York, Pennsylvania

Trip No. 370937 Wednesday, April 6
Trip No. 370938 Thursday, April 7
York, the White Rose City, was founded by German and Scotch Irish settlers. The Continental Congress met in York in 1777 and the Articles of Confederation were drafted and adopted there in 1781. The tour includes the Harley-Davidson Motorcycle factory, the Colonial Complex, Martin's Potato Chip factory, and the Agriculture and Industry Museum. Lunch at the Roosevelt Tavern is included. Fee: \$79. Leave 7:00 am, Return 6:00 pm

Walking Tour of 18th Century Burkittsville, Md.

Trip No. 370939 Wednesday, April 23
Trip No. 370940 Thursday, April 23
A new tour! Experience what life was like in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in a flourishing town nestled in the rolling hills of Frederick County. In Sept. 1962 Union troops forced residents to flee as the Battle of Crampton's Gap led commenced, leading to the Battle of Antietam. Homes remain untouched by time and war. Visit the South Mountain Heritage Society, the War Correspondents Arch, South Mountain State Battlefield, and the new Gatland State Park Museum. Fee: \$65. Leave 8:00 am; Return 5:00 pm

Eastern Shore Underground RR and Harriet Tubman Riding Tour

Trip No. 370942 Wednesday, April 30
Trip No. 370943 Thursday, May 1
Guide relates stories of early to mid-nineteenth century farm life on the Eastern Shore, where Harriet Tubman was born and worked as a young slave girl. Sites include Bucktown, Brodess, Plantation, Church Creek, and Madison. See the historic courthouse where trades bought and sold slaves. Follow the flight to freedom of runaway slaves – through Secretary, East New Market and Preston. See the sites made famous by Harriet Tubman in her 13 attempts to rescue friends and family. Lunch, included, at a local restaurant. Fee: \$74. Leave 7:30 am, Return 6:30 pm

Valley Forge National Historical Park with Historian Ed Bearss

Trip No. 370944 Tuesday, May 6
Trip No. 370945 Wednesday, May 7
Trace the path of Washington's winter encampment march-in. Explore rows of cannons, the soldiers' log huts, earthenwork fortifications, Washington's headquarters, and the majestic Memorial Arch. Hear the stories and legends of the struggle to survive of the Continental Army as only Ed Bearss, retired Chief Historian of the National Park Service, can tell them. Lunch, included, at Old Country Buffet.
Fee: \$75. Leave 7:00 am, Return 7:00 pm
And there's more...

May 15

Fort McHenry National Park on 200th Anniversary of Battle of Baltimore

May 22

Guided Safari Tour of Lake Tobias Wildlife Park in Halifax, Pennsylvania

May 29

Annual Sailing Trip on Chesapeake Bay out of Annapolis

June 5

White Water Rafting Trip on the Shenandoah River

June 6, 27

Marine Corps Evening Parade, Precision Marching and Band Concert

OPT

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