



Parish Times

Special Edition
Summer Camp Special

MARCH 2022

Living the Faith Together

FOUNDED 1991



Paul Zurkowski
1932-2022

Founder of *Our Parish Times* and the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County

On January 30, 2022, Paul Zurkowski passed away at 89. Paul's passing is a significant event for the *Our Parish Times* family. He founded *Our Parish Times* and the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County in 1991. Paul's illustrious life will be celebrated at Holy Redeemer Church in Kensington, on March 25 at 11:00 AM. As part of the celebration of Paul's life, current publishers of *OPT*, Larry and Kathleen Hamm, and long-time columnist, Chuck Short remember and reflect upon Paul's unprecedented contributions to parish life in Montgomery County in this column today.

Thirty years ago, a deeply Catholic layperson with a remarkable vision for vibrant local Catholic communities rooted in Catholic education, service and fellowship imagined and founded *Our Parish Times* newspaper. Paul Zurkowski's faith-inspired vision was uncomplicated; to merge Christ's call to love God and neighbor through the principles of Catholic education, civic responsibility and social justice. Paul founded *OPT* as an independent paper to assist Montgomery County parishes to labor collectively in Christ's vineyards through better understanding each other's ministries and parish objectives. Paul's vision was a local, independent paper, produced by volunteer parish editors and professionally published. And so, it is. Recognizing that there are forty-six parishes and nearly 300,000 Catholics in Montgomery County, Paul used to joke, if Catholics in the County could get their act together, they could control the County!

The early days of *OPT* were challenging. Archdiocesan leaders were suspicious of an independent, local Catholic newspaper totally outside their control. Paul held that this inde-

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A Candlelit Feast Day Celebration

On February 11, 1858, a young French girl named Bernadette Soubirous first saw a "lady" who later revealed herself to be the Immaculate Conception. On February 11, 2022, a very memorable evening Mass was held at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in the heart of downtown Bethesda to celebrate our patroness' Feast Day.

As the Church filled with dozens of altar servers waiting to proceed to the altar with Pastor Father Rob, Parochial Vicar Father James, and seminarian Caleb Gaeng, the lights were turned off throughout the church. The altar was full of glowing candles that sent a warm aura over the altar and sanctuary. The candlelight drew the congregation to the sacredness of the Mass. The altar servers, all holding candles, soon progressed down the aisle while the schola sang traditional hymns. The Liturgy was

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Candlelit prayer in the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes



St. Francis of Assisi parishioners and New Neighbor Interfaith Alliance Steering Committee members Todd Grams and Christine King meet one of the Afghan families who are now resettled in the Rockville area. The multi-faith coalition is now sponsoring three Afghan families and helping two others that have all resettled in the Montgomery County area.

Multi-faith Coalition, including Quartet of Catholic Groups, Helps Refugees Resettle in Area

By Melissa Montealegre Egan

As members of Pax Christi USA, local Catholics like Christine King and Bob Cooke are dedicated to living out their Catholic faith through deterring war and rejecting racism in any form. But as a spate of global conflicts have brought refugees and asylum seekers to the region over the past five years, these volunteers have led their Montgomery County parishes to welcome these families into their communities while building relationships with other faith groups willing to welcome the stranger.

King, a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi, and Cooke, a parishioner of St. Rose of Lima in Gaithersburg, both serve

on the Steering Committee of the New Neighbor Interfaith Alliance (NNIA), a coalition of 17 faith congregations that includes four synagogues, one Bahá'í, two Muslim mosques and several Protestant churches. An offshoot of the now defunct Montgomery County Interfaith Refugee Resettlement Neighbors (MCIRRN), NNIA aims to provide ongoing support and emergency assistance to refugees who settle in the area.

"The hardest thing for [the refugees] is worrying about not being accepted," King said. "When someone welcomes them and smiles at them, it's everything."

The initial group was founded in 2017

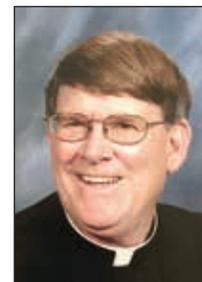
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We All Need Lent

It may sound odd to hear someone say they love Lent. After all, it is a time of sacrifice and penance. I love Lent, however, because I need it.

I need structure. I need reminders. I need seasons set aside specifically to slow down and reflect upon my life and relationship with the Lord.

I need Lent as much as ever, even after having been through it more than 70 times now. I still remember Stations of the Cross every Friday when I was probably five years old at Our Lady of Lourdes School. Now, as I



Fr. John Enzler

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Tough Times - Take the Time to Pray

It's a tough time to be a parent. Despite the many conveniences and gadgets, despite nannies and daycare centers, and preschools, and tutors, and resources for gifted and struggling kids, despite the acknowledgement of the need for mental health services for kids, and despite the



Patricia McGann

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CBN-MC Upcoming Events

March Madness Happy Hour

First round is on us!
Thursday, March 24
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
 Young Professionals- Join us at Tommy Joe's in Bethesda for the first round of the Sweet 16, light appetizers, drinks and great networking.
 Tommy Joes
 7940 Norfolk Ave
 Bethesda, MD, 20814
 All are welcome to this fun evening! To register, visit: <https://members.cbnmc.com/event-calendar>.

April Scholarship Breakfast

Speaker: Marcus Washington
Friday, April 22
7:30 AM - 9:00 AM
 At its annual April breakfast CBN-MC awards Essay Scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 totaling \$30,000 to rising high school freshmen from Montgomery County parishes. Funds for Needs Based Scholarships are also given directly to the Principals of Montgomery County parochial schools. This is a great event at which CBN-MC's mission of supporting local Catholic Schools comes alive. In 28 years, CBN has awarded over \$1,300,000 in scholarships and grants to Catholic Schools.

OPT

Sign the petition against Md. abortion amendment

Three extreme abortion bills are before the Maryland House of Delegates. These bills would:

- Enshrine abortion in the Maryland constitution
- Expand insurance coverage of abortion
- Allow abortion to be performed by non-physicians.

On March 4, members of Maryland's Health and Government Operations Committee received nearly 15,000 emails in one day through our Catholic Advocacy Network. Sadly, the legislators voted generally along party lines to move the legislation forward, including a constitutional amendment on abortion. However, they told us they noticed!

Please support women in



Maryland by speaking out against these bills and standing up for both them and their unborn children.

Tell your Maryland senator: NO to abortion bills

Oppose enshrining abortion in Maryland's Constitution. Sign the petition against a constitutional amendment on abortion. Visit: www.mdcatholic.org/abortion2022
 Let's keep strong on advocating

and supporting both women and their children:

Use our Maryland parish respect life resources available at www.mdcatholic.org/parish.

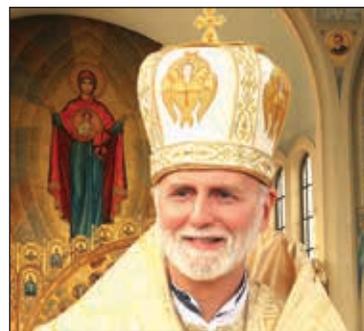
Pray the Novena of St. Joseph, March 10-18, for the protection of life in Maryland.

Use the Walking with Moms in Need parish resource kit to support for pregnant and parenting women in need (English and Spanish). **OPT**

Ukrainian Catholic leader sounds alarm over Russian attack on Ukraine's churches

Borys Gudziak, metropolitan archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, which includes the Washington DC area, sounded the alarm over Russia's attack on the Catholic community in Ukraine at a media briefing on March 10

"Over the last 250 years, every time there's been a Russian occupation where the Ukrainian Catholic Church ministers, the Ukrainian



Borys Gudziak

Catholic Church has been strangled and rendered illegal," said Gudziak.

Gudziak, speaking at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family in Northeast D.C., said that the Russian military has already fired on churches in the eastern regions of Ukraine. Church services in besieged cities, he added, have had to go underground.

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Initiative focuses on inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Church

The Vatican's Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life has launched a series of videos that focus on inclusion through the experience of Christians living with disabilities. Tagged #IamChurch, the campaign consists of five video testimonies of Christians living with disabilities from different parts of the world who recount their experience of faith and affirm, "I am Church!"

You can see the #IamChurch videos on the Dicastery website - www.laityfamilylife.va/content/laityfamilylife/it.html - or on YouTube.



"I am Church" through Baptism

In his message to persons with disabilities on the occasion of the International Day dedicated to them, Pope Francis noted that Baptism gives each one of

us, "without exclusion or discrimination, the possibility of exclaiming, 'I am Church!'" Echoing the Pope's words, the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life launched the videos with the aim of highlighting

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Local Pastors Help Parishioners to Face the War in Ukraine

Pope Francis used a recent Sunday Angelus to issue an urgent plea to stop the violence from Russian aggression in Ukraine, stating, "Rivers of blood and tears are flowing in Ukraine. It is not merely a military operation, but a war, which sows death, destruction and misery. The number of victims is increasing, as are the people fleeing, especially mothers and children." While the Pope urged for the protection of humanitarian corridors and aid for the millions of refugees, he also implored Christians to unite in prayer for the end of the war. "Let us pray together for Ukraine: we have its flags in front of us. Let us pray together, as brothers and sisters, to Our Lady, Queen of Ukraine."

Montgomery County Catholics are doing just that. Local parishes are providing opportunities to pray for peace and pastors are helping their flock to look at the events of the world through the eyes of faith..

Our Lady of Lourdes, in Bethesda, held a special mass on Thursday, March 10 for Ukraine

as a way to put the prayers of the people and the needs of Ukraine in front of the altar.

Pastors from around the county are also encouraging their parishioners to pray and offer up sacrifices for Ukraine during this Lenten season.

Fr. Lee Fangmeyer, from Mother Seton in Germantown, in his weekly "Message from the Pastor" post, linked the Gospel from the first Sunday of Lent to the current situation, writing "Ukraine looms over us reminding us that the world is always in a balance. On the brink of a possible third world war, we are being tested. Jesus too was tempted. Being fully human, he faces the same trials we do. Jesus' temptations by the devil in today's gospel strike at His and our being. That is, belonging to the Father." He continued by reminding us that we "are loved by the Father. That is the fact that conquers the world." Now, in this time of seemingly hopeless hostility, is a time to seek the embrace of the Father in prayer and to turn to Our Lady, Queen of

Peace.

Fr. John Dillon, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi in Derwood, recalled the story of a Ukrainian parishioner who asked for his prayers after a recent mass. He used this as an opportunity to share messages from Pope Francis and Cardinal Gregory, highlighting the Pope's request that all Catholics fast for peace on Ash Wednesday.

Fr. Paul Lee penned a powerful letter about Ukraine for the St. Jude's community in Rockville. He finished it by stating, "As Jesus on the cross shows humanity a new way to break through the impasse of ingrained prejudice and hatred: 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do' (Lk 23:34), he opens the door to hope and life. Through the power of His Holy Spirit, may we also overcome the instinct and logic of hatred and revenge, and learn to love one another without distinction or limit! Lord, make us instruments of peace!"

Many of the local parishes referred to initiatives organized

by Catholic Relief Services and other ways that the faithful can support the people of Ukraine in their weekly bulletins and Flocknote messages. CRS already has staff in Ukraine providing humanitarian relief to both soldiers and refugees. Donations can be made at the following link: <https://support.crs.org/donate/donate-ukraine>. More information on how to help can be found at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/church-central-eastern-europe/how-give>

It is also important to note that there are Ukrainian Catholics in Montgomery County. The St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral is located in Silver

Spring, one of the four Ukrainian Orthodox churches in Maryland. In addition to holding prayer vigils and services, St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Church is also collecting monetary donations, food, and supplies to send to the frontlines. You can even order supplies from Amazon and have them delivered to the Church. Visit www.standrewuoc.org for more details.

In times of distress, uncertainty, and fear, it is beautiful to be reminded that we can look to our pastors, our bishops, and the pope to lead us in prayer and to more firmly root our hope in Christ, Savior of the World.

OPT

Justice & Advocacy Council of Montgomery County

Candidate Forum April 26

By Chris Farrell

The Justice & Advocacy Council of Montgomery County and Catholic Charities are cosponsoring a County Executive Candidate Forum the evening of Tuesday, April 26, 2022 from 7-9 pm at the Shrine of Saint Jude (see details below). All Montgomery County Executive candidates have agreed to participate. At our deadline the candidates who have filed for Montgomery County Executive are: David Blair, Marc Elrich, Tom

Hucker and Hans Riemer. Please save this date on your calendar. Clip out the summary block below.

Father John to Moderate

Msgr. John Enzler, President and CEO of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, will moderate the Forum. Rev. Paul D. Lee, STD, pastor of the hosting parish will welcome the candidates and audience. Lawrence Couch, co-chair of the Justice & Advocacy Council, will introduce the Forum.

The Shrine of Saint Jude is located at 12701 Veirs Mill Road in Rockville MD 20853-3856. Ample parking can be accessed from either Veirs Mill Road or 4710 Mercury Drive. Metro Bus Q1, Q2, Q4, and Q6 provide service along Veirs Mill Road (Stop ID 2001295) connecting MetroRail stations in Silver Spring, Wheaton, Rockville and Shady Grove. Use Metro's Trip Planner at www.wmata.com.

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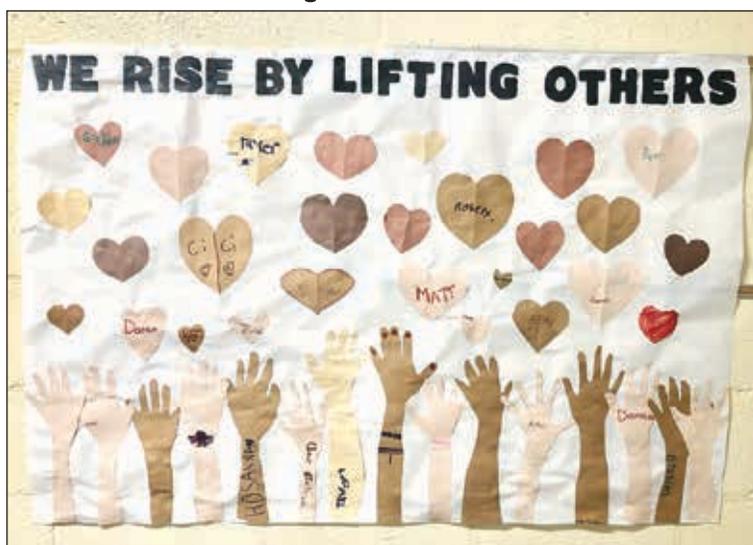
Celebrating Black History Month at St. Mary's

By Kathleen Morris

One of the many amazing things about Saint Mary's is the diversity of the school and parish community, which we celebrate every day. February is a special month for many reasons, but most importantly is the observance of Black History Month. Saint Mary's recognizes Black History Month with a number of projects and learning activities throughout February.

Black History Month honors and highlights the integral contributions of African Americans to America's history. The celebration of Black History Month began in 1926 as "Negro History Week," and was the creation of Carter G.

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I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

OUR Parish Times

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Grace Bonkougou receives her award from Grand Knight Dave Bivans.

Knights of Columbus Poster Winner from Visitation Parish

By Diana Hurley

Congratulations to Our Lady of the Visitation Parish Faith Formation eighth-grader Grace Bonkougou for placing first in the Knights of Columbus Keep Christ in Christmas (KCIC) Poster Contest! She received her first-place award and prize during Faith Formation class on January 30, 2021 from Knights of Columbus Grand Knight, Dave Bivans.

Our Lady of Fatima Council (#6901) of the Knights of Columbus represents the parishes of St. Mary's (Barnesville), Our Lady

of Presentation (Poolesville), and OLVP (Darnestown). The Council sponsors the KCIC poster contest each year and solicits entries from each parish, the Council's families, as well as Mary of Nazareth and St. Martin's (Gaithersburg) Catholic schools. Students in grades 1-8 are invited to participate by creating a piece of art that supports the annual theme.

Congratulations to Grace, her catechists Christa Dommers and Debbie Waechter, and Erin Clegg coordinator of the OLVP Faith Formation program.

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John James McKenna, Jr. 1964 – 2022

John James McKenna, Jr. of Kensington died February 26, 2022, at his home with his wife and family. He was 58. He had been treated for pancreatic cancer since mid-December. An estimated 600 people attended the Mass of Christian Burial at Holy Redeemer Church on March 5.



John James McKenna, Jr.

An accomplished Washington attorney, he was perhaps best remembered as a witty loving friend and father whose deep Catholic faith was rooted in action. John described himself as deeply blessed until the day he died. Having been raised by wonderful parents with his beloved siblings, then joyously living his vocation as husband and father with complete devotion, he felt the hand of God surrounding him always. In 2018 he traveled to Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Togo, West Africa. He was so grateful to witness how missionaries supported both human and spiritual needs in those they served.

John was born in Washington, DC to J. James McKenna and Lois Dyer McKenna, who survive him. He grew up in Bethesda and graduated in 1986 from Saint Anselm College, in Manchester, New Hampshire. It was there he met and fell in love with Meg Hoffner, whom he married in 1988. As joyous teammates, he and Meg raised four children, who survive him: Jack, Molly, Claire, and Charlie McKenna. They were his heart and deepest delight.

After graduating from Catholic University Columbia School of Law in 1990, he clerked for Judge Thomas Flannery at the US District Court for the District of Columbia. In 2010 he helped found the law firm of Asmar, Schor, & McKenna, PLLC, along with his partners Chuck Asmar and Larry Schor. Together they established a thriving practice, which continues. He took great pride in his firm's work and deep integrity. John was a parishioner of Holy Redeemer Church in Kensington since 1992. His parish family always nourished his faith, especially since the time of his cancer diagno-

sis. Their constant prayers, love, and support provided deep comfort and consolation as he fought cancer with characteristic grace and irrepressible humor. John was a humble man – unassuming and steadfast – and enjoyed life thoroughly. Whether he was lobbing a tennis ball, trolling the Boca Grande shoreline for snook, or meticulously

curating his legendary Christmas playlists, he lived his life with wonderment and found joy in every aspect of it.

Along with his parents of Bethesda, Maryland. He is also survived by his sister, Polly McKenna Cress and her husband, Richard Cress of Philadelphia, Pa., as well as his brother, Ross McKenna and his wife, Jennifer McKenna of Queen Creek, Arizona, and many nieces and nephews, whom he loved dearly. He was also a beloved brother-in-law and uncle to the entire extended Hoffner clan.

Memorial contributions can be made in John's name to Togo Mission c/o HR, 9705 Summit Ave., Kensington, MD 20895. Checks payable to HR, memo line.

Requiescat in pace.

The following is a message from Fr. Bill Ryan, the pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Atchanvé, Togo.

I was privileged to meet John McKenna when he visited in 2019 our mission parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe here in Togo, which is Holy Redeemer's sister parish. During each of my home visits the next years we would get together with his family and friends for dinner. I'll never forget when he kindly offered to drive me to Newark for my return flight to Togo -- the four-hour plus trip seemed to fly by with such great conversation. What a wonderful, wonderful person! He was filled with the joy and wonder of life. A Holy Redeemer parishioner said to me that "John truly loved his Togo family." In all of our villages we prayed for John during his illness, and I'm sure our mission now has a special friend in heaven and has already started to benefit from his prayers.

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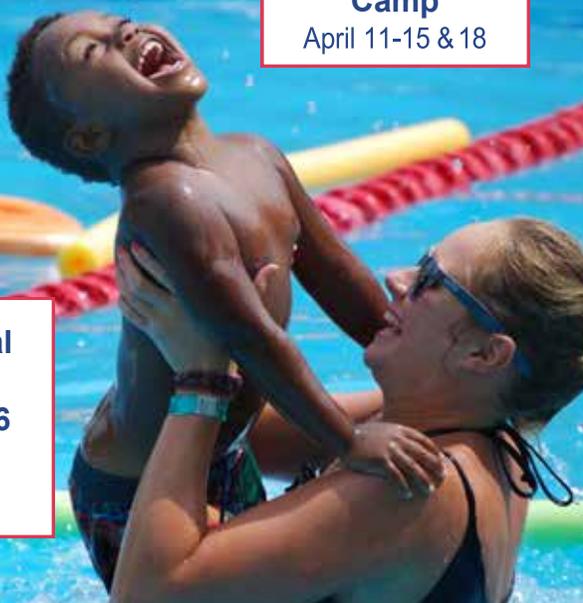
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Public "Way of the Cross" Through Downtown Washington on Good Friday

Local members of the Catholic movement, "Communion and Liberation," have organized a "Way of the Cross" procession through downtown Washington on Good Friday, April 15. The Way of the Cross is a public gesture commemorating – and indeed, living again – the passion of Jesus Christ. Beginning at St. Stephen Martyr (2436 Pennsylvania Avenue NW) at 9:30 a.m. and ending at St. Patrick's (619 10th Street NW), the procession will include several stops at outdoor squares along with way. Each stop will feature music, readings, and a reflection by Fr. Roberto Amoruso of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Charles Borromeo, a missionary order with a house in Bethesda, Maryland. In addition to the Way of the Cross in Washington DC, Communion and Liberation will also host processions in



several other major cities around the world, including New York, Boston, and Chicago.

Continued on page 5

Lent Program Opens with Fresh Look at Works of Mercy

The traditional list of corporal works of mercy was originally based on Matthew's Gospel, but has long since cut loose and gone its own way, asserts John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, the first speaker in the Lenten series of talks at St. Paul Catholic Church. St. Thomas Aquinas saw the problem and urged that we go back to the

includes hydration, but also the joy of Cana and the blood of the Triduum. The conversation with the woman at the well started with plain water, but turned quickly to salvation history, and Living Water, and cleansing from sin like a baptism.

The third injunction is about shelter, but it's about a movement of the heart as well: welcome, embrace, include. The original Greek (sunago) refers to gathering people into your "synagogue." And who should be gathered in? The Greek word (xenos) refers to a person from another land – in modern English, an "immigrant" (a word invented in 1790 to talk about American experience). Hospitality should be extended to other strangers as well – especially the strangest of all, unborn children.

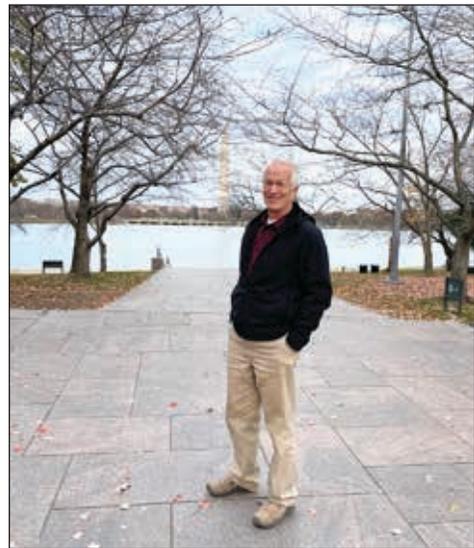
Clothe the naked: that's about shame, not hypothermia. Adam and Eve experienced shame as nakedness; that's a metaphor. The soldiers who stripped Jesus aimed to shame, not chill. And clothes reveal: the command is about proper identity.

"Visit" is too weak. Did Americans "visit" France on D-Day? Does the dawn "visit"? The word here is about a shocking transformation, like Christmas. When Jesus "visited" the sick, he healed, and forgave. And the "imprisoned": that's "captive Israel." Jesus, like Moses, "visited" his people – and set them free. We aren't healers or saviors; we are heralds. We make an appearance; then Jesus – right behind us – makes a difference.

The Lord's "works of mercy" are corporal – and mental and emotional and social and spiritual.

Cavanaugh-O'Keefe clowns around a bit – singing, lighting matches, throwing coins. But what he said was serious, thought-provoking, challenging. God's mercy is all-embracing.

More St Paul Parish News on Page 24



John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, St Paul parishioner

Gospel. We didn't then, but still should now.

Cavanaugh-O'Keefe is a long-time pro-life activist, now focused on promoting a "consistent ethic of hospitality." While studying the Church's teaching about welcoming strangers, he noticed the long-neglected complaint. The problem, he says, is that Jesus never taught anything focused on a single level of human experience, separating corporal works from spiritual works. So the best list of "spiritual works of mercy" is the list we call corporal works – but read expansively, as Jesus taught.

Cavanaugh-O'Keefe's talk was organized around the six precepts about mercy in Matthew's Gospel. Each precept includes a tangible service, but much more.

Feed the hungry: that includes bread, but also includes wisdom, and every word that comes from God, and the Eucharist, and the heavenly banquet.

Give drink to the thirsty: that

WAY OF THE CROSS

Cont from page 4

In the words of Servant of God Fr. Luigi Giussani, the founder of Communion and Liberation, Good Friday "is the most serious day of the entire year, the day when we recover ourselves the most in the entire year." On Good Fridays in past years, Giussani encouraged everyone in attendance to imagine themselves as if present along Jesus' original road to Calvary: "Everyone was waiting for the Redeemer at that time. But the Redeemer has a face, and ... we, as well as the Jews of that time, do not like it, because it is different from what we expect."

The words of the "Stabat Mater," the 13th-century Franciscan hymn sung at Lenten Stations of the Cross, both describe Mary and constitute a prayer on Good Friday: "O Mother, foundation of love, / make me feel the power of sorrow, / that I may grieve with you." The Stabat Mater, however, does not end with Mary's and our grief, but with Christ's glory. "The Amen in the Stabat Mater is a cry of joy, of glory," Giussani said, that "is not out of place in the heart of Good Friday, because he died in order to rise and thus dominate time and space and reach us." Visit www.wayofthecrossdc.com for more information.



St. Martin's Pre-K students dressed as characters from favorite storybooks. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School

SMS Reads Across America

By Jennifer Mohrbacher

Read Across America was launched in 1998 by the National Education Association to help students around the country enjoy reading, relate to a storybook character, and to promote community in classrooms across America. During the first week of March, together with the nation, St. Martin's School celebrated Read Across America 2022!

Each day during the week, St. Martin's Principal, Mr. Lamont, read a clue to a story that students had all week to think about and guess. The mystery book was "If You Give a Moose a Muffin,"

part of the If You Give a Mouse a Cookie series, which helps young readers learn important phonics skills, including rhyming. It also helps kids make reasonable predictions. Students received muffin-like treats at the end of the week of guessing.

Kids in older grades got to peruse a collection of their teachers' favorite in the front display case and tried to guess which book belonged to which teacher.

All students also had a chance to guess how many books are in the school library. Spoiler alert: there are 11,274 books in there!

Homeroom doors were decorated with book themes. First prize went to Pre-K for their

"Where the Wild Things Are" theme. Second place went to seventh grade for their Winnie the Pooh theme, and the Art/Music Room was third with the multicultural "Dancing Hands" theme. Everyone worked hard and the hallways looked amazing!

On Friday, students and teachers dressed as characters from storybooks. It was a wonderful week, during which the students were submersed in the joy of reading and of the world of books.

Thank you to Ms. Julie Stinger for organizing the week, and to all of the students and staff who participated and the week just as special and unique as our school is!

OPT



GOOD COUNSEL 2022 SUMMER PROGRAMS

ATHLETICS

- Archery
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Field Hockey
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- Soccer
- Softball
- Volleyball
- Yoga

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Two Holy Cross participants assemble "to-go" bags at the monthly Cup of Joe service event.

Holy Cross Youth Lend a Hand to Cup of Joe!

by Michelle Ilagan

Since October, Holy Cross Youth have been dedicating the second Saturday of the month to pack meals for the Cup of Joe Project sponsored by SHARE. Through their service they assist in providing a "to-go" bag for men and women venturing out after a night in one of the shelters in our area.

The teens attend Mass at 5:00pm and gather to pray for the homeless and other marginalized populations around the world before they begin. They also discuss current events and apply Catholic Social Teaching as they see the world through a Catholic lens. Many of the youth have participated multiple times and have taken the lead in forming assembly lines for a quick and efficient process. A holy card is added to each bag with the hope that the recipient will be reminded and assured of God's love. The service ends with a prayer and joyful send off.

OPT

It pays to advertise in Our Parish Times

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4900 Strathmore Avenue,
Garrett Park, MD
Fr. Robert Buchmeier, Pastor
301-942-1020
Holy Cross School
Lisa Maio Kane, Principal
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Lent in Holy Cross

by Michelle Ilagan

Lent is a beautiful time to rededicate ourselves to the practices of prayer, sacrifice, and almsgiving. Holy Cross is making the best out of the lent season by offering parishioners an opportunity to pray for vocations. A Vocations Cross has been set-up to display seminarian cards, each holding unique information about the man preparing to be a priest. Parishioners are invited to take a card home and adopt a seminarian in prayer. Praying for good and holy priests can be a powerful means of helping our Catholic Church grow.

Holy Cross is also happy to participate in the CRS



Holy Cross Parishioners have been invited to select a card from a Vocations Cross displayed in the church to pray for a seminarian.

Rice Bowl project. Every child from the Religious Education Program was sent home with a bowl along with a lent calendar to help them offer prayer, sacrifice and almsgiving during these 40 days. Parishioners were also offered the Rice Bowls on Ash Wednesday. Many of the Holy Cross parishioners were nostalgic as they remembered filling the Rice Bowls with money during their childhood.

Holy Cross marks every Friday in Lent with multiple opportunities to grow in holiness. If you wish to spend some time with our Lord in prayerful stillness or quiet reflection, come for Eucharistic Adoration starting at 3:00pm followed

Continued on page 35



Two third grade friends pose for the camera on Pajama Day.

So Much to Celebrate During Catholic Schools Week!

Holy Cross had a great deal to celebrate during Catholic Schools Week this year. Always a fun-filled week, the school community counted its blessings that we were together on campus once more and had weathered the pandemic storm through faith, compassion, and good will. "The smiles and camaraderie among the students and faculty were evident each day," observed Mrs. Kane. "It was beautiful to see."

There was a clothing theme for each day: Pajama Day, Olympics pride, school spirit wear, wacky-tacky outfits, and team jersey day. But the fun was not limited to our

wardrobes.

Career Day was spectacular, thanks to our amazing, talented parents and friends who generously gave of their time, and to Christine Zalewski, Director of Development and Admissions at Holy Cross, who organized the event. Among the virtual visitors to school were a Google executive, an Emmy award-winning cinematographer, and CEO of a computer security company. A recent Holy Cross alum, now an engineer, was among the guests, too, and he shared that the Math foundation he received at Holy

Continued on page 12

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Marian Mornings Bring Women of Holy Cross Together

by Michelle Ilagan

What is a Marian Morning? In Holy Cross Church, Marian Mornings gather women of all ages and begin with the 8:30 a.m. Mass. It is followed by a light breakfast and carefully considered talk. It ends with the prayerful recitation of the Holy Rosary. Attendees have enjoyed the fellowship and revitalized by the spirit-filled talks of the Marian Mornings. Our first Marian Morning in October ignited inspiration on how to speak compassionately on the dignity of human life. We reflected on the virtues of Mary as we waited with her in the season advent. In February, we learned how to acknowledge God's purpose for us to further our spiritual, mental and



The newly refurbished Mary's Garden at Holy Cross honors Our Blessed Mother.

Continued on page 10

Luminaria Light the First Steps of Our Lenten Journey

The Home and School Association hosted a magnificent Lenten Luminaria Walk on Tuesday, March 1, in lieu of the traditional pancake supper this year. Hundreds of luminary bags lined the walkways around our recently renovated Mary Garden and the sidewalks between the church and the school. Each bag was beautifully decorated by students and faculty and contained a special intention. Families thoroughly enjoyed walking through the display and engaging with other participants in a meaningful way to start



Above, an Eighth-Grade student presents his beautifully decorated luminaria, one of hundreds which lit the path around Holy Cross for a night of Lenten reflection.

At left, Luminaria surrounded Mary's Garden, and the pathways of the Holy Cross grounds on Shrove Tuesday's Lenten walk.

our Lenten journey. Principal Lisa Kane stated, "The entire community enjoyed a lovely evening of prayer, reflection and camaraderie. We are grateful to the many parent and student volunteers that organized and set up this fantastic event!"

OPT

Josephine P. Shore | 1937 – 2022

Josephine Shore celebrated Pro-Life all of her life and was the inspiration for her husband-Maryland State Senator S. Frank Shore's—20-year career in public service. She supported Senator Shore during the Maryland State Senate 8-Day Filibuster for Life in 1990, saying "God wanted you there."

She was devoted to the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. In the 1980s, Josephine met Mother Teresa at the opening of the Convent of the Missionaries of Charity in Washington, DC. The Missionaries of Charity serve the poor and care for the sick. For many years, Josephine supported the Missionaries of Charity – Gift of Peace House through her work with Holy Cross Church's Social Concerns Committee.

Josephine was truly a "Woman of Faith"
A mother of Mercy,
Voice for the needy
Defender of Life
Counselor of Comfort
Partner in Peace
Producer of Praise
Servant of God

A woman of Faith and Works.

In a fitting tribute, the Maryland House of Delegates honored Josephine P. Shore on Monday, February 28, 2022,



Josephine P. Shore

with House Resolution 89. On Monday, March 7, 2022, the Maryland Senate also honored her with a Senate Resolution placing her in the annals of Maryland history.

Josephine Shore was a nurse in the Washington, DC area for over 30 years in communities that included Providence Hospital, the National Institute of Health, Suburban Hospital and the U.S. Postal Academy. She was an active parishioner of Holy Cross Catholic Church where she was a member of the Social Concerns Committee. She was also a founding member of St. Jude's Catholic Church where all five children attended school.

Requiescat in Pace

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tion into art. This allows students to think abstractly but also in a representational way. It gives them the opportunity to get creative and explore different styles and color combinations!

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As we enter our Lenten journey together, we remember our brothers and sisters beside us and across the world.



CYO Basketball at St. Elizabeth's



Our girls' team shows off their trophy from the season.



The boy's championship team poses with their coaches.

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Congratulations to the St. Elizabeth CYO basketball teams! This year we had several St. E's teams competing in every age group. We could not be prouder of the skill, sportsmanship, and teamwork they showed during the season. Nearly all of our basketball teams advanced to the Championship round. A special shout out to our 14U girls and boys Tournament Teams who ended their seasons as Mid-Atlantic Champs!

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It pays to advertise in Our Parish Times

Paul George Zurkowski

The world is emptier. We are missing the big smile, hearty laugh and brilliant mind of a Husband, Brother, Father, Poppy, and Friend.

Paul G. Zurkowski, born on November 8, 1932, died peacefully on January 30, 2022. Paul was the quintessential renaissance man with his next idea right around the corner. Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and raised in Palmyra with his four siblings. He graduated from University of Wisconsin Whitewater with a Bachelor of Arts degree where he started his love of publishing. He then went on to Law School. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin Law School, he moved to Washington, DC, to work for the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC).

He met his lovely wife Margaret Becker in DC. They married in 1960 and moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he practiced law and worked for Congressman Kastenmeier as his district representative. He later served his country in the US Army Judge Advocate General Core where he was stationed at Fort Irwin in California, then at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. After the Army, he joined the Washington DC staff of Congressman Robert Kastenmeier as a Legislative Assistant. From Capitol Hill, he was recruited to form an association of information content companies that were envisioning how their products could keep up with the emerging technologies such as personal computers and the world wide web. This group became the Information Industry Association (IIA). He is credited with coining the phrase "Information Literacy" in a Library of Congress document in 1974, a phrase that is a standard for Information Specialist to this day.

Following his 20 years as President of the Information Industry Association, he went on to start *Our Parish Times*, an all-volunteer newspaper, bringing parish and school



Paul G. Zurkowski

news to each Catholic parish in Montgomery County, Maryland. To complement this endeavor, he founded the Catholic Business Network, which has provided over \$1.6 million in scholarships for Catholic education and is still active today. He always enjoyed building communities whether in business or for pleasure.

He has left behind a loving wife Margaret (nee Becker) of 62 years. His six children, Paul C. Zurkowski and his wife Christine, Pamela Cacchione and her husband Patrick, Patricia Dilling, Peggy Kettle, Paula Zurkowski and Peter Zurkowski. He deeply loved his grandchildren: Christian, Coleman and Claire Zurkowski; Victoria and Anthony Cacchione; Marshall, Ryan, and Collin Dilling; Miller, Abby, and Maggie Kettle. He is also survived by his brother Tom and sister Carol Davis. He was predeceased in death by his parents Martha and Stanley Zurkowski, his brother Lester Zurkowski, sister Joanne Earle and her husband Roger Earle, and son-in-law Michael Kettle. He will always be remembered for instilling in all of us the love of the printed word, the joy of puzzles and the excitement of baseball.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his honor to the Catholic Business Network's Scholarship Fund at the following site <https://cbnmc.ejoinme.org/Zurkowski> or by mail at CBN-MC Foundation P.O. Box 34549 Bethesda, MD 20851. Or donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project P.O. Box 758517 Topeka Kansas, 66675 or www.wounded-warriorproject.org or by phone 877-832-6997. Funeral Mass will be held March 25, 2022, at 11 am at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, 9705 Summit Avenue, Kensington, Maryland, 20895. Live streaming will be available at the following link: <https://youtu.be/5nGkVuW9XP4>.

OPT

Holy Redeemer Eighth-Grade Mock Trial: *The State of Oklahoma vs. Johnny Cade*

This year's eighth graders had the distinct privilege of experiencing the inner workings of the American judicial system as an intensive response to reading SE Hinton's *The Outsiders* in literature class. *Spoiler alert:* by changing the end of Hinton's classic, main character Johnny Cade was charged with and tried for First Degree Manslaughter. Middle school literature teacher Deb Roby guided the students through four weeks of pretrial work, with each student preparing to conduct a mock criminal trial.

On February 11, Mrs. Roby transformed the school's auditorium into a courtroom, complete with a gallery of cardboard visitors and observers. Students dressed appropriately for their roles and the 1960's setting of the novel – either as story characters, legal counselors, the judge and bailiff, court personnel including the clerk and court recorders, jurors, media members and sketch artists.

Six students assumed the roles of the novel's characters (Claire, Xavier, Oscar, Ivana, Joey, and Matt) while an additional

six served as defense lawyers (Cora, Meggie, Kande) and prosecution lawyers (Margaret, Nicole, Alicia, and Sean). These counselors presented their arguments before The Honorable Gavin while Bailiff Maeve maintained order. Jury summons were sent to class members who were to serve that vital role. The media team (Patrick, Mia, Alex, Will, and Jamie) provided pretrial, trial, and post-trial coverage, including television

Continued on page 39

Holy Redeemer Parish
9705 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD

Rev. Mark Hughes, Pastor
301-942-2333

Holy Redeemer School
Mr. Thomas Corrigan, Principal
301-942-3701

Holy Redeemer Parish, Together to Christ: "Did You Not Know that I Would Be in My Father's House?"

by Ann Enkiri

Holy Redeemer Church invites all to the Father's house, to Christ's home, this Lenten season. The church is offering beautiful programs throughout Lent to inform, nurture, and deepen our Catholic faith, hope and love in community with one another. Together, we can share our journey with Jesus towards the cross and resurrection as we attend Mass, go to confession, worship at Adoration, participate in the Parish

Mission, experience the Stations of the Cross and enjoy special group gatherings. All are welcome! Please visit our website for calendar and location details: <https://hrkensington.org/>.

Catholic Bible Study, Thursdays, 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Join Catherine Tolnay to read and discuss Scripture, immediately after 9:00 AM Mass.

Continued on page 35

Holy Redeemer Catholic School: Spotlight on Technology Class

Marianne Green, Holy Redeemer School's technology teacher and coach, keeps students engaged and productive in the Technology Lab. Student activities in the tech lab support and enrich learning across the curriculum while developing critical 21st century skills. African-American history month inspired creative projects about people, culture, and secret quilting codes.

The middle school students completed a Science and Computer Science collaboration where the 8th graders coded unique applications featuring significant black scientists. Their work was applauded through



Unplugged activities help prepare for coding.

Continued on page 39

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COALITION

Con't from page 1

and formed to help Syrian refugees fleeing their country from bombings. Coordinated by the Islamic Center of Maryland, that coalition also included St. Francis, St. Rose of Lima, and Temple Beth-Ami, all of whom helped Syrian families. In subsequent years, St. Francis parishioners – buoyed by the support of its Pax Christi ministry – also helped families from Central Africa and Cameroon, assisting them with reapplying for government assistance, offering tutoring in English as a Second Language, driving them to medical appointments, and helping them find mosques and Christian churches.

All along, both parishes reached out to their fellow parishioners to appeal for volunteers and donations. At St. Rose of Lima, Cooke helped form the St. Rose Good Samaritan Initiative, a network of about 125 people that provides money for refugee help – a figure that totaled more than \$20,000 last year.

“All the money St. Rose has raised has been through individuals giving contribu-

tions,” Cooke said.

When MCIRRN dissolved, the two Catholic parishes and Temple Beth-Ami sought to establish NNIA in 2020, anticipating a change in U.S. administration would be supportive of refugees. But when Afghanistan fell to the Taliban in 2021, that again opened the floodgates, with 76,000 Afghan refugees eventually coming to the U.S. for resettlement. Because resettlement agencies were rebuilding their capacity, the U.S. State Department empowered volunteer groups like NNIA to do the work the larger organizations had once done.

NNIA attempts to help support refugees through working in teams. Each family sponsored by NNIA is paired with a team of volunteers responsible for food, furniture and housing, healthcare needs, and education. A volunteer coordinator assigned to the family fills in any gaps, King said.

Currently, NNIA is sponsoring three Afghan families, all of whom have moved into a Rockville apartment complex. The coalition is also helping two other families that were resettled in the United States, but do not have a sponsoring organization.

King said, the less education the parents in the families they help have, the longer assistance is needed. But several families no longer need intensive help. “As soon as they become financially literate, we fill the role as their friends,” she said.

Equally fulfilling have been the interfaith relationships King and Cooke have made with members of the other faith communities. But King said she hopes other Catholic parishes will step forward to continue the work.

“We are limited in the people we help by our volunteers, resources, and our expertise,” she said. “There are more families than we can handle.”

OPT

St. Francis of Assisi Parish

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Parish's Campus-wide Conversion to LED Lighting puts Teachings of *Laudato Si* into Practice

By Melissa Montealegre Egan

Seven years after Pope Francis issued his landmark encyclical *Laudato Si* on the importance of caring for God's creation, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Derwood has taken a significant step in doing its part to safeguard the environment, in replacing virtually all the incandescent and fluorescent light sources on the parish campus with light emitting diode (LED) fixtures.

The conversion came about in two phases – one planned and one preordained. In early 2021, as part of the parish's facilities enhancement project, the parish replaced its legacy lighting with LED bulbs in the nave of the church, in its Gathering Space, and on the light poles in the parking lot. LED lights use less electricity

to produce the same amount of light as a traditional light bulb, last for years, thus reducing maintenance and replacement costs, and reduce impact on the environment.

Permanent Deacon Jim Datovech, who helped coordinate the project, said the parish aspired to replace more of the campus' lighting as part of that plan, but could not. “That was as far as our funds would allow us to go,” he said.

But, when a lighting contractor offered to donate to the parish a significant number of LED fixtures he had removed from another building project, the opportunity seemed worth studying. After Deacon Datovech and a parishioner with extensive facilities management expertise analyzed the offer, they concluded it would be a sound proposal for the parish to take and recommended so to the parish Finance Council and Fr. John Dillon, the pastor. Fr. Dillon, in turn, submitted the proposal to the Archdiocese of Washington for approval.



On March 7, Fr. John Dillon gestures toward the new LED light fixtures in the Rectory's Assisi Room. The parish had virtually all its incandescent and fluorescent light sources replaced with LED lighting over the past year.

In December, installers replaced 292 light fixtures in the Parish Center, in the Rectory office space, on the church building above the Parish Center entrance and those attached to the Rectory building. The bid cost totaled about \$40,000 without factoring in the \$8,800 value of the donated fixtures and a \$21,000 Pepco rebate that went to the installer. The actual cost to the parish was less than \$14,000 Deacon Datovech said.

The parish's January electricity bill was about \$415 less than the previous month, which indicates an annual savings of nearly \$5,000. But an equally compelling argument to have taken this step rests with the parish better conforming to the teachings and tenets of *Laudato Si*.

“It is important to me, as pastor, that we are good stewards of God's creation and to preserve its use for future generations,” Fr. Dillon said. “All of creation is connected and we are called to care for our common home.”

OPT

MARIAN MORNINGS

Con't from page 6

physical wellness. The women of Holy Cross have been enriched by the experience of listening and praying together with the generous help of esteemed speakers. We are grateful to Molly C. Sheahan formerly of the Maryland Catholic Conference, Sister Mariam Annai Vailankanni, SSVM and most recently, Rebecca Mullan, MS, LCPC of the

St. Jerome Counseling Program.

All are invited to join us for the last Marian Morning of the season on Saturday, May 21 from 8:30am-11:00am. Our speaker will be Kately Javier, Coordinator for Christian Initiation and Adult Formation of the Archdiocese of Washington. Her talk will focus on “The Treasured Gift of Womanhood.” Contact Michelle Ilagan at ilagan@hccrosschurch.org for more information.

OPT



Approximately 50 seminarians from St. John Paul II Seminary in Washington, DC visited Saint John Neuman parish on February 6, 2022.

Seminarians Visit St. John Neumann

By Mary Beth de Ribeaux

On a brisk, sunny Sunday morning, the rows reserved near the front of the church seated nearly 50 serious young men in suits and ties. They had come from St. John Paul II Seminary in Washington, DC, where they are in formation for the priesthood, studying, praying, and continuing to discern God's call. Many are from the Archdiocese of Washington and others are sent by their home dioceses from as far away as North Dakota. Parishioners at St. John Neumann were not only treated to the presence of these inspiring young men on

February 6, however; they also got to see a former pastor, Fr. Kevin Regan (now Vice-rector at the seminary), return to celebrate the 9:30 a.m. Mass, along with Msgr. Robert Panke (Pastor of SJN), Fr. Carter Griffin (Rector at the seminary), Fr. Chris Seith (Director of Spiritual Formation), and Fr. Mark Ivany (Director of Pastoral Formation). In his homily, Fr. Regan spoke about the joy of living God's calling in the priesthood. Toward the end of Mass, one of the seminarians, Aiden Perusse, shared his vocation story.

Afterward, the seriousness of

Continued on page 13

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to venerate sacred relics

By Rodney Harris and Marisa Stoolmiller

Saint John Neumann Catholic Church hosted the Treasures of the Church ministry led by Father Carlos Martins, Companions of the Cross, on February 28th. Over 165 relics were available for veneration, including St. Joseph, St. Maria Goretti, St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Faustina Kowalska. In addition, Mary's veil, Jesus' crib, the Holy Lance, the True Cross, St. Joseph's cloak, and the Holy Crown of Thorns were some of the more incredible among the collection.

With over 650 people in attendance, plus 200 children, teachers, and staff from Mother of God School who attended earlier in the day, many had the opportunity to find a new saint friend. Fr. Carlos



Photo of over 650 people in attendance, plus 200 children, teachers, and staff from Mother of God School who attended the relics presentation "Treasures of the Church Ministry" at Saint John Neumann parish in Gaithersburg, Md.

Martins, a Vatican-appointed expert, gave an excellent presentation on relics and why they are important.

The presentation on relics gave the catechetical and spiritual basis for experiencing the relics and rein-

Continued on page 32



More than 165 relics were available to venerate at Saint John Neumann Catholic parish on February 28, 2022.

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More St. John Neumann News on Page 13



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CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Con't from page 6

Cross was "life-changing."

The annual Cup of Joe service project and student Bingo were part of the lineup of activities. This year, Club SciKidz brought a portable lab to Lewis Hall where our youngest students built penguin thermometers while older students built Holy Cross-themed snow globes.

Our Home and School Association made sure to recognize the teachers throughout the week, all of whom felt the love. A Dunkin' Donuts mobile truck greeted teachers with a coffee and donuts one morning, and teacher survival kits filled with sweets and treats surprised teachers another day.

"We are so grateful for everyone who made Catholic Schools Week a success--and overjoyed that we are back together again as a school family," said Mrs. Kane. **OPT**

At left, students in Grades Three through Eight worked together to fill "go bags" for Cup of Joe, an annual school service project.

BLACK HISTORY

Con't from page 3

Woodson, an important African American scholar, publisher, educator and historian. Dr. Carter G. Woodson spent his life educating African Americans about the achievements and accomplishments of their ancestors. Fifty years after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States, Woodson established what is today known as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). This organization spreads awareness to the contributions of African Americans throughout history. Black History Month officially became a month-

long celebration in 1976. The month of February was chosen, as it coincides with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

Saint Mary's celebrated Black History Month with many education-focused projects throughout their curriculum. The Pre-K to 2nd graders learned about influential African American figures that have impacted our world, through story books, learning activities, media presentations and videos. Second graders selected and researched various African Americans that overcame tremendous hardship and obstacles to make a lasting impact on the world.

Saint Mary's music director, Jessica Brunk, guided students in 3rd through 8th grades to research many different African American musicians. Students explored these musicians and their histories, making presentations, and presenting their findings to the class. Many of our teachers also played the music of these amazing artists throughout the day. The students really enjoyed this project, as they learned about some famous names, including Billie Holiday, Ray Charles and Jimi Hendrix, as well as some lesser-known artists, such as: Bessie Smith, Scott Joplin and Marian Anderson. These artists helped pave the way for many of the modern musicians our students listen to today!

All classes also enjoyed the educational concert, "Unsung Heroes", put on by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. This concert honors the African Americans involved in the Civil Rights Movement, like Rosa Parks, through classical music. The students hope to be able to attend this concert in-person next year!

The Middle School English Language Arts and Reading classes read and worked on several different books that honor African Americans. These books helped to educate students on the impacts that these individuals have created on our world today. Sixth graders enjoyed "Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott", by Russell Freedman. The seventh grade read "Hidden Figures", by Margot Lee Shetterly, and the eighth grade read Frederick Douglass' autobiography, "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass".

We celebrated Black History Month in February to highlight the many contributions of African Americans to the world. Saint Mary's strives to honor the diversity of its community by continuing to educate students on the contributions made by Americans of all different backgrounds throughout the school year. **OPT**

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Times**

St. John Neumann

Our Parish Mission - Taking the Journey of Discipleship: Reflections from Luke's Gospels

By Marisa Stoolmiller

St. John Neumann Parish was blessed to have Fr. Jack Gleason lead our three-day parish mission from February 20-22, 2022, and help the parish prepare for Lent. Fr. Gleason presented Taking the Journey of Discipleship while reflecting on several of Luke's Gospels. By the end of the three evenings, the parish received an excellent introduction to the Kerygma, and a better understanding of God's love for us, the importance of forgiveness, and His plan for our lives. Parishioners left inspired

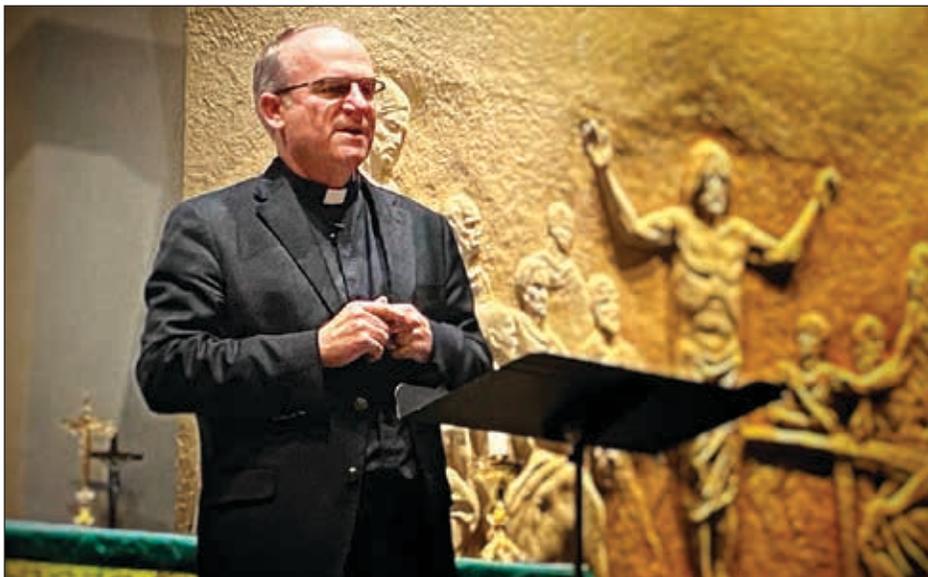


Photo of the Very Rev. Jack Gleason, Pastor, Church of Saint Mary, Tulsa, OK.

by Fr. Gleason's words and ready to go out and share the Good News and bring others to faith in Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

A native of Oklahoma, Fr. Gleason graduated from and worked for Oklahoma State University in the area of Student Services prior to entering seminary. He was ordained for the Diocese of Tulsa in 1995 and has been a pastor for 27 years. He has been involved in specialized ministry in the diocese, serving as a chaplain in High School and teaching theology in the Pastoral Studies Institute.

OPT

ENZLER

Con't from page 1

approach 50 years in the priesthood, I still celebrate the opportunity to pray, repent and sacrifice in reflecting on my journey with the Lord and toward the Lord.

I encourage all of us to use this time for reflection on our own journeys and how we are allowing God to guide us, lead us and support us each day. It requires a commitment, but it is worth it. Even one thing done well – an act of prayer, penance, or almsgiving – can become your “go to” effort to grow in your relationship with the Lord and make Lent a time of spiritual renewal.

We heard on Ash Wednesday to not be too public about our Lenten sacrifices, but if you are looking for ideas, I will share a few that I have found helpful through the years:

Pray the Stations of the Cross weekly, if not daily.

Spend a few more moments in prayer before and after Mass to allow the Scriptures to come more alive in your daily life.

Try to be extra conscious of the great gift of the Eucharist and celebrate it with even more attention and love.

I often give things up in Lent, as many people do. I try to find something I really enjoy and cut back on it or put it in better perspective. I have heard many different ideas, like turning off the television, playing fewer video games, eating out less often, giving up snacks between meals, and more. All of these are simple ideas but also real sacrifices that can make us better disciplined in our faith journeys.

In addition to prayer and fasting, let's not overlook almsgiving. I care deeply about all the charities I support, and I try to do more for them during Lent. It is a season to remind me that I am called to share what I have been given with those in need. Some great ways to do this include supporting the archdiocese's Annual Appeal as well as Lenten food drives through your parish, Catholic Charities or Catholic Relief Services.

As we journey through Lent, try thinking ahead to Easter Sunday and imagining what it could be like if we have done what we hoped to do. Let's use this time well. Accomplishing a few small things in prayer, penance and almsgiving, we can be more prepared than ever to rejoice in the glorious gift of The Resurrection and the promise of eternal life with God, who loves us more than we can ever know.

I would like to conclude with one special prayer request. I received a call a few weeks ago from the daughter of Paul Zurkowski telling me of his passing. Paul was the founder of *Our Parish Times*, and we are blessed that he established this wonderful local news outlet that allows us to share with our neighboring parishes. Paul will be buried on March 25 at Holy Redeemer in Kensington.

Please say a prayer for Paul and his family. *Our Parish Times* is a great gift to our community, and he deserves our prayers as he makes his journey home to God after helping all of us with ours.

OPT

Priest and Beggar with Kevin Wells

By Larissa York

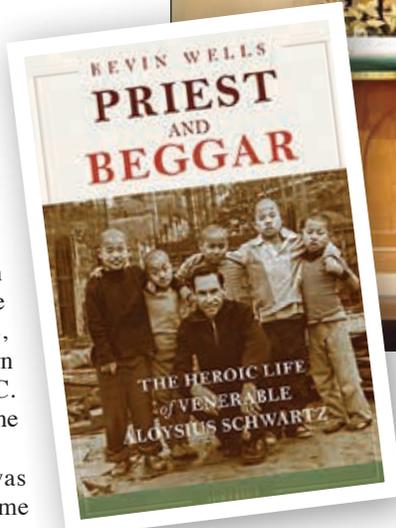
Last August, Fr. Dan Leary celebrated a Mass with Healing Prayers at St. John Neumann. He briefly spoke about the founder of World Villages for Children, Venerable Aloysius Schwartz, whose ministry Fr. Dan continues in Mexico. The story of Aloysius Schwartz was new to those in attendance but even hearing small snippets proved powerful. Walking away with prayer cards and the hope of a miracle, people wanted to learn more about the D.C. native who was on the path to sainthood.

The parish was blessed to welcome Kevin Wells on February 7th. He came to share what he learned during his research and writing of *Priest and Beggar: The Heroic Life of Venerable Aloysius Schwartz*, published in May 2021. Within his talk and its corresponding book, Kevin Wells captured both the humanity and



Above, photo of Kevin Wells talk on February 7, 2022 at SJN.

At left, Kevin Wells new book, “Priests and Beggar”



sanctity of Aloysius Schwartz (1930-1992).

Aloysius grew up poor in D.C. His uncle owned a five-and-ten shop in Minnesota and would send the leftover comic books to Al. The *Boy Commandos* was his favorite comic and inspired him

to confront chaos with virtue. Al was determined to become a heroic priest and live with the poor. He entrusted his life, vocation, and mission to Our Lady of the Poor.

Within the first year of his priesthood in 1957, at his request, Fr. Al was assigned to post-war South Korea. He lived in a shack on

the mountainside among the tubercular, lepers, and unwed mothers. He began to transform the area by founding a hospital and hospices, an elementary school, and Boystowns and Girlstowns. Fr. Al established the Sisters of Mary in 1964 to mother the orphaned, abandoned, and impoverished children that came to live at the Boystowns and Girlstowns.

Fr. Al Schwartz's ministry extended to the Philippines and Mexico during his lifetime despite suffering from ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. While dying, Fr. Al united his sufferings with Christ Crucified and was confident that this offering was more beneficial for souls than his productive years of service.

In 2015, Fr. Aloysius Schwartz was declared Venerable by Pope Francis. The Sisters of Mary further his mission at the World Villages for Children. They now care for over 20,000 children in 7 countries. To learn more about Venerable Aloysius Schwartz and the work of the Sisters of Mary, visit WorldVillages.org.

Kevin Wells's inspiring talk is available on the St. John Neumann Parish - Gaithersburg YouTube channel.

OPT

SEMINARIANS

Con't from page 11

the seminarians broke into smiles and jovial fellowship as they assembled in the Parish Center for a hearty brunch provided by parishioner Luis Jovel and his crew. The seminarians joined more than 30 high schoolers who are open to discerning whether God is calling them to the seminary, too. Later, members of St. John Paul the Great

Vocations Society, sent the discerners and a group of seminarians off with snack packs and prayers as they continued to share experiences and camaraderie on a 5-mile hike on Sugarloaf Mountain. The Vocations Society encourages all parishioners to keep these young men in prayer as they continue their spiritual journey of vocational discernment.

At right, SJN provided brunch for 50 Seminarians and 30 highschoolers.



OPT

St. Jane de Chantal Volunteers Adapt Food Service Outreach to Respond to the Pandemic

Adapting to the Pandemic and The New Sandwich Ministry

By Maria Cornelius and Kim Daniels

Since the pandemic began, volunteers at St. Jane de Chantal parish have responded by adapting their efforts to feed the hungry in our community. In addition to modifying the methods and types of foods delivered through the “So Others Might Eat” (SOME) ministry, the volunteers started a new sandwich-making program that has grown both in size and in support as the pandemic lingered—evolving into a new parish “Sandwich Ministry.”

St. Jane de Chantal has been donating and delivering lunch for the guests of SOME for over 40 years. Typically, volunteers donate and deliver lunch for the guests of SOME four to five times a year, on the fifth Wednesday of the month, most recently on December

29. SOME estimates that these lunches feed between 300 and 400 guests.

Before the pandemic, guests would sit inside the cafeteria and eat together in three shifts. At that time, St. Jane de Chantal used to bring the chili or pasta salad in large plastic containers, which would be emptied into serving trays that were then rinsed, washed, stored and reused. During the pandemic, it became much harder for volunteers to serve the meals. At one point during the pandemic, restrictions made it that there were no volunteers serving. Then, the cafeteria was closed, and all food was given to guests “to go” in containers or bags. On one occasion, at the height of the pandemic, SOME asked that each volunteer bring the ingredients of the meal but not cook or prepare it. Everyone shifted and did just that, delivering the ingredients, along with the recipe for the facility to cook. This fall and winter, volunteers were again allowed to prepare the meals, when conditions allowed.

In April 2020, after the pandemic began, two parishioners and a group of eight to ten friends began to make sandwiches to alleviate the additional burden on the needy and hungry in the area. The core group began making sandwiches (peanut butter and Jelly or meat and cheese) weekly. Another volunteer suggested using surplus bread that he and others picked up at area bakeries.

Continued on page 26

St. Jane de Chantal Parish

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Bethesda, MD

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301-530-1550

St. Jane de Chantal School
Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton
301-530-1221

Michelle D'Amour Flynn
OPT Editor

Field Trips Return to St. Jane de Chantal School

DeChantal Students Excited About Return of On and Off Campus Field Trips

By Catherine Tomsbeck and Taryn Veith

St. Jane de Chantal school's curriculum features fun-filled field trips. Every grade includes these off campus days that enhance their faith, STEM, or music/art learning. However, due to

Continued on page 26



Olivia Aquino and Mia Reid test out their marine biologist skills with a chance to dissect a squid at the National Aquarium



Charlotte Owens helps her fellow future scientists identify the parts of a squid.



First-grader Boden Brandaleone volunteers to be a tornado to help Doug Kramerer teach students about Maryland weather.



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St Jane de Chantal Church Celebrates the First Installment of the Stained Glass Windows Project

Honoring the Families of the Parish, the First Window Installment is The Guardian Angel in the Church's Children's Room

By Josh Felker

St. Jane de Chantal Parish recently dedicated a new stained-glass window – one of the first tangible benefits of the *Forever de Chantal Capital Campaign*. On November 14, 2021, the church community dedicated the window depicting a Guardian Angel with children in the church's family room. The dedication took place at the 10am Sunday mass that day. The beautiful and colorful window is the first of 12 planned new stained-glass windows in the *Drawn to God* series. The other windows included in the project will feature inspirational French and American saints, including the church's patron St. Jane de Chantal turning toward a triptych of windows featuring Christ the Light as the focal point of the sanctuary.

Situated in the family room adjacent to the entrance lobby to the church, the window depicts several children and two dogs playing beside a stream in the woods while an angel watches over them. Up on a hill behind the children, the St. Jane de Chantal church building can be seen. Families with babies in the quiet room will have the new window



Maggie and Jude Flynn spy the dogs in the Guardian Angel Window. The School's Mascot Duke makes a cameo with another dog in the Beautiful Stained Glass Window.

Continued on page 28

Catholic Schools Week 2022

By Kathleen Morris

The first week of February, Saint Mary's School pulled out all the stops for Catholic Schools Week! The students look forward to this week every year, and 2022 was no exception. The week-long festivities delivered many colorful themes to the classrooms, as the school community celebrated our students, our community members, those in vocations, our teachers, and our families.

Throughout the week, the entire school participated in a service project, which benefited the Gabriel Project. The Gabriel Project is an all-volunteer organization helping needy women in Montgomery County, Maryland, who are facing crisis pregnancies, and their children, by providing practical support, including help to pay for prenatal care, cribs, strollers, clothing, grocery cards, diapers, formula, and other needed items. Students delivered diapers, baby socks, baby soap, lotion, diaper cream, board books, receiving blankets, and diaper bags.

The week started off on Monday by celebrating our students with a Pajama Day,



Our favorite day is always pajama day! Movies, breakfast, our favorite books and mystery readers kept our day fun and interesting!

breakfast treats, and a movie. Students and teachers came to school dressed for comfort and enjoyed walking the halls in their jammies. On Tuesday, we celebrated our community with a Career Day theme: students dressed in clothing that reflected what they

Continued on page 30



Our eighth-grade role models are in the spirit! Friends, fun and lots of LOVE!



Will you be my valentine? Preschool shares the love at their St. Valentine's Day celebration!

Loving Our Valentine's Day Celebrations & Welcoming the Lenten Season

By Kathleen Morris

Love and kindness were in the air this February 14th at Saint Mary's, as students celebrated the feast day of Saint Valentine. Classes exchanged Valentine's Day cards, candy and small toys with one another. Kindness was an underlying theme of this year's celebrations. Students in the second grade wrote anonymous compliments to each of their individual classmates. This was an excellent exercise in seeing the good in one another and allowed students to let their peers know how special and unique they each are. Other classes exchanged traditional

Valentine's Day cards. Many students crafted handmade Valentines, as stores sold out of premade cards quickly this year.

Valentine's Day is an excellent segue into the season of Lent, which is soon upon us. At Saint Mary's, the spirit of Valentine's Day can be felt every day. Everyone needs to feel loved and appreciated as a child of God and as a human being. Valentine's Day is an excellent time to honor those around us and remember the less fortunate. Service and community are important tenets of the school and students are taught to show love to oth-

Continued on page 28

Galapalooza 2022

By Kathleen Morris

Saint Mary's annual gala was a great success in 2022! Parents, staff, parish members and the gala committee worked tirelessly for months to ensure that this year's theme, "Galapalooza", would be a safe, fun and memorable event. After a

Continued on page 39



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

Our Lady of Lourdes Multicultural Night

Throughout the afternoon of February 4, 2022, the hallways of Our Lady of Lourdes were aflutter as preparations began for the much-anticipated annual Multicultural Night. Families spent hours setting up tables to represent the countries of their heritage, middle school students decorated common areas with flags and welcome signs, and the delicious aromas of home cooked meals wafted throughout the building.

Occurring annually since 2019, OLOL Multicultural Night is a joyful community celebration of the many different cultures represented in the Lourdes community. At the Around the World Expo in the gym, sixteen country tables displayed spices, foods, crafts, art, photos, videos, traditional dress and other items representative of each country. This year's countries included: Ireland, Cameroon,



Above, OLOL first grade girls celebrate with their friends and families
At right, a dragon dance performance at multicultural night



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
7500 Pearl Street
Bethesda, MD
Fr. Walsh, Pastor
301-654-1287
Mr. David Long
Assistant Principal
301-654-5376

Italy, Mexico, El Salvador, Spain, Taiwan, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Puerto Rico, Philippines, Vietnam, Poland, India, USA, and Austria. Children who visited the tables carried a passport and received stickers and stamps for each country.

In the school cafeteria, guests were invited to join an interna-

tional potluck dinner served buffet style. Each year, the attendees are also treated to various performances. This year, Grace, Saoirse, and Brendan Reilly, Kelly Quinn, and Grace and Nora Feeley performed a traditional Irish dance. Preschool student Nicholas Fernandez performed a Spanish Flamenco dance

with his aunt, and the Tran family shared a Vietnamese New Year's dragon dance.

Our Lady of Lourdes multicultural night is a time to share different

cultures and countries of origin, but also a time to celebrate love for the Our Lady of Lourdes community and just how much its members really have in common.

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The OLOL 7th grade with Father James Morrison

Catholic Schools Week 2022

Catholic Schools Week is a national celebration of all that makes Catholic schools wonderful and unique. This year, the event was celebrated from January 30- February 4. The theme was, appropriately, the same as the motto of Our Lady of Lourdes school: faith, excellence, and service.

OLOL kicked off Catholic Schools Week with a church filled to capacity by students and their families at the 10:30 Mass on Sunday, January 30. Fr. Rob, our pastor, celebrated Mass and commented on the joy he felt seeing so many students, teachers and families gathering together for Sunday Mass. Middle school students were able to share with the congregation what they love about their Catholic School. The teachers were also busy over the weekend



Ethan Shaw and Everet Grew share why they love their school

Continued on page 36

Bridge Builders

Our Saint Bernadette Confirmands and Director of Religious Education, Neil Sloan, made a family pilgrimage to the Saint John Paul II National Shrine on the morning of Saturday, February 12. In preparation for their Confirmation, they prayed, explored the exhibit, and reflected together on their role in the Church.

They discovered many interesting things about the saintly Polish successor of Peter, and they heard his famous call to "Be Not Afraid." Dr. Sloan said, "In addition to seeing John Paul II's skis, hand-written notes, and liturgical attire, they also had the opportunity to receive a plenary indulgence by going to Confession, receiving the Eucharist at Mass, and praying before a special relic of John Paul II.

As they prepare to be confirmed by Bishop Dorsonville on March 16, our confirmands are ready to be "bridge builders" in the Church and the World.

OPT



Above, Saint Bernadette Parish confirmands on a family pilgrimage to the Saint John Paul II National Shrine in Washington D.C.



At left center, Pilgrims had the opportunity to learn about Saint

Pope John Paul II and to ask for his intercession as they prepare to fully enter the Catholic Church.



At left, John Paul II's skis serve as a reminder of the saint's love for the outdoors



Dr. Guzik is pictured after the lecture with Saint Bernadette's principal Ted Ewanciw and pastor Monsignor K.B. Smith, along with her son John and daughter Helenka.

St. Bernadette's Learns about how a Saint Communicates

In January, Saint Bernadette School parent Paulina Guzik, Ph.D, delivered a presentation on the Ten Commandments of Communications According to St. John Paul II. The Guzik family moved from Krakow, Poland, to Silver Spring so she could spend the fall semester in a Catholic Project fellowship at Catholic University.

The main themes of Dr. Guzik's lecture at the St. John Paul II National Shrine were how the vision of a transparent and communicative Vatican came into life under John Paul II; how the Pope was using his communications skills; and why St. John Paul II wanted to professionalize the communications of the Santa

Sede. She also explained how JPII's legacy lasts today and how policies implemented by a pope elected 43 years ago can help the Vatican to communicate better even today.

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Silver Spring, MD

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Knitting with Purpose



At far left top, brightly colored squares knitted by individual students come together to make beautiful, cozy scarves!

At center top, students gather their knitting needles to participate in the St. John the Evangelist knitting ministry.

At center bottom, scarves, and other knitted items, are donated to people in need.

Below, one student shows off the fruit of her labor in art class.

At St. John the Evangelist School, all students in 5th and 6th grades learn how to knit in art class. Once they learn the basics, they are invited to participate in the St. John's Knitting Ministry. Students knit small patches, which are then assembled into scarves, baby blankets, and lap blankets. These are then given to people we know who may need an extra "hug", along with a note that we are praying for them. We are so thankful to our art teacher, Mrs. Stephanie Rico, for leading this important ministry!

OPT

Journeying toward Jesus

With Catholics around the world, the St. John the Evangelist community is journeying through Lent with prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Students will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, participate in adoration in our new chapel, and pray the Stations of the Cross together during these forty days. Our principal has encouraged us to follow Pope Francis' suggestion to fast from "hurting words" and to only say kind words. We will participate in a food drive for Catholic Charities. Our Student Council is sponsoring a special no uniform day and bake sale with proceeds going to Catholic Relief Services for their efforts to help the people of Ukraine. We pray that these efforts will bring us closer to Jesus and help us to fully appreciate His love and sacrifice.

OPT



Students enter into the Lenten season by receiving ashes at an all school mass.



Student Government students helped to organize the liturgy for the First Friday mass, an opportunity for the school community to come together in prayer and worship.

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Caitlin Keeton,
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Lenten Activities for St. Martin's School

By Anne Gemunder

During Lent, St. Martin's School organizes a Lenten food drive. Our goal is to collect more than 9,000 food items by Holy Thursday. This year not only will each class prepare for Lent in a special way, but also the whole school will do a Lenten Project.

Pre-K students will each choose a special Lenten sacrifice. Highlights of Lenten sacrifices

include saying extra prayers; finishing all of the food at dinner; being kind; and brushing teeth without making a fuss! They will also study the Stations of the Cross and have weekly Walking with Jesus Lenten reflections.

Kindergarteners will be charting their good deeds, giving prayers to God, being kind, and doing a Lenten sacrifice.

First graders discussed what

"Little Gifts & Sacrifices" each student will make during Lent. Some students give away some toys, give up iPad and/or electronic devices, say more prayers, do chores, do chores without complaining, be more helpful to parents, and watch less TV.

Second graders will be discussing different sacrifices that they can each make during the Lenten season. They will also be learning about the Stations of the Cross, the

Last Supper, and Passover.

Third and fifth graders are writing in a Stations of the Cross journal throughout Lent. In the journal they will reflect on prompts that ask them to imagine they are walking with Jesus.

Fourth graders will create sun catchers to share with community members.

Sixth and seventh graders will be creating Word Art based on

Lent to be displayed in school. The theme for their Word Art is "Lent and Easter, What They Mean To Me."

Eighth graders will be practicing for the Living Stations of the Cross and creating a reenactment of the Lord's Passion that they will present to the school and parents.

The whole School will pray for the seminarians each day during Lent.

OPT

St. Martin's Parish Lives Lent Together

After nearly two years of this Covid pandemic, Fr. David Wells, pastor at St. Martin's Parish, decided it was time to bring individual members of the parish together as a family, challenging them to *Live Lent Together*.

Participants pledge to fast and pray for each other throughout this season. Their spiritual resolutions are recorded on a card that will be placed on the high altar throughout Lent. At every Mass, the priest will remember those who have pledged

themselves to pray and fast for their fellow parishioners. In addition, participants can request that the community prayer for their special intentions using a form on the parish website.

There have been numerous opportunities planned for parishioners to prepare for Easter. This liturgical season's events include:

Prayerful reflection on 3/7 in the church. Catholic speaker and author, Heidi Saxton, will lead a reflection on the Seven Sorrows of Mary.

Spanish-language women's retreat on 3/11-3/12 at K of C's Cuddy Hall.

Spanish-language men's retreat on 3/18 at the K of C's Cuddy Hall.

English-language parish mission on 3/21-3/22 in the church. The mission consists of talks by Fr. Jack Berard, confession, Eucharistic adoration, and a healing mass.

Stations of the Cross each Friday in the church.

More details are available at: www.stmartinsweb.org.

OPT



St. Martin's students enjoy their time on the playground at recess. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.



MultiCultural Day

St. Martin's students dressed for Multicultural Day. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.

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CELEBRATION

Con't from page 1

delivered in both English and Spanish in order to share the uniqueness of this Mass with all the communities that make up Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. After the Mass, the congregation processed out to The Grotto of Our Lady, candles in hand, for prayers to Our Lady of Lourdes led by Father Rob. It was a

moving way to bring together both the school and parish to celebrate the special Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes.

To round out the evening after the prayers in the Grotto, there was a reception with light refreshments held back in the atrium of the church allowing all to socialize and reflect on the occasion. School children and teachers and parishioners of all ages joined in fellowship to celebrate this blessed day.

OPT

Josiah Henson Visits Mary of Nazareth

Grade four through eight had the opportunity to 'meet' Reverend Josiah Henson, who shared his story about his enslavement in Maryland. He also brought artifacts from the the Josiah Henson Museum and Park which included a slave document and tag, tobacco, and shackles.

OPT



Mr. Fowler portraying Mr. Josiah Henson in his period-themed outfit.

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Second Grade Celebrates 2-22-22

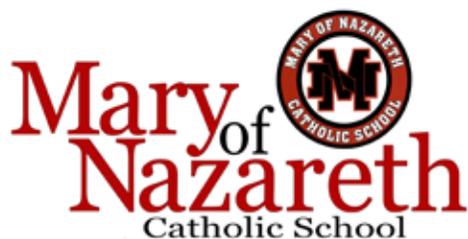
Second grade took over 2-22-22 playing games and doing activities that involved the number 2. There were math stations where one of the questions asked them to find an object that was 22 inches long and they wrote letters to themselves to be read 22 years from now!

OPT



Above, students broke up into small groups to complete different activities for their special day!

At top, second Grade teachers wearing tu-tus and second grade themed shirts for 2-22-22
 Above, Hank wrote a letter to himself (to be opened 22 years from now!)



Our Mission

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"All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name."

Virtue Award winners for February

Each month, Mary of Nazareth School students are given virtue awards at Mass for displaying outstanding virtuous behavior. These students were recognized for being complementary to students and teachers.

ATTACK

Con't from page 2

He also thanked the American people and lawmakers for their prayers and solidarity with Ukraine, and he called on the U.S. to welcome refugees as millions more Ukrainians are expected to flee the war in the coming weeks and months. "It's clear these millions of refugees will need hospitality, and it would be wonderful if America, which is built on immigrants ... if we can prepare to welcome these homeless, beleaguered people," he said.

White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said the U.S. would welcome

Ukrainian refugees, but the Biden administration says that for now, many refugees prefer to stay in Europe.

Gudziak also urged American leaders to assist Ukraine by establishing a no-fly zone, something U.S. officials worry would lead to a direct confrontation with Russia.

After a prayer service on March 2 at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine, Metropolitan Borys addressed the audience with words of support: "There are no words to express what we are going through. Those who have relatives, parents, friends in Ukraine, under fire in the queues in front of the border. There are no words to describe what our bishops are going through together

with the priests who have decided to stay and to serve. There are no words to describe what the government is going through. Let us raise our hands before the Lord! We all look at those people who go to the front. They believe in life. They defend life. And by sacrificing their lives, they begin eternal life."

Following his remarks to the media March 10, Gudziak held a memorial service at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine to remember the soldiers and innocent civilians killed during Russia's ongoing invasion, including a graduate student of the Ukrainian Catholic University who was killed while defending the country.

Source: WTOP News



St. Jude Regional Catholic School Happenings



Ash Wednesday

Rev. Paul D. Lee, STD, Pastor of the Shrine of St. Jude, celebrated Ash Wednesday Mass for parishioners as well as the students of St. Jude Regional Catholic School. Pictured receiving ashes from Fr. Lee is Landon, a SJRCS kindergartener. Photo by Abby Sullivan



Rosary Club Prays for Ukraine

The St. Jude Rosary Club continues to meet every Monday on Zoom so that families and students can all participate. On this past Rosary Club online meeting, the children offered up their Rosary to the people of Ukraine. "Pray the rosary every day to obtain peace for the world." ~ Our Lady of Fatima. Photo by Ellen Donnelly



Hear ye, hear ye! The "presidents" arrived on Friday, February 25.

As has been a St. Jude Regional Catholic School tradition for many, many years, Mrs. Merideth's third-grade class did an outstanding job presenting their research papers and speeches about one of the former presidents of the United States. These young students pulled a president's name from a hat, researched that president, and then gave a speech about that President. This wonderful tradition continues at St. Jude and the school children were fantastic. Thank you, Mrs. Merideth, and your amazing students, some of whom are pictured above dressed as their president. Photos by Abby Sullivan



St. Stephen's Food Pantry at the Shrine of St Jude Rolls Into 2022

By Mike Goss, Pantry Director

"When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice."

— Pope Saint Gregory the Great

The St. Stephen's Food Pantry at the Shrine of St. Jude continues to serve 180+ families every Saturday morning, providing bags of non-perishable items and fresh produce (vegetables and fruit). With the current inflation, food prices continue to rise and suggest that those already coming to the pantry each week will continue.

Donations to the pantry should be placed on the table across from the Thaddeus Room before or after school hours Monday through Friday, or 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Saturday and Sunday. The pantry's

greatest needs continue to be one-pound boxes of spaghetti, plastic jars of pasta sauce, as well as cans of soup, fruit and vegetables. In addition, we struggle to maintain enough size 6 diapers.

In addition, monetary donations can be given through "Faith Direct" or you can click on the Donate button on the Shrine of St. Jude webpage at www.shrinestjude.org (search for St. Stephen's Pantry) where you can make a one-time gift. We will also accept cash and check donations as well as gift cards to grocery stores. Follow us at www.facebook.com/StStephenfoodpantry.

We are still accepting volunteers for inventory and for bag preparations and distribution days. If you wish to volunteer, please send your name, phone number, and email to: Mike Goss, Director, pantry@stjuderockville.org.

OPT

Rosary Garden at St. Jude is Now Complete

Thanks to Nathaniel Barish, an Eagle Scout from BSA Troop 1083, with help from other Scouts from the Troop, the installation of 22 stepping stones forming a Rosary Garden has now been completed at the Shrine of St. Jude. Nathaniel, who is a senior at The Heights, explains in his own words how the project began:

"For my eagle scout project, I built a rosary garden. I was trying to think about what I was going to do for my project, and my mom suggested that I do the Rosary Garden to serve the St. Jude community. The first plan that I had was to do a five-decade rosary, but after talking to the parish council, we decided that I would make a single decade rosary instead, given the space to be used.



Nathaniel Barish, a senior at The Heights (SJRC '18), stands with his completed Eagle Scout project: a Rosary Garden at the Shrine of St. Jude. Photo provided by the Barish family

community. Thanks to all of you for your support of the project."

OPT

After we decided this, I gathered the materials I needed and discovered that circular pavers were not easy to find. So, I had to make my own. With help from my dad and a family friend, who also is a parishioner, we created the circular pavers that I needed to put this decade of the rosary together.

After creating the circular pavers, I spray painted both the square and circular pavers. After we had all the materials, members of my scout troop came and helped on January 15 to finish this project. After going to school here (at St. Jude Regional Catholic School), I am glad I am able to give back to the St. Jude's

Pantry Recognizes Student Volunteer Milestones

The St. Stephen's Food Pantry at the Shrine of St. Jude recently recognized two student volunteers for their service since the start in May of 2020. Kaitlyn McMahon and Shaun McMahon, students at Rockville High School, were each presented with framed certificates for their 500 hours of service and

epitomizing the words of Saint Teresa of Avila: "Christ has no body now on earth but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world. You are His body."

OPT



Shrine of St. Jude Parish Offices Relocate to Former Convent on Campus

Shrine of St. Jude Parish Offices have relocated to the former convent on the parish campus, which had been undergoing renovations since last summer. This new space provides ample room for parish staff offices as well as meeting areas for staff and clergy to meet with parishioners. More photos of this beautifully renovated space can be found at <https://shrinestjude.org/news>. Photos by Tom Roach



Shrine of St. Jude Parish

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Rockville, MD

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Pastor

301-946-8200

St. Jude Regional
Catholic School

Jeanne Donatelli, Principal
301-946-7888

Maureen Martin,
OPT Editor

MaureenCMartin@verizon.net



Sign the petition against Md. abortion amendment

Three extreme abortion bills are before the Maryland House of Delegates. These bills would:

- Enshrine abortion in the Maryland constitution
- Expand insurance coverage of abortion
- Allow abortion to be performed by non-physicians.

On March 4, members of Maryland's Health and Government Operations Committee received nearly 15,000 emails in one day through our Catholic Advocacy Network. Sadly, the legislators voted generally along party lines to move the legislation forward, including a constitutional amendment on abortion. However, they told us they noticed!

Please support women in Maryland by speaking out against these bills and standing up for both them and their unborn children.

Tell your Maryland senator: NO to abortion bills

Oppose enshrining abortion in Maryland's Constitution. Sign the petition against a constitutional amendment on abortion. Visit: www.mdccatholic.org/abortion2022

Let's keep strong on advocating and supporting both women and their children:

Use our Maryland parish respect life resources available at www.mdccatholic.org/parish.

Pray the Novena of St. Joseph, March 10-18, for the protection of life in Maryland.

Use the Walking with Moms in Need parish resource kit to support for pregnant and parenting women in need (English and Spanish).

OPT

SOAR Spring Trips!

The Montgomery County Department of Recreation has released its Spring 2022 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. All trips depart from and return to Olney Manor Recreation Park, 16605 Georgia Avenue in Olney.

You may register for a SOAR trip in any of three ways. The fastest and easiest way is to use the internet and go to ActiveMONTGOMERY.org. You may also mail your trip registration form or register in person.

Call 240-777-6840 for hours and addresses or if you have questions about the registration process. If you have questions or require more information about a specific trip, call the SOAR Coordinator at 240-777-4926.

Tour of Hillwood Museum & Gardens, DC
04/13 • 8:30am-4:00pm
\$78.00

Guided Tour of York, PA
04/20 • 7:00am-6:00pm
\$84.00

Law Enforcement Museum
04/27 • 8:30am-3:30pm
\$62.00

Walking Tour of St. Mary's City, MD
05/11 • 7:15am-5:30pm
\$78.00

Go Wild and Take a Safari, Halifax, PA
05/18 • 7:15am-6:30pm
\$69.00

American Revolution Museum, Phila, PA
05/25 • 7:15am-6:30pm
\$92.00

Annual Sailing Trip
06/01 • 7:45am-1:30pm
\$92.00

Rafting On the Shenandoah River
06/09 • 8:00am-4:30pm
\$92.00

Marine Corps Museum, VA
06/15 • 8:30am-3:30pm
\$62.00

Non-residents of Montgomery County add \$15 to the listed fee.

Day Trippers

The Department of Recreation also offers less strenuous travel –

the Day Trippers program for all ages. Trips leave and return from the Olney Manor Recreational Park.

Spring 2022 Day Trippers programs include:

Celtic Women at American Music Theatre, Lancaster
March 25 • \$153

High Tea Luncheon and shopping in Lititz, Pa.
April 22 • \$89

"DAVID" at Sight and Sound Theatre, Lancaster, Pa.
April 29 • \$149

Garden House High Tea, Harpist, Elkridge Furnace Inn
May 6 • \$92

National Cathedral Flower Mart
May 7 • \$49

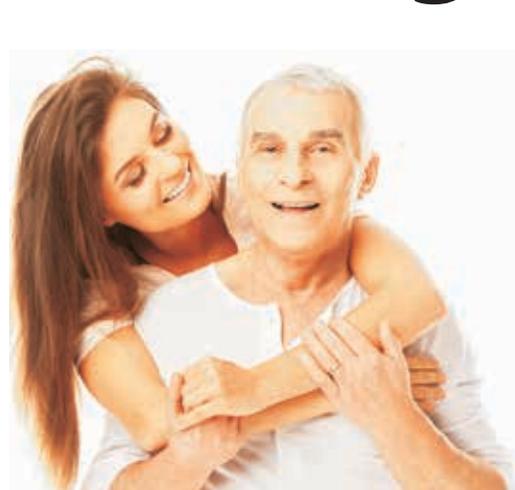
Maymont and Lewis Ginter Gardens, Richmond, Va.
May 13 • \$98

Shear Madness at Kennedy Center
June 5 • \$82

Maryland Lavender Festival
June 11 • \$78

Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament
June 18 • \$82

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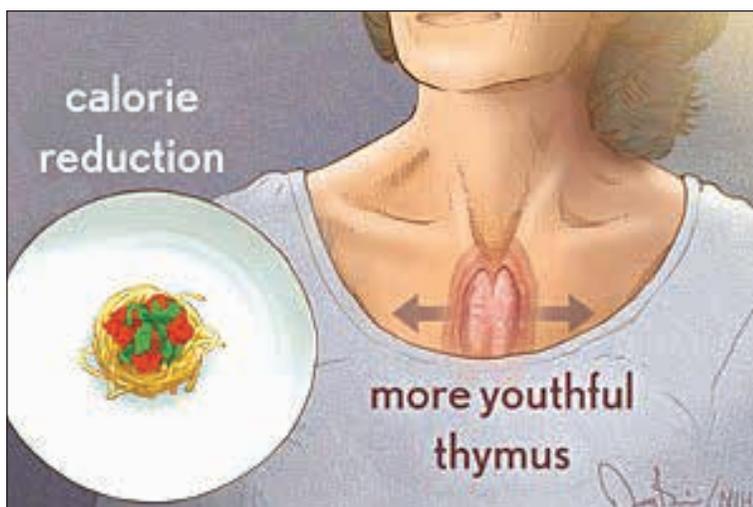
Biology of aging study shows why curbing calories counts

From the NIH Director's Blog, a guest post by NIA Director Dr. Richard J. Hodes

The NIH's National Institute on Aging (NIA) broadly invests in research to find ways to help people live longer and healthier. As people age, they are more likely to have multiple chronic diseases, and NIA-supported research studies reflect a strong focus on geroscience. This advancing area of science seeks to understand the mechanisms that make aging a major risk factor and driver of common chronic conditions and diseases of older people. Illustration of an adult, highlighting the thymus gland, noting that calorie reduction may lead to a more youthful thymus.

More than 85 years ago, researchers at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, observed that some lab rodents lived longer when fed a lower calorie diet that otherwise had the appropriate nutrients¹. Since then, many scientists have studied calorie restriction to shed light on the various biological mechanisms that may explain its benefits and perhaps discover a way to extend healthy years of life, known as our healthspan.

Although there have been many studies of calorie restriction since the Cornell findings, the NIA-supported clinical trial CALERIE, which stands for Comprehensive



Assessment of Long-term Effects of Reducing Intake of Energy, provided critical data on the impact of this intervention in people. Completed in 2012, CALERIE was the first carefully controlled study to test whether study participants undergoing moderate calorie restriction would display any of the benefits observed in animal studies.

Volunteers for the CALERIE study were healthy, non-obese adults ages 25 to 45. People in one group were randomly assigned to continue their customary dietary choices, and those in the second group were trained by an expert team of psychologists and dietitians to restrict calories through specific

strategies, such as eating smaller servings of food.

In addition to demonstrating that people could sustain moderate calorie restriction for two years, the CALERIE study also showed that this intervention could diminish risk factors for age-related cardiovascular and metabolic diseases². The CALERIE investigators also made their data and biological samples available for other research teams to study further.

Recently, a team led by Vishwa Dixit, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, examined CALERIE data to investigate the effects of calorie restriction on immune function. The findings, published in the

journal *Science*, suggest that calorie restriction may improve immune function and reduce chronic inflammation^{3,4}.

As people age, the size of the thymus, which is part of the immune system, tends to become smaller. As this organ shrinks, its output of T cells declines, which hampers the ability of the immune system to combat infectious diseases. This deficiency of T cells is one of the reasons people over age 40 are at increased susceptibility for a range of diseases.

Dixit's team noted that MRI scans showed the thymus volume increased among people who reduced their calories for the two-year CALERIE study but was not significantly different in the control group. The increase in thymus size in the group restricting calories was accompanied by an increase in indicators of new T cell production.

Next, the team analyzed immune system effects in belly fat samples from people in the CALERIE study. The team discovered that the PLA2G7 gene — which codes for a protein involved in fat metabolism that is made by immune cells such as T cells — was suppressed after calorie restriction, with evidence that the suppression occurred in immune cells present in fat. They hypothesized that the PLA2G7 gene could have played a role in the

improved thymus function resulting from calorie restriction.

To test this hypothesis, the team suppressed the PLA2G7 gene in lab mice. When these mice were 2 years old, which is equivalent to a human age of about 70, the thymus had not decreased in volume. In addition, the mice had decreased fat mass and lower levels of certain inflammation-promoting substances. These findings suggest that mice without the PLA2G7 gene might have been protected from age-related chronic inflammation, which has been linked to many conditions of old age.

Taken together, the findings extend our understanding of the power of calorie restriction and suggest that it might also improve immune function and reduce chronic inflammation in people. The results also indicate interventions that influence PLA2G7 gene function might have favorable health effects. Additional research is still needed to assess the health effects and to determine whether calorie restriction extends lifespan or healthspan in humans. The NIA is funding more studies to determine the benefits and risks of calorie restriction, as well as the mechanisms that account for its effects.

Source: National Institute on Aging



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One Family's Experience of the Eucharist

By John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe

On February 26-27, 2022, eight students in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program at St. Paul celebrated the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Rebekah McQuin was among them, and she offered an insight into the meaning of family life as she approached the sacrament.

Her parents have been local heroes for decades.

Bobby McQuin, Rebekah's father, has fought brain cancer and complications for about 36 years, since he was eight. He endured chemotherapy, radiation, and bone marrow transplant; he lived for years in the shadow of death. When the final treatment was successful, he and his mother built a campaign to help other kids and families facing cancer. Supported by his family, Bobbie made two cross-country bike trips, in 1999 and 2001,



Proud parents grin behind their daughter Rebekah McQuin

cycloning across prairies and deserts and mountains to raise money for pediatric cancer patients, including at St. Jude's Hospital.

Megan Moss McQuin is the

Youth Minister for the parish now. She has been a part of the religious education program for years, working with parish teen programs – on staff when the parish had funds, as a volunteer when the parish could not pay. Over the years, she has touched the lives of hundreds of young (and older) parishioners.

But for sure, their greatest achievement to date has been raising Rebekah.

The day before she received her First Communion, Rebekah said to Lisa Nueslein, "Ms Lisa, you don't know how long I've been waiting to receive Jesus!"

Lisa responded, "I bet tonight you'll have trouble sleeping, like Christmas Eve."

"Even better than Christmas Eve!"

She started asking to receive Communion a year ago, at least 15% of her life ago.

OPT

African Catholics Bring Vibrant Hope to St. Paul's

By John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe

St. Catholic Church – the community – looks more and more like the universal church, and it's a source of great pride. In the 1960s, just a few years ago, we were all Caucasian; but now we are Latin and Asian and African as well. The number of parishioners who are immigrants from Africa is growing steadily, and – to take an example – we have a new lector from Cameroon, Long Christ Tatchum Nenchie.

Long Christ's name is taken from Psalm 84: "How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord!" (ESV) His family, going back four generations, has longed for Christ.

German missionaries brought Catholicism to Cameroon in the 19th century. Long Christ's great-grandfather was raised in a Catholic compound that was probably run by the Pallottine Fathers, and he was committed to Catholicism. But Long Christ says it was his maternal grandmother's strong faith that shaped the family. She was a convert,

with the zeal of a convert.

German and then French missionaries were active in Cameroon, but Long Christ was educated in English – from primary school through university. He attended the University of Buea, an English-language institution in predominantly French-speaking central Africa, where he studied education and biology. He was active in the church in Cameroon: he was an altar server, and lector, and a coordinator and training master working with the parish liturgical committee.

He is one of six children, all in America now. His mother also came, but his father has not (yet). Some of them drifted away from the church when they came here, secularized in their new culture. But he did not; he became a lector at St. Paul shortly after he immigrated in 2021. It's inspiring to watch his gestures at Mass, and to hear him read, tasting each word, ensuring that every word comes through clearly.

He's pleased to serve among us, and we're fortunate to have him.

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Two lectors, Chloe Kennedy and Long Christ Tatchum Nenchie, chat briefly about plans for the Triduum celebration.



A radiant family surrounds Kayla Lewoueh Donfack after her First Communion.

"I Thought I Was Her Prayer Partner"

During the funeral Mass for Ginny Clifford, Msgr. Edward Filardi listened to another priest who said that he and Ginny had been prayer partners, and joked about it. He didn't want to seem jealous, he indicated; but after all, "I thought I was her prayer partner."

Why were people cracking jokes about this serious loss? It wasn't just the pastor; everyone was pretty upbeat. Ginny wasn't dead and gone; she was just dead – and not even that, exactly. It's standard at funerals to dodge unpleasant realities with pious words: the deceased

has gone to a better place in the sky. But with Ginny, people were comfortable with reality, not dodging anything: she went home, and it's all good.

One parishioner who (who chooses to remain anonymous) related his experience with her. He wasn't a stranger to her, but neither was he a close friend; they knew each other from a distance. But when he ran into devastating family troubles – a long list of agonies, culminating in a granddaughter suffering and near death – he called Ginny. She had a reputation as a person who prayed, who knew God. The list of crushing

troubles that she faced herself was extensive; when she talked about hope amidst suffering, she knew what she was talking about. So he called, and she dropped everything to talk to him and pray with him – for three hours. You've done all you can do, she said, and it's not enough. Ask Jesus to make up the difference between what's needed and what you can do. "She's probably as close to a saint as most of us are likely to meet," he remarked.

Mary Virginia Aldrich Clifford was born January 11, 1937, in Atchison, KS. She married Jack Clifford on February 1, 1958. They

had six children and ten grandchildren. She was an active member of St. Paul, serving in a list of ways both formal and informal. She was involved in the educational programs of the parish, and was a Eucharistic minister; she was active in the parish council, Catholic Daughters, healing ministry, various charismatic groups, and social concerns. She died peacefully on January 29, 2022, in Germantown, MD.

She won't be "missed," exactly. The parish still expects her to serve faithfully.

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More St. Paul News
on Page 5

OLVP Fun for Everyone: Super Bowl Watch Party Kicks Off and BINGO is Back

By Diana Hurley

Watching the NFL Super Bowl with family and friends is an annual tradition in most homes. At Our Lady of the Visitation Parish, pastor Fr Greg Shafer invited the parish family to join together. On February 13, the first ever Super Bowl Watch Party was held in Founder's Hall which was decorated by Youth Minister Julia Jordan in both teams' colors and festive football blowups. Facilities manager Tony Glander brought in couches to create a "family room" feel. Using the new 75 inch smart TV, the game was viewed with clarity. The parish provided subs, pizza, and chicken wings for hungry fans. To add to the excitement of the evening, a Super Bowl pool was created and squares were sold in advance for a fun chance to win each quarter based on the score of



Above, parishioners come together to cheer on their favorite teams.

BINGOs return was voted a "thumbs-up," at right.

the game. Winners did not need to be present to play or win. All proceeds from the pool went to support the parish youth program. Stepping away from the halftime "show", the group went outside for a fun filled snowball fight. Parishioner Debbie Waechter attended with her husband Steve. She said of the event, "It was great to connect with friends at church and watch the game together. Great food, good company, and a hard-fought game, despite a disappointing loss for my team." No matter who you rooted for, the event was a winner and a new tradition has begun for the Parish. Anita Stiger stated, "The decorations and food were first class and rumor has it that Founders' Hall has been renamed as Party Central".

Parish BINGO returned with much enthusiasm on Saturday, March 27. A long running tradition at OLVP, but on hiatus due

to the pandemic, BINGO is sponsored jointly by the Men's Club, Women's Sodality and supported by OLVP families of Mary of Nazareth Catholic School. Parishioners young and old were happy to shout "BINGO," louder than ever. The event was taken up a notch with the upgraded BINGO technology utilizing the smart TV system. Meredith Williams, BINGO coordinator, decorated the room with BINGO ball table centerpieces and festive candy jars. Parishioners brought treats to share and pizza was available for purchase. Caller Brendan Emerson had the room laughing and awaiting his every word. Winners selected prizes that ranged from stuffed animals, home goods, the ever-popular gift cards, and a first-time cash raffle winner! Attendees voted the event as "thumbs-up".

OPT



Each Paint Party participant proudly displays their own unique piece

Paint Party Draws Out the Artists at OLVP

The Women's Sodality at Our Lady of the Visitation Parish hosted a Paint Party fundraiser on February 19, open to all women of the parish. The morning began with the Saturday 9:00 am mass. After socializing, sipping and snacking in Founder's Hall, artist Rose Marie Lonce led the women in creating their own unique piece of art. Step by step directions were given along with visual examples.



Teresa Sanwo celebrates her artwork

Participants were free to experiment with colors and techniques. The results were stunning and all one of a kind. Proceeds from this fantastic fundraiser will be used to create a prayer garden for use by the entire Parish.

The idea of the prayer garden was launched following the pass-

ing of the Women's Sodality's past prefect, Heidi Titus. Following the event, attendee Shelley Welter exclaimed, "We should do this every month!"

OPT

Technology Updates Help Parishioners Hear the Gospel

By Diana Hurley

In 2000, the Visitation Parish building and church was built with state-of-the-art technology, including hand held support devices for hearing impaired parishioners. But with the passage of time, technology has evolved. Facilities manager Tony Glander began to research updated systems.

At the beginning of 2022 Visitation Parish made available a new system entitled AudioFetch. Since more recent hearing aids now have bluetooth technology, this allows users to connect to AudioFetch's own WiFi signal and the AudioFetch app. Tony explained



Hearing support app uses Bluetooth technology and brings a smile to parishioner Matt Baker.

how successful the new system has been, increasing clarity and ease of use for many parishioners.

Also updated recently were the sound system in the main church, the Parish WiFi connectivity, and the projector screen in Founder's Hall, which was replaced with a smart TV. The new sound system has been enjoyed by the music ministers as well as parishioners enhancing the audio experience during Mass.

The Faith Formation Program has benefitted from the other technology upgrades as many of their classes use video technology. Keeping up with technology can be a challenge, but allowing the Gospel to be heard and spread is always the goal.

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Lenten Opportunities Spring Forth at OLVP

Visitation Parish is offering several new events and ministries to aid in spiritual growth as well as foster community. A first ever, Parish-wide retreat is scheduled for the weekend of March 11-13. Located at the scenic Priest Field Retreat Center in Charles Town, West Virginia, this will be an opportunity for a "Spring Cleaning" for your soul.

Led by our Pastor, Fr Greg Schaffer, 80 parishioners will immerse themselves in the natural surroundings away from the distractions of every day life. Our Lady of the Visitation has also begun two new weekly offerings:

a Men's Group and a Women's Group. These spiritual groups began the first weekend of Lent, Saturday March 5.

Parishioner Peter Geiling heads up the Men's Group, which is known as the "The Upper Room" based on Acts 1:13-14. This group meets every Saturday at 7:30 am for coffee and donuts. They have a presentation as well as time to talk.

The format of the weekly women's group begins with the 9:00am mass, then continues with a social and discussion. Mary Lynda Harrigan and Janet Scanlon are getting the group started with a 5-week Lenten program focused on prayer.

Visitation Parish is also continuing its tradition of Lenten weekly Stations of the Cross on Friday nights at 6:30pm in the church.

OPT

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 301-948-5536
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Building Bridges in Science Class

By Megan Mullally, Science Teacher

In science, students have been investigating different types of bridges through a variety of hands-on experiments and projects. To start the unit, students were given a challenge to create a bridge out of two pieces of paper that could hold the most pennies. Since learning from our mistakes and prototypes is an essential part of the engineering design process, after the group's bridge collapsed, students were given an opportunity to assess and redesign the bridge. While everyone was successful, a few bridges held weight equivalent to over 1,000 pennies!

Students have also been investigating what shapes are the strongest. Using plastic beams, screws, and bolts, they have created triangles, squares, pentagons, and more. Each shape was tested for stability and strengthened by adding more beams.

All of these experiments and activities have led up to students building their own bridges. Through the engineering process, they have discovered what shapes, materials, and types of bridges are the most successful. In small groups, they have learned about compression, tension, and deflection.

The culmination of these weeks of work was designing a bridge using beams, screws, bolts, and wire that can hold the most weight.



Fifth-grade students at The Woods Academy have been building bridges both figuratively and literally since returning in the new year.

Our strongest bridge was able to hold almost 20 pounds suspended from the roadway!

In advisory, students are encouraged to build figurative bridges through the connections that they make with their classmates. Since returning to school in the new year, we have been focusing on respect, inspiring others, and communication. Through these themes, students have examined how teamwork and positive actions promote individual and group success.

OPT

Celebrating Mardi Gras in French Class

By Jocelyn MacDonald, French Teacher

French students in grade 1-8 enjoyed Mardi Gras celebration

The children took so much pleasure in this special holiday, especially eating the King's cake. We spent time learning about the meaning behind Mardi Gras and French vocabulary. Mardi Gras is a festival that originates from Louisiana and Alabama, from when both were a part of the French colony La Nouvelle France



Above and below, students in grades 1-8 at The Woods celebrated Mardi Gras on March 1st in French Class.



starting in the late 1600s. In other parts of the world, the holiday is referred to as le Carnaval. It is celebrated the day before Ash Wednesday. Mardi Gras is the French term for "Fat Tuesday" and is a day when people indulge in things that they will be giving up for Lent, which starts the following day.

Celebrating French traditions and culture in the classroom really helps to make our classrooms come alive and true joy was felt through the celebration. The students were excited to look for le bébé in the gâteau des rois and were thrilled to receive their beads and coins.

OPT

Who Was Eloise Greenfield?

By Capri Coleman, second-grade teacher

The Woods Academy second graders were asked "Who was Eloise Greenfield?" They researched and reported their findings this past month.

Eloise Greenfield was born May 17, 1929 and died August 5, 2021. She was an African-American children's book author. She is very famous for her descriptive, rhythmic style and positive portrayal of the African American experience. Eloise Greenfield books include, *Honey I love*, *Daydreamers*, *In the Land of Words*, *Talk About a Family*, *The great Migration*, *Grandpa's Face*, and many, many more. Second grade honored her by recreating some of her book covers. Mrs. Greenfield was a wonderful author and will truly be missed.



Above and at right, second-grade students at The Woods Academy enjoyed researching Eloise Greenfield and the legacy she left behind.



OPT

The Woods Academy

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OUTREACH

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Soon a group of some 15 parishioners used the donated bread to make the sandwiches. Over the past 18 months, this group has grown to about 40 regular volunteers, who provide between 400 and 600 sandwiches each week, as well as apples and protein bars, to SOME, the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, and Shepherd's Table. Since inception the Sandwich Ministry has provided approximately 50,000 sandwiches

OPT

to the homeless.

The volunteers with SOME and the new Sandwich Ministry enjoy working with SOME, Shepherd's Table and the other service organizations, developing long-term friendships with the wonderful staff at these organizations. The staff has great respect for the guests that they serve and appreciate the long-term commitment of the parish volunteers. Those wishing to join in these ongoing volunteer efforts can contact Maria Cornelius at 301-613-6991 mariacornelius@gmail.com.

FIELD TRIPS

Con't from page 14

COVID restrictions almost all field trip plans were halted. But with restrictions being lifted, field trips have made their triumphant return to De Chantal!

In late February, seventh-grade students and teachers spent a day at the National Aquarium in Baltimore. This interactive field trip included an opportunity to dissect squid, observe aquatic life, and walk through "Shark Alley." The day ended with students being

drenched with "marine" water from a splash by Puff the dolphin.

In-school assemblies were also brought back to life. The younger grades got a visit from NBC4's chief local meteorologist, Doug Krammerer. The students had a great time at the assembly! They learned all about different types of weather in the state of Maryland and all about being a meteorologist. First-grader Boden Brandaleone was called on and showed his classmates how to be a "Maryland tornado." Doug even took a few pictures to share them on the evening news broadcast!

OPT

Catholic Schools Week

At left, Leadership 8 students collect canned goods for the "Souper" Bowl during CSW.



Above, Pride the Lion surprises Mercy's "pawsome" parents with a treat during CSW.



At left, students show their Mercy spirit during Catholic Schools Week.

Mercy Staff Find Ways to Support the Greater Teaching Community

We are so proud of the many ways our teachers and staff provide support to professionals in our community. Nurse Amanda Williams has been mentoring student nurses who are training to be school nurses. Pat Sharp, Mercy's science teacher, designed the Science section of the Scantron exam which is used to qualify low-income children in Catholic Schools for BOOST scholarships. PreK 4 teachers, Alli Richardson and Bridget VanEgmond have welcomed teachers from another local Catholic school who were looking for techniques on how to best provide an inclusive academic environment. These teachers came to observe how Mercy includes students with intellectual disabilities in the PreK 4 classroom.

Jeanne Dwyer, Mercy's Director of Resource and Learning Support

is serving on a state-wide commission to improve access to technology for all adults and children, particularly those with disabilities. This Technology First Council will guide the development of the Maryland Technology First Initiative, establishing a system of support for people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities so that access to and use of Assistive Technology becomes a priority when evaluating needs for community supports and independence.

Many other Mercy teachers have continued to mentor high school students from area Catholic high schools in teaching careers and techniques. Our staff considers it a privilege and a responsibility to support and guide the next generation of Catholic educators.

OPT

Mrs. Christine Green to Become Full-Time Assistant Principal

Mrs. Christine Green will assume the position of full-time assistant principal effective August 2022. After much discernment, she has decided that this is how she can best share her extensive talents with the entire OLOM community. Her focus in this new role will include: further development of Mercy's educational extension program for students who need academic challenge; identify and manage specific professional development for faculty, oversight of our middle school program (grades 5 – 8), instructional support, and extensive input into our building

program via facility improvement. Additionally, Mrs. Green's ability to focus full-time on administrative issues will have a great positive impact on other initiatives such as Mercy's plans for a new Makerspace, more after school and embedded electives, and an examination of our reading and math series. Mrs. Green has generously served as both a teacher and administrator for seven years, and Mercy has been blessed by her work in both areas. She will continue to teach Leadership Seminar to grades 7 & 8 and teach Study Skills to grade 6.

OPT

MPTO Events are Back on the Calendar!

As we slowly come out of the pandemic, community events are excitedly being scheduled for the Spring! Mercy's PTO is moving forward with several of our most beloved events including the Father-Daughter dance and Mother-Son event. Our band concert will be held on May 18, and we will be holding the Mercy Art Expo on June 1-2 to highlight the incredible talent and cre-

ativity of Mercy students. The school and parish community will come together for a community celebration and summer send-off the weekend of June 4-5. This weekend of festivities will start with a spaghetti dinner on Friday, June 3, followed by the 2nd Annual Mercy 5K Run/Walk on Saturday and then the Pentecost Picnic on Sunday.

OPT



Father Joe teaches Mercy's PreK 3 students about Holy Water.

Bienvenidos a Mercy!

We are blessed to have been able to welcome two wonderful Spanish teachers to cover for Sra. Ana Oyonarte who will be on maternity leave this Spring. Mrs. Julia Zaera-Meade, a native Spanish speaker, developed the Spanish program at a neighboring Catholic school from an optional extended day activity to a vigorous academic program. She is well-versed in the area Catholic high school requirements for Spanish language study. She has offered to join us, although she retired in August,

out of generosity and concern for students at this difficult time.

Mrs. Monique Briend-Walker will be substituting as the Spanish teacher in grades K – 6. Mrs. Briend-Walker, also retired, is rejoining the teaching profession out of love and concern for children during the pandemic.

Mrs. Briend-Walker is fluent in multiple languages and taught various languages in grades K-12 for many years. She is an experienced catechist for children with disabilities, and also has training in remedial reading techniques.

OPT

Summer Learning at Mercy

The warm summer days are not as far off as they seem! Mercy's Summer Spectrum will be returning in full form, and better than ever. In addition to the popular academic and art classes, we are excited to be launching a Sports Camp for the first time! Flag football, volleyball, street hockey and more!

OPT

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D Engel, Principal
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Dress Like a Teacher Day



Above, Msgr. Charles Antonicelli and Fr. Joe Cwik are happy to be joined by this Mercy student during CSW Dress Like a Teacher day!

At right, Mercy's Coach Knecht was a popular pick on Dress Like a Teacher day!



OPT

A Recycled Masterpiece

By Alex Guarini, eighth grade

Walking down the hallway, you may notice a colorful surprise on the library's windows. Mrs. Guarini and her eighth-grade Reading students have been recycling sticky notes to make a beautiful collage. The sticky notes were used to annotate the novels the students read in Literature Circles, and instead of discarding them into the recycling bin once no longer needed, they are using them to produce a picture on the library's windows. "I love the idea of recycling classwork to make a work of art for all to enjoy," commented Mrs. Guarini.

The first image they produced was of a bumblebee. First, Mrs. Guarini and her Reading group browsed the internet for a pixelated image to use as a model-pixel art is



creating art using small squares. Next, they assessed which colors they had to work with and sorted them into respective piles- and substituted colors where needed. Following that, Mrs. Guarini and her students measured the windows and used math to determine how the artwork would fit. Finally, they planned the image. Day by day, the eighth-grade students worked on a section at a time, and eventually their work of art (composed of 576 sticky notes) was complete...much to the delight of younger students who had been monitoring the progress daily. Mrs. Guarini and her students are currently at work on another piece of pixel art for the spring.

Perhaps it will "bee" even better, but there sure has been a lot of "buzz" about this first piece of recycled art.

OPT



The sixth-grade class researched and assembled timelines of Black Americans who have made significant contributions to science and medicine. Students enjoyed recognizing some names and learning many new ones.



Clergy Appreciation Day

Members of the SGA expressed words of appreciation for our parish priests and deacons. They presented ornaments and plaques inscribed with the "Irish Blessing."

We Love Catholic Schools Week

From Jan 31-Feb 4, 2022, St. Patrick's School celebrated their school community during the annual "Catholic Schools Week." There were themed days, dress-down days, and lots of fun activities. The week kicked off with Parent Appreciation Day. Members of the HSA and SGA presented the parents in the drop-off line with donuts and students were granted a homework-free evening.

For Student Appreciation Day, students dressed in clothing from all decades and enjoyed musical selections from 1950-2020 to celebrate



Teachers were presented with a special framed gift which reflected input from their students describing their many attributes.

many different genres of music. Grades PK-fourth grade enjoyed an afternoon movie and snacks while the older students enjoyed some extra recess time and classroom board games. Of course, there was no homework for the students! On Wednesday, all attended our weekly liturgy and members of the SGA thanked our priests and deacons for their guidance and inspiration.

The Home and School Association declared Thursday as Teacher Appreciation Day and

asked all students to dress as superheroes in honor of the teachers who are real-life heroes for the school community. Teachers were presented with a special framed gift which reflected input from their students describing their many attributes.

The week concluded with a focus on the greater community. All students participated in a service project to create care packages for a nearby homeless shelter.

OPT

WINDOWS

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behind them as they worship during church services through the floor-to-ceiling glass wall separating them from the main church.

Like the other planned windows, the Guardian Angel window was crafted by Associated Crafts & Willet Hauser Architectural Glass of Winona, MN. Founded in 1898, the firm designed the Great Sanctuary window in the Cadet Chapel at the United States Military Academy in West Point, NY as well as windows in the National Cathedral and the National Presbyterian Church in Washington DC; St. John the Divine Cathedral and the chapel at the United Nations in New York; and Grace and St. Mary's Cathedrals in San Francisco, CA.

Other saints who will be depicted in forthcoming stained-glass

windows include French saints: St. Martin, St. Louis of France, Saint Joan of Arc, and St. Therese, and American figures include Servants of God: Emil Kapuan, Augustus Tolton, Mary Virginia Merrick, Blessed Stanley Rother, Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. Saint Jane Frances de Chantal appears next, inviting parishioners to join the procession.

The stained-glass window project will transform the appearance of the church. The project, which is projected to cost \$450,000, is one part of the Forever de Chantal Campaign. Other projects include a new turf field for the school and a renovation of the lower lever meeting spaces below the church. The three aspects of the campaign were designed to support the three goals of our Children, our Church and our Community.

OPT

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St. Patrick's School

Ms. Christie Anne Short,
Principal

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Parish Editor

New Volunteer Needed
Contact rectory to apply

CELEBRATIONS

Con't from page 15

ers in various ways: canned food collections for local pantries, baby item collections for Shady Grove Pregnancy Center and the Gabriel Project, and helping those in need.

During our Ash Wednesday school Mass, Father James taught the students about the forty days of Lent and how they can focus on

prayer, almsgiving, and service. He asked the students to pray daily, do a small act of kindness for someone daily, and to pick something to abstain from daily. As we reflect on the sacrifices that Jesus made for us during the forty days of Lent, let us also reflect on the small sacrifices we all make for one another. Let's honor our fellow humans by practicing patience and kindness throughout the Lenten season and remembering the less fortunate in our prayers and actions.

OPT

Celebrating Black History Month

By Robin Vanderpool

Like other school communities across America, Saint Peter's students celebrated Black History Month in February. One specific activity included fourth and fifth graders in Ms. Morgan Duffy's Social Studies classes researching and writing a report on notable African Americans. Each student was asked to investigate important dates and landmarks, childhood and adult milestones, and professional achievements for their assigned African American leader and write an accompanying report that summarized what they learned about the individual.

For example, fifth grader Shaw Vanderpool researched the life and accomplishments of John Lewis, a civil rights leader who served in Congress representing the state of Georgia for 17 terms until his death in 2020. When asked about the assignment, Shaw commented: "It was really interesting to learn about John Lewis' dedication to public service, his friendship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his involvement in the March on Washington in 1963. I am glad that my classmates and I were able to learn more about African American leaders and Black History Month."

David Duggan, a fourth grader,

reported on Jackie Robinson, the first African American to play in Major League Baseball in the modern era. The significance of Jackie Robinson's trailblazing career is highlighted by the fact that the number 42 has been retired across all MLB teams. David shared that he "really liked learning about Jackie Robinson, especially all of his personal and professional achievements such as serving in the military, winning the World Series

with the Dodgers in 1955, and his commitment to civil rights." Both Shaw and David noted that their

assigned notable African Americans were awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.



Top left and right, Ms. Duffy's fourth-grade students proudly show their "My Biography Research" reports on notable African Americans.



At left, Ms. Duffy's fifth-grade students standing in front of their class "Histogram", Instagram-like profiles of notable African Americans.

In reflecting on the assignment, Ms. Duffy commented, "During the month of February I try to share with my students the many ways that African Americans have significantly influenced our society. Many of our students know about certain individuals like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Vice President Kamala Harris, but individuals like Arthur Ashe, Mae Jemison, Wilma Rudolph, and so many more also deserve the recognition and credit for transforming our society in such a positive way."

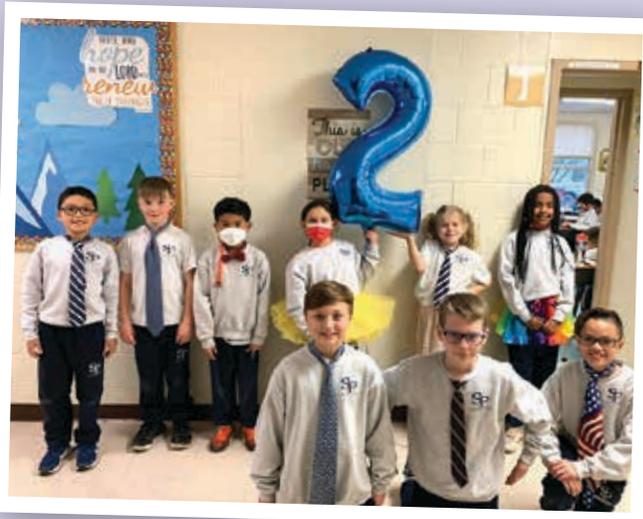
OPT

A Terrific TWOSday

It was impossible to let a day like 2-22-22, go by without a grand celebration at Saint Peter's School. The school celebrated with trivia, treats, and themed-scavenger hunts throughout the day. Students wore tutus, ties, and tennis shoes, while teachers enjoyed a tasty taco bar and \$2 scratch off tickets. And finally, at 2:22pm, 22 student names were drawn for a brand new \$2 bill. The day was full of just plain FUN!" said Mrs. MaryJo O'Keefe, the "TwosDay" Committee chairperson.

"There was so much joy and energy in the school throughout the day, which served as another reminder about the great spirit that we have as a community!" said Principal Vincent Spadoni

OPT



Students participate in a new program, Panthers Dancers, where they are introduced to different dance techniques.

After School Dance Class Gets Kids Moving

by Jane Bornborst

Every Monday, a group of K through fifth-grade girls and boys stay after school to dance with the Panthers Dancers at Saint Peter's School in Olney. "It's nonstop moving. There's no sitting down," laughs Mrs. Cron, middle school language arts teacher and parent at Saint. Peter's.

The youngsters have a great time and move their bodies, which is the goal, she says. "Some kids aren't into sports, so I want them to have an outlet where they're moving and healthy," she says. "Of course, some of them like both sports and dance!"

Mrs. Cron founded and taught a similar program at St. Jane Frances de Chantal School for 15 years before coming to Saint Peter's in

2021.

The Panthers stretch using ballet techniques and dance in the pop and

Continued on page 32



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More St. Peter's News on Page 32

St. Michael the Archangel Sodality Honors Our Blessed Mother

By Cynthia Lewis

In honor of Our Blessed Mother Mary, St. Michael the Archangel Sodality will usher in the month of May by hosting the 73rd Annual Sodality Communion Brunch on Sunday, May 1, at 3:00 p.m.

The event will be held virtually for the second year and will proudly feature as the guest speaker Father Robert Boxie, III. Father Boxie is chaplain at Howard University and the priest-in-residence at Immaculate Conception parish. The brunch will feature Marian hymns and liturgical dance to pay tribute

to Our Lady with Sodalists and parishioners gathered to witness to her loving care and powerful intercession.

The Sodality motto is "To Jesus through Mary." The popular Sodality Communion Brunch is one way the Sodality helps to promote Marian spirituality in the parish. Those who register will be offered various donation levels to select from as a contribution to this parish fundraiser. The Sodality is guided by our Moderator and pastor, Monsignor Eddie Tolentino, and Prefect Ingrid Denis. **OPT**



Sodality member Janice Hamilton Outtz presents socks from the Sodality to Knights of Columbus Grand Knight David Bludis.

The Sodality Joins the Knights of Columbus in "Socks for Souls"

By Janice Hamilton Outtz

St. Michael the Archangel Sodality was honored to join with St. Michael's Knights of Columbus (Council 15084) in the recent "Socks for Souls" Drive. When the announcement went out to our parishioners, the Sodality thought it was a great opportunity

to join with the Knights and parishioners of our parish to contribute to the efforts. Socks are the number one requested and least donated item in homeless shelters.

The Sodality was pleased to donate more than 100 pairs of socks for women and men. The campaign will continue until mid-March. **OPT**

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It pays to
advertise in
Our Parish Times

How to Orient Myself?

Avalon's Mapcrafting Summer Camp Helped Me Better Understand the World

By Gil McPberson, Avalon teacher

In the summer of 2021, Avalon offered its first MapCrafters camp. Maps had become a new fascination of mine, and I wanted to share this fascination with students at our school. I called the ever-learned and energetic Mr. Oriani to ask if he would join me in my quest and away we went! It was a grand adventure. We made traditional and fantasy maps. I found both to be wonderfully worthwhile exercises. Here is what I learned from our time together:

Traditional cartography forces one to observe a place in an uncommonly comprehensive way and, naturally, this deepens his awareness of the world around him. Mapping an already familiar few acres of forest helps one notice things he might have previously overlooked: trees oddly clumped together, strange windings of creeks, the unevenness of terrains, etc. A first-time cartographer quickly realizes that the land he thought he knew well is actually wondrously unknown to him.

This is true for larger areas as well. A Washington, D.C. native mapping the city for the first time would be astonished by how much he discovers. He would almost certainly find neighborhoods, monuments, museums, theaters, and who knows what else, that were previously unknown! Through drawing maps, what is normally overlooked becomes seen and one can even discover his own home anew.

In a different way, drawing fantasy maps also helps one see what is often overlooked. If the artist



wants to draw a river, he must be able to give a geological explanation as to why a river would form where he has drawn it. The same goes for mountains, lakes, peninsulas, volcanos, etc. Thus, counter-intuitively, drawing a make-believe world encourages the map-maker to learn the geological nature of the real world in a deeper way. The often overlooked marvel of how our world forms becomes more familiar.

Similarly, fantasy maps encourage one to ponder real anthropological questions. The fantasy map-maker must be able to explain why a civilization would build a city in one place and not another. He needs to be able to give a historical context as to why certain areas of a kingdom he has drawn are more

developed than others. He must consider what foods a civilization would survive on and the goods upon which its economy would be built. Again, the map-maker is forced to know the real world in an uncommonly comprehensive way in order to make a convincing fantasy world.

The amazing result of drawing both kinds of maps is an explosion of wonder. It is a paradoxical art. The more one builds fantasy worlds, the more he appreciates the real one. The more one maps the real world, the more fantastic it appears. It was clear that our campers felt this wonder themselves, and I look forward to cultivating their wonder for years to come and at the camp this summer. **OPT**

ST MARY CSW

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wanted to be when they grew up. The halls were filled with doctors, nurses, karate instructors, ballerinas, coaches, police officers and dozens of other career-related costumes. Students learned about different jobs, the career paths required, and the responsibilities that go along with various positions. Wednesday honored those that choose vocations and students came to school dressed as their favorite saints. Saint Mary's held an All School Benediction in the afternoon. The next day, Thursday, was a well-deserved celebration of our amazing teachers! Students came to school dressed as their favorite teacher or storybook character. It was fun to see the students honor the staff in such a creative way. Students and teachers were treated to some ice cream in the afternoon. Friday, the end of our Catholic



Career Day was a hit! So many jobs, so little time!

Schools Week, celebrated all of our wonderful families with an All School Mass and early dismissal. Friday night, students and families enjoyed a virtual movie night, snacking on candy and popcorn that were purchased from Saint Mary's.

Catholic Schools Week was a

wonderful experience, honoring all of the amazing members of our Saint Mary's Community with special days. We are so fortunate to be surrounded by such dedicated members of our congregation. **OPT**

Tragedy in Our Community



View of Friendly Garden Apartment fire from Lyttonsville Park

By Liz Weiss, parishioner and member of Social Concerns Commission

On Thursday March 3 at about 10:30 AM a large explosion occurred at Friendly Garden Apartments in Silver Spring. Fourteen people were hurt, 3 critically injured. Many of the residents are immigrants or elderly. This was affordable housing. I went outside about 10:40 AM and smelled smoke. When I turned around, I saw a huge grey cloud of smoke billowing over the neighborhood park.

My son and I walked up to Lyttonsville Park, we heard siren after siren. We called our friend who lives in an apartment in that direction. No answer. We called another friend nearby and she said that the man and his daughter got out and were ok. Other friends from our Christ the King Church community were evacuated from their buildings. They are thankful they were not home when it happened. They are now without a home. Luckily, they are now living with relatives temporarily. They are no longer allowed in their building because it was across from the explosion. They will have many needs.

Christ the King has been able to provide food. Other friends are helping until the county or other organizations can provide greater help. Please keep the 100+ displaced people in your prayers. Montgomery Housing Partners has been collecting money to help those residents. If you would like to donate, their website is: mhppartners.org.

OPT



Christ the King Ash Wednesday Mass led by Father Steve, pastor

Lenten Season Begins

By Liz Weiss, parishioner

On Wednesday March 2, we began Lent. Every year, we reflect on our own faith during this time. We pray, fast and give alms. Father Steve gave a wonderful suggestion for many of us in his homily at Friday Mass. He noted how many of us give up food or something we like for Lent. He mentioned that maybe we could give up our “time.” He gave examples like helping at the soup kitchen, delivering meals to others, helping the homeless, reaching out to homebound and those less fortunate. Christ has reminded us to help others. The words of the Servant song ring true:

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too. We are pilgrims on a journey, we are travelers on the road; we are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.”

Let’s follow Jesus’s example and help someone in need this Lent.

OPT

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OPT Editor

“Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?”

Women who have enacted a feminine style of holiness

On March 7 and 8, 2022, the Catholic University of Ávila (UCAV), in collaboration with the Pontifical Urbaniana University and the Institute for Advanced Studies on Women of the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum in Rome, organized an International Inter-University Conference on Women Doctors of the Church and Patron Saints of Europe: Teresa of Jesus, Teresa of Lisieux, Hildegard of Bingen, vBridget of Sweden, Catherine of Siena and Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Professor Gabriella Gambino, Undersecretary of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life, opened the meeting by addressing an introductory greeting to the participants. Gambino explained that one of the objectives of the meeting is to “gather the still fruitful legacy of these extraordinary women of the Church, who, although they lived in very different eras, continue to irrigate the world with the gifts of the divine Spirit and in a surprising way have much to suggest and reveal to the women and men of our time.”

Women who, through their intimate and profound love for Christ and their industrious action in the service of the Church and society, have known how to link the earth



to Heaven.

A holiness with a feminine face, manifested in the “perennial authority of their doctrine, which extends beyond the confines of the Catholic Church” and which was expressed in historical circumstances and geographical contexts that make them, especially today, decisive figures for the European continent: to inspire young people, so that they may know how to make the dialogue within the Church and with the world fruitful in order to build a culture and an ethic of unity and peace.

In his Message to the participants in attendance and online the Holy Father urged everyone to “promote this ‘feminine holiness’ which

makes the Church and the world so fruitful,” stressing that “the preeminent teachings of these saints, for which they were declared Doctors or Patronesses of the Church, are particularly timely due to their enduring depth and relevance and, in the present circumstances, can offer light and hope to our fragmented and fractious world.”

The proceeds of the event will be donated to three institutions of Latin, Greek-Melkite and Maronite rite for the literacy of girls in Lebanon.

Source: Vatican Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life

OPT

How to respond to the progress of bioethics?

Pope Francis responds with an appeal to defend life

In his March video, the Holy Father faces the new challenges that bioethics poses to today’s world and addresses an invitation to ensure that in the face of them “we always promote the defense of life with prayer and social action.” The video on the challenges of bioethics was made with the collaboration of the Pontifical Academy for Life.

How to think about bioethics giving a Christian answer?

Nobody can deny the prog-

ress of bioethics in the last few decades. This relatively new discipline is dedicated, among other things, to orienting and reflecting on problematic situations that pose economic, social, ecological, ethical, biomedical or biotechnological challenges. The Holy Father exhorts us not to slow down the progress brought about by bioethics and to “not hide” from its fields of action and research.

Continued on page 32



Stepping into Black History Month

Each February, St. Bartholomew school celebrates Black History Month during February with a variety of interesting and vibrant activities. In addition to lessons and projects across subjects and grades, students also had the opportunity to engage in unique experiences and cultural presentations starting with a lesson in step dancing! Khlover Brown, the owner and director of Khloverleaf Dance Academy, began the assembly with the origins of stepping and its cultural significance.

Boys and girls quickly learned simple steps then put together a quick routine, which later evolved into a spirited dance-off, incorporating step dance, break dance, tumbling, and cheer between the fifth through eighth grades.

Throughout the month students in all grades learned about not only influential African Americans, but also about the importance of inclusion, diversity, and bravery.



Pre-K students demonstrate inclusion and love for all brothers and sisters.

First graders focused on how regular people just like us CAN and DO change the world. Inspired by the story of Ruby Bridges, a first grader just like them, students shared stories of bravery, character, and taking risks to make change for the better starting at home and school.

Moving up to fifth grade, students read *Hidden Figures*, the story of how four African American women excelling in math paved the way for NASA space exploration of the 1960's and 70's. This tied in nicely with sixth through eighth grades research on notable Black scientists, which they shared with schoolmates in an elaborate timeline to grace the hallways.

OPT

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An Emotional Goodbye and a Warm Welcome at St. Bartholomew Parish

At a packed noon Mass on February 27, St. Bartholomew's Pastor, Reverend Mark Knestout, bid a fond farewell to his congregation. In January, Father Knestout announced that Cardinal Wilton Gregory had assigned him to take a position as Attaché at the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations in New York City. Having been personally requested by the Nuncio, also known as the Vatican Ambassador, Father Knestout will assist with work at the United Nations and oversee several large projects, in addition to serving as Executive Director of the Path to Peace Foundation.

In his goodbye Mass, an emotional Father Knestout thanked the congregation for the gift of its faith and the example it has given him. Speaking with slow, purposeful words, he told the congregation that the church offers opportunities to take new paths. Father Knestout also remarked that it is not a coincidence that the day's second reading from First Corinthians included the language, "Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

At the conclusion of the Mass, the choir sang its Pastor off in style, with custom lyrics set to the tune of *New York, New York*. Much of the parish attended a goodbye lunch and reception immediately following Mass.

With about a half month under



Reverend Mark Knestout says his final Mass as Pastor at St. Bartholomew.

his belt, St. Bartholomew's new Pastor, Reverend Mark Smith, says he is enjoying getting to know the St. Bart's community.

"It's really been pretty amazing," says Father Smith. "I've found people to be incredibly welcoming and I felt at home right away."

Father Smith, who comes to St. Bartholomew after spending eight years at Holy Redeemer Parish in

College Park, says he immediately felt the spirit and culture created by Father Knestout during his time at the parish. Father Smith says he's particularly excited to see the explosive growth of the Parish School in the last two years. "It makes me excited to see what we can do as a community to keep that going forward and build on it."

OPT

St. Peter

DANCE CLASS

Con't from page 29

jazz styles, with elements of musical theater choreography mixed in. At the end of the eight-week program, the students perform in a showcase for their families, dancing to songs like "Hard Knock Life" from the musical *Annie* and Disney movie favorites.

The dance program is offered every quarter for K-5, and Panther Dancers Pro is available for middle schoolers during part of the year.

Second grader Quinn Burrirt loves being a part of the troupe. "We get to stay after school and listen to 'We Don't Talk About Bruno,' and we dance and we laugh," she says. "Mrs. Cron is really nice and she's a really good dancer."

Mrs. Cron says it is one of her favorite parts of teaching. "They're the cutest kids ever. The class is a ray of sunshine in my week. It's a really fun way to show your Panther pride."

OPT

Students Give Back



At left, Saint Peter's 8th graders took part in a service project to support those suffering from hunger in our area. They hosted a food collection and assembled 664 breakfast bags. The bags were delivered to So Others Might Eat and to St. Thomas Catholic Academy in Washington, D.C.

At right, a Coins for Change Challenge was held during Catholic Schools Week to support two charities chosen by Father Kalita, So Others Might Eat and St. Paul's Clinic in Honduras. The challenge resulted in 737.7 pounds of change, or \$5,814.81! Special thanks to Sandy Spring Bank, Gaithersburg Branch, for counting the change.



RELICS

Con't from page 11

forcing the Gospel message that God is here right now and desires to be encountered. He touches us through the lives and the remains of His Saints. God does not disappoint and is always with us. There are healings. Though a great number of miracles have been physical, the most spectacular is the healing of faith where a new and deeper relationship with God is formed in

the faithful.

Monsignor Panke called the exhibit, "a beautiful work of grace for the parish," and Father Stefan Yap reminded us that the exhibit is "a chance to find a new saint friend." People brought rosaries, prayer cards, statues, and other religious items to become third-class relics of their own gained by touching their item(s) to the relic.

The Holy Father has issued a plenary indulgence for all attendees of the exposition.

OPT

BIOETHICS

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Francis asks Christians to "promote the defense of life" through "prayer" – which remains the center of the intentions proposed each month by the Pope and relaunched by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network through the Pope's Video and the Click To Pray app – but also through "social action." Christians, in fact, have the task of participating in the public debate by making their voices heard: with suitable

language and understandable arguments in the current social context – as the Holy Father recently reminded the Pontifical Academy for Life – but without watering down the content and always reiterating the need for integral human development.

The English-language edition of the video may be viewed at: www.laityfamilylife.va/content/laityfamilylife/en/news/notizie.html

Source: Vatican Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life

OPT

Prepare for the Suffering of Our Lord



First Penance

Father Kevin and DRE/Teacher Liz Smith, gather with First Penance children after the ceremony. Afterwards, a delicious Feast of Pardon was provided for the children and families.



Shrove Tuesday

Above left, the Kavanagh Family enjoy the farm fresh eggs, local sausage, and fluffy pancakes for Mardi Gras.

Above right, Chef Robert prepares awesome pancakes for Mardi Gras on Shrove Tuesday.



Cup of Joe

Above assembly line of Youth Group and Confirmation Candidates successfully packed 300 breakfast treats for those in Homeless Shelters of the Archdiocese of Washington.



Vocation Tree

Above, members of the Confirmation class in an effort to increase prayer opportunities, selected a seminary to pray for during Lent.



Fish Dinner

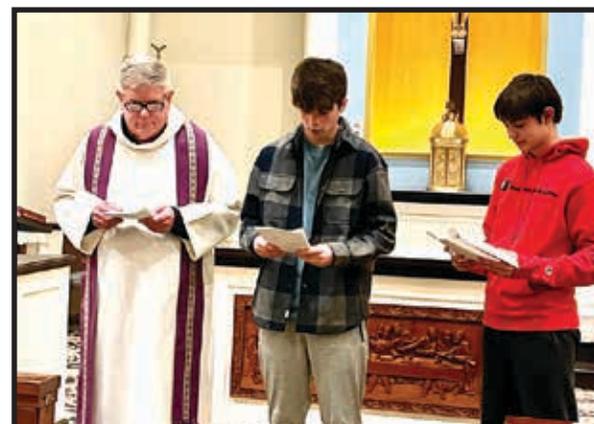
Above, Fr. Kevin joins a parishioners and neighbors for the first Lenten Fish Dinner. Dinner is prepared skillfully each Friday by the Knights of Our Lady of Fatima Council.



At left, Dedicated Knights of Our Lady of Fatima Council excited once again to be cooking a delicious Fish Dinner for the Fridays in Lent.

Donations

At right, Sean Rice-Schofield brainstormed different ways he could help others. He heard that Homeless individuals were always in need of clean socks. Sean spoke with Fr. Kevin and requested permission to start a Sock Drive. He will gather socks throughout Lent and deliver them to the Frederick Mission.



Stations of the Cross

Above, Father Kevin, Caleb Bodmer, and Shane Lawler lead the Stations of the Cross each week.



Lenten and Easter Crafts

At right, Alicia Casella helps her daughter Chloe create beautiful Lenten crafts.

At left, Presley and Mason Smith worked diligently on every Lenten craft which was offered. They went home with many activities to enhance their Lenten preparation.



St. Mary's Faith Community began their preparation for the death of Jesus on Ash Wednesday. We will use these forty day-time periods to reflect, renew our faith and observe our religious practices, all leading to the Passion and Death of our Lord on Good Friday. The three practices of Lent are Alms, Fasting, and Prayer. Although, the parish actively engages in these practices throughout the year, the Lenten season provides us with an opportunity to increase our efforts.

Our Youth Group and Confirmation Candidates in an

effort to give Alms resumed their participation in the program "Cup of Joe." The program is a breakfast pack program serving the men and women at Catholic Charities' homeless shelters throughout the Archdiocese of Washington. Members of the parish are also gathering monetary and material donations for the people of Ukraine and our Twinning Parish in Carcass, Haiti.

Weekly, Fish Dinners prepared by the Knights from Our Lady of Fatima Council, are served to members of the community and parishioners. Delicious crab cakes

are painstakingly prepared by Lady Knight Pat Chmelik. Following dinner, many journey to Stations of the Cross led by Father Kevin and members of the Youth Group. Father Kevin, Shane Lawler, and Caleb Bodmer read the words of Christ's Passion at each Station. Anna Porch accompanied her sister Cara, our cantor, on the organ.

The first Sunday in Lent, at our monthly Youth Sunday mass, the seventh-grade students read the Word and the younger children led the congregation in song from the altar. From the choir loft, St. Mary's student cantor and musicians

assisted. The Vocation Tree in the Sanctuary contained dozens of tags with names of young men on the path to priesthood. Confirmation Candidates have each selected a seminary for whom to pray for during Lent.

Following mass, the Pavilion was a-buzz with activities for Lent which created an environment of faith and service.

The children were provided a variety of Lent and Easter crafts. The craft theme offered a spiritual reflection to assist the children on their path through Lent. The children had a wonderful time during

these activities. Donut Sunday coincided, and is always a special treat! The last sweet for those giving up sweets for Lent.

OPT

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Congrats to SRS Boys' Varsity Basketball team for ending their 2021-22 season with a huge win and gold trophy!

St. Raphael CYO Basketball brings home Trophy

By Gabriela Herrera Gugiu

After two years without organized youth basketball, St. Raphael 7/8 grade boys' CYO tournament team, coached by John Henderson and Thomas Pullano, came out in full force winning the CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) Tournament Championship on February 26 by defeating St. Barts. In addition, the St. Raphael 7/8 grade boys' tour-

namment team, coached by Chris Connors, was runner-up in their championship game against Mary of Nazareth.

The 7/8 grade girls' Mid-Atlantic team, coached by Joe Roach and Mike Mussio, won their Holy Cross tournament against a variety of local, parish teams in a round-robin competition. Congratulations to all our players and coaches.

OPT

Lent at SRS

The Ash Wednesday Mass tradition marked the start of Lent at St. Raphael School. "May Lent 2022 be a season of grace for you and all of your loved ones beginning today and lasting throughout the entire season," said Washington Cardinal Wilton Gregory on March 2. "Our hearts need to be refashioned and turned more directly toward God and, in merciful charity, towards one another."

Far from Kyiv, St. Raphael School keeps Ukraine close in prayer as Lent begins.

OPT

Upcoming Events

Girls' Night Out

Girls Night Out is back this year, and is all about fabulous. You are invited to join the ladies of St. Raphael for a wonderful night out on Wednesday 3/16 from 7 - 10

p.m. There will be lots of tasty treats along with drinks, raffles and take-home treasures!

Spring Soiree and Online Auction

Ticket sales for the 2022 Spring Soiree are now available! Be sure to book your babysitter and make your way to Rock Creek Mansion on Saturday April 2. Registration will close on Friday March 25, but if you register before Girls Night Out, you will be entered to win either a \$50 gift card to Summer House Restaurant or a \$50 gift card to Pinstripes.

Frozen Jr. Play

The SRS Performing Arts Department is proud to present "Frozen Jr." Performances will be held on Friday, April 8 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, April 9 at 2 p.m. Tickets, ads, shout-outs, frozengrams, and DVDs are now on sale!

OPT

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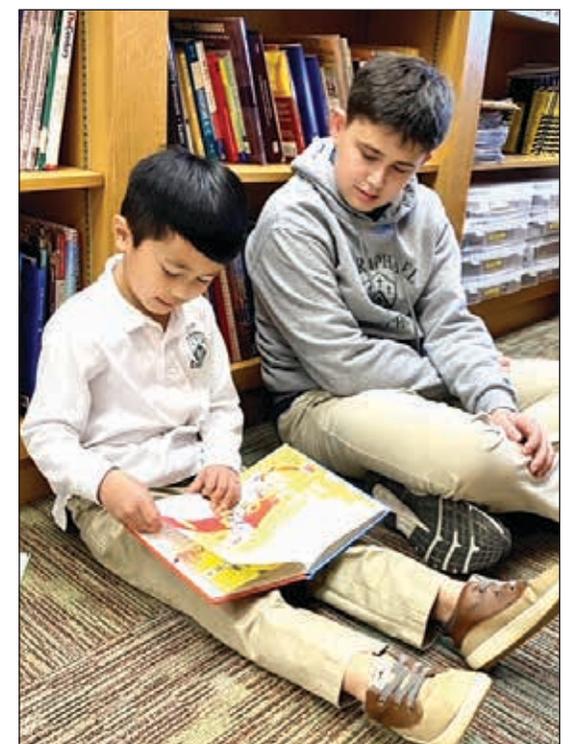


Black History Month at SRS

In honor of Black History Month our second-grade class dressed up and informed the community about historical leaders — Thurgood Marshall and Mae Jemison.



Beloved SRS second-grade teachers—Mrs. Trees and Mrs. Everling—celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday and Reading Across America.



Students met with their young "buddies" for a special story-time for Reading Across America.

40 Days for Life: March 2–April 10

You can protect mothers and children by joining this worldwide mobilization to pray and fast for an end to abortion! Through prayer and fasting, peaceful vigils and community outreach, 40 Days for Life has inspired 1,000,000+ volunteers! With God's help, here are the proven results in 30 coordinated campaigns:

- Over 20,000 babies saved from abortion
- Over 200 abortion workers converted
- Over 100 abortion centers closed

Here's how to take part in 40 Days for Life in our community:

Vigil location: Public sidewalk outside the Wildwood Medical Center, 10401 Old Georgetown Road



Vigil hours: 7 am to 7 pm daily

Local contact: 40DaysBethesda@gmail.com

Learn more ... get involved ... and sign up for prayer times by visiting our campaign at www.40daysforlife.com/en/bethesda

OPT

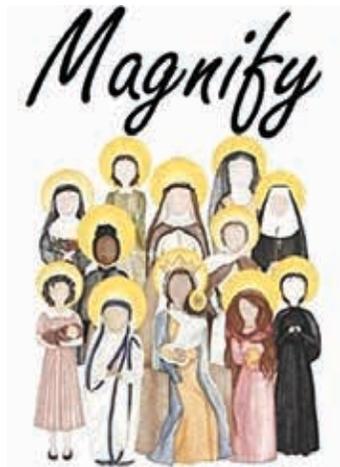
HR PARISH

Con't from page 9

Enrich your Lenten experience with a shared exploration of God's Holy Word. Bring your Bible and a friend.

Catholic Book Club, Mondays, 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Read the selected book on an important aspect of our Catholic beliefs. Then get together for a faith-filled discussion. Catherine Tolnay is the organizer and facilitator.



HR Women's Ministry Magnify Women's Group, 8:00 PM Wednesdays

The Magnify Women's Study Group meets at 8 PM on Wednesday nights, following Mass in the chapel at 7:30 PM. Women share their Lenten journeys, inspired and informed by Kaylene Brown's book of daily reflections, *Magnify*, which features a weekly virtue and draws on the wisdom of women Saints, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and Scripture. Magnify seeks to help women develop a deeper intimacy with Christ so that they can magnify the unique feminine genius they have been given for the Glory of God.

Women's Groups also meet at other times throughout the week to pursue different courses of study. **Mondays at 7:00 PM**, The Better Part (Gospel study) in person; Reclaiming Friendship in person and on zoom; 60 Days to Becoming a Missionary Disciple (Fr. Bartunek's book) in person & on zoom; **Mondays at 7:30 PM**, 60 Days to Becoming a Missionary Disciple on zoom; **Tuesdays at 9:30 AM**, The Better Part (Gospel Study) and Reclaiming Friendship in person **Saturdays at 7:00 AM**,

LENT

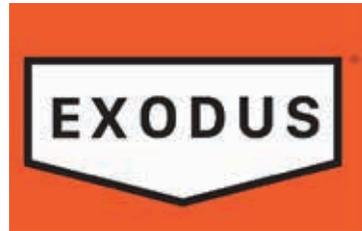
Con't from page 6

by the Sacrament of Reconciliation at 4:00pm. If music inspires you, raise your voice during Evening Prayer where we will also be praying for religious vocations in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Benediction is at 7:00pm. We end the evening with the solemn and prayerful walk with Jesus in the Stations of the Cross at 7:30pm. Come for fifteen minutes, an hour

Reclaiming Friendship in person. It is never too late to join!

HR Men's Ministry 7:00 AM Saturdays

The Holy Redeemer Men's Ministry brings together like minded men, who are seeking to be a better person, husband, and father while living their Catholic faith fully. The group meets on Saturday mornings from 7:00 am to 8:00 am in the school auditorium. This program fosters camaraderie among the men of Holy Redeemer, strengthens their faith, and provides practical support as they live out their vocations as Catholic men.



Exodus 90, 5:30 AM Wednesdays or 8:00 PM Thursdays

The Exodus 90 Men's Group members support one another in a rigorous work-out for the soul. Based on the Book of Exodus, this program of spiritual exercise calls men of all ages back to the foundations of their faith. Freedom from distraction is one of the soul-fitness goals. The program's three pillars are prayer.

Lenten Mission Together to Christ, March 14, 15, 16 at 7:30 PM

Holy Redeemer Church welcomes Father Roberto Amoroso, of the Priestly Fraternity of the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo. Father Roberto was ordained in 1993 and went on mission to Kenya, caring for the sick and the poor. Now in Washington, D.C., Father teaches at The Avalon School. He will lead a three-evening all parish retreat, March 14, 15, 16 at 7:30 PM in the church, that will culminate with a Penance Service:

- Monday, March 14 **Faith, Reason, and Evangelization**
- Tuesday, March 15 **What Does Faith Have to Do with Everyday Life?**
- Wednesday, March 16 **What Jesus Does in the Sacrament of Penance; Penance Service**

OPT

or more. Don't let your Lent simply pass without offering some time with our Lord, Jesus.

Other opportunities for spiritual nourishment this lent are the Morning of Reflection with Father Peter Nguyen on March 12 and the food drive on March 26 and 27. Our doors are always open to those who seek the Lord. Holy Cross Church welcomes you to encounter Jesus in a safe and loving environment centered on the Eucharist!

OPT

Healing Mass at Mother Seton



Fr. Martin Scott & Fr. Lee Fangmeyer



Deacon Frank Salatto

Father Martin Scott returned to Mother Seton on March 3rd to give a talk and healing service. Fr. Scott spoke of true reconciliation with God, giving our spirit to God, and our responsibility to help others in need.

After Mass, the many people who attended, were invited to come

to the altar for personal healing and prayers from Father Scott, Fr. Fangmeyer and Deacon Frank Salatto. We are very grateful for events like this which help people work through the many issues that separate them from each other and from God.

Fr. Martin Scott attended

Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg. In 2003 he moved to Peru and founded the religious community called "Siervos de la Misericordia". The charism of his religious community life is based on the messages concerning our Lord's infinite Divine Mercy given to Saint Faustina Kowalska.

OPT



Fr. Carlos Martins



Mother Seton Relic



Wood of the True Cross of Our Lord

Exposition of Sacred Relics with Fr. Carlos Martins

Father Carlos Martins, a Vatican-appointed expert on relics, visited Mother Seton with an extraordinary Vatican collection of over 150 relics.

After a compelling talk, all in attendance were invited to the Parish Center to have an opportunity to examine and venerate each relic. People brought their rosaries, holy cards and pictures of ill friends and family to touch to the reliquar-

ies as a means of intercession for healing, which throughout history, many have been worked in the presence of relics.

The expositions showed relics from St. Joseph, St. Maria Goretti, St. Faustina Kowalska and many more, including a portion of the Veil of Our Lady and a piece of the True Cross.

OPT

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Resurrection Celebrates Black History Month

Resurrection Parish celebrated Black History Month by displaying beautiful portraits of the Six Black Catholics on the road to Sainthood. The prominent display of Venerables Henriette Delille, Pierre Toussaint, Fr. Augustus Tolton, and Servants of God Mother Mary Lange, Sr. Thea Bowman, and Julia Greeley, drew much interest from parishioners. There was also a page in the bulletin dedicated to these 'Super Six'. The Spiritual Reflections page included the same images and short summaries of each of their virtuous, faith-filled lives, along with sources for more information. It was challenging to summarize the lives of such great faith, hope, and love into just 150 words!

Pastor Fr. John Barry spoke at Masses about each of the holy women and men who are on the path to sainthood, remarking on their spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Religious Education Director Helene Stever arranged for all students and parents to attend a presentation on these amazing role models on Monday, February 28, as part of their



classes for the evening. Guest speaker and parishioner Lisa Peacock gave a talk on how there is a push to have these holy men and women 'fast tracked' for canonization given the great discrimination and structural racism they faced both while alive (many were slaves or direct descendants of slaves) and even during the process of canonization.

It can take significant money to promote a cause for sainthood. All six of these African Americans do not come from wealthy religious orders or organizations, that is why we must ask for their intercession and also pray for their canonization. The students and families present were very interested in doing whatever they can to help promote the causes of these holy Americans...because we can never have too many saints, given that they all point to Jesus.

Please contact Lisa Peacock at lisa.peacock@verizon.net if you or your parish is interested in acquiring a set of these beautiful portraits to display in your Church.

OPT



Examples of Saint Shields prepared by Resurrection's Confirmation candidates

Saints Are Our Heroes of Today!

Choosing a saint name is an essential part of Confirmation and it is an acknowledgment that the Holy Spirit will change you through the grace of this Sacrament. We see in Scripture that Jesus changed the name of some of his disciples to signify that their role had been changed and that they were becoming, in a sense, a new person. For example, Abram became Abraham (Genesis 17:5), Sarai became Sarah (Genesis 17:15), and Simon became Peter (Matthew 16:18).

At Resurrection parish beginning in October, Confirmation Candidates research men and women saints. They choose someone who exemplifies a quality that they wish to have, somebody whose life they want to emulate, or some-

body they have something in common with.

Each candidate begins asking for the prayers and intercession of the saints so they can finally choose one. Once they have decided on their saint, they create a Saint Shield *Coat of Arms*. On their shield will be important facts of the saint, its feast day, profession or vocation, reason the person is a saint and what are the personal qualities they want to emulate.

During class, the Confirmation Candidates, present their saint, and the shields are displayed in the church for the parish community. And at the Confirmation liturgy.

After the presentation class, at the end of each class at prayer time, candidates ask out loud for their Confirmation saint to pray for them.

Helene Stever, Director of Religious Education, "Each year, it is wonderful to see the many beautiful, inspirational saint shields and hear about the chosen saints", I tell the Confirmation Candidates that "through your prayer and intercession a saint has chosen YOU! He or she now becomes your patron saint for the rest of your life!"

OPT

McGANN

Con't from page 1

advances made in medical treatment for serious illnesses - it's still a tough time to be a parent.

It may not be as tough as it was to be a parent who sent sons off to fight a war and didn't hear from them for months at a time. It's still tough to be a parent today. It's also tough being a kid today.

Many of our children are anxious and afraid. They have been told for two years that it's not safe to let their mask slip below their noses. Suddenly they're being told they don't even need those masks. Sadly, many of them *do* need them to feel safe. Parents are anxious and afraid. To which "science" should we listen? Are we sure of anything when it comes to this mutating virus? Will our children ever catch up academically? Will they learn how to socialize appropriately? What does that even mean anymore? Parents in small Catholic school communities, even brothers and sisters are arguing with one another about whether or not children should be required to get vaccinated! What must our children be thinking?

OLOL CSW

Con't from page 16

and into Monday decorating their doors for the competitive "OLOL Opens doors" decorating contest. Each class decorated their door in a theme related to what they have been learning about or working on this year. The Eighth Grade awarded First Place to Anna-Sophia Capizzi, Middle School Science teacher, for her Science Lab-themed door.

On Tuesday, older and younger students throughout the school paired up to collaborate on CSW

Now they have another thing to worry about. 24-hour coverage, complete with vivid images of families sleeping in subway stations to avoid collapsing buildings in Ukraine enables them to see up close what war in a modern city looks like. We can only imagine how our children are processing this constant barrage of frightening information.

We can assure our children that nothing like that would ever happen to us, but they already know that we can't predict the future - they (and we) learned that the hard way in March of 2020.

So what can parents and grandparents do to help our children get back to being children? We can keep our worries and fears to ourselves. Our children do not need to share our anxieties. If we need to talk about these things, we must do it when our kids are not around, and we need to do it with other adults. Secondly, we can turn off the television and put new limits on our family's time on the internet. It's also important to answer questions with facts - not predictions or prevarications. When our children ask questions about the war, we need to find out exactly what they have

heard, and what they are worried about, and what they want to know. Address only those things. Getting out a map and giving a brief geography lesson may be helpful for some children, but for others a reassurance that no matter what happens we - the adults in their lives - will be responsible for making decisions for our families. We will decide, using the best information we have, whether they need masks or shots. We will be in charge of any worrying that has to be done, and we want them to focus on being children, on schoolwork, and on having fun. We also want them to know that we won't back away from questions, and that if they are anxious, we will help them find a way to deal with their worries.

Finally, we can make sure our children know that God does not abandon us when life is difficult. He is with us, and He wants us to lean on Him when we are sad or scared. Making a nightly Rosary a part of our family's Lenten practice will help all of us, children and adults alike, to put our fears and our anxieties where they belong - in God's hands. I know what you just said! "We don't have time for that." Yes, you do.

OPT

themed projects. They discussed, wrote, and illustrated why Catholic schools are special and what faith, excellence, and service mean at OLOL. On Wednesday, the school hosted an Open House for prospective families. Dozens of tours were given by pairs of eighth grade students, some of whom have been students at the school since they were three. They shared their insight as to what it's really like to be a student at OLOL. Students also worked on thank you notes to community members. They included everyone from the crossing guard to the milk delivery man in their

gratitude. That evening the faculty enjoyed dinner hosted by Fr. Rob.

Thursday was Faculty Appreciation Day, and parents filled in to help while teachers were treated to a 10:00 am start to their day. Friday marked the conclusion of Catholic Schools Week and Student Appreciation Day. Everyone enjoyed ice cream sundaes, games, and a very competitive dance-off served as the highlight before being dismissed at noon. It was a joyful and spirited week to show the beauty of our Catholic school, Our Lady of Lourdes.

OPT

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Pastor
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Commemorating Our Steadfast Forebears

By Bozenna Buda, ED

On Sunday, March 6, 2022, Our Lady Queen of Poland Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych, S.Chr., celebrated a National Memorial Mass for the fallen, murdered, and living Steadfast Soldiers “Niezłomni Żołnierze.” The Holy Mass was requested by the Polish American Congress Washington Metro Area Division (PACWMAD). It was attended by parishioners and friends and included representatives from several organizations. Present were representatives from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Knights of Columbus St. Maksymilian Kolbe Council 16634, PACWMAD, Polish Legion of American Veterans, and Polish Scouting Organization ZHP. OLQP Parish youth also participated as they raised their hands and voices to sing liturgical songs with gestures during the Holy Mass.

The Steadfast Soldiers, also called the Unbeatable or Cursed Soldiers, were men and women who were persecuted, tortured, and even killed, as they brave-



Liturgical songs with hand gestures were led by OLQP parishioners Tatiana Psurek (raised hands) and Krzysztof Psurek (on guitar) in which parish youth participated at the 12 noon Mass on March 6 for the Steadfast Soldiers.

ly fought against Communism after World War II. In 2011, after an initiative by President Lech Kaczynski, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland established March 1st as the National Day of Remembrance of the Steadfast (Cursed, Unbeatable) Soldiers.

President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda, at this year's National Commemoration, noted that, “This story of the Cursed Soldiers is dramatic - steadfast people who clearly and simply understood the concept of an independent and sovereign

Poland. They knew perfectly well that if there are foreign troops and an authority that no one has chosen, it is not a free Poland” (www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/odsloniecie-epitafium-zolnierzy-wykletych,49665).

It was only after 1989 that their stories could be told openly. Among OLQP parishioners are the children and grandchildren of these courageous Steadfast Soldiers. We honor our forebears and pray for them.

OPT



Several of the representatives who took part in the PACWMAD National Memorial Day Mass for the Steadfast Soldiers “Niezłomni Żołnierze” at OLQP on March 6, 2022. Council 16634 GK Franklin Morton, past GK David Birely, past GK Jacek Marczyński, ZHP Scouting Leader Bozenna Buda, COL Pawel Marzeda, SK Richard Okreglak, Dr. Edwarda Buda-Okreglak, BG Krzysztof Nolbert.

INITIATIVE

Con't from page 2

the contribution that persons with disabilities offer to the ecclesial community on a daily basis.

The videos illustrate the work of evangelization carried out by some young deaf persons in Mexico, of a monastery in France where several nuns with Down's syndrome live out their vocation, and a group of young Italians with disabilities who participate in World Youth Day celebrations, among others.

A sign of richness

“We are convinced that if we are able to listen attentively to the voices of our sisters and brothers with disabilities, the ecclesial community will come out truly enriched,” said Gabriella Gambino, undersecretary of the Dicastery.

The campaign comes during the Amoris Laetitia Family Year launched by Pope Francis to celebrate five years since the publication of the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia on the beauty and joy of love in the family. The year-long celebration will conclude on June 26, 2022, on

the occasion of the Tenth World Meeting of Families in Rome.

The videos are made by Poti Pictures, the film division of Coop Soc II Cenacolo, the first social film production company in the world which makes commercials, short films and feature films with actors with intellectual disabilities.

Cardinal Kevin Farrell, prefect for the dicastery, is a former auxiliary bishop of Washington.

Source: Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life

OPT



Vocations Tree

OLQP Parish Council President Izabella Macander and Urszula Rychlik stand near the “Vocations Tree” in the church foyer. Each card on the “Vocations Tree” features a seminarian in the Archdiocese of Washington, DC. Parishioners and entire families are encouraged to pick one, or several cards, with the names of seminarians and commit to praying for them during Lent. The prayer on the back of each card asks us to pray for graces for the seminarians so they will be “blessed in [their] formation and guided in [their] discernment.”

OPT

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Holy Thursday, April 14	Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7:30 PM
Good Friday, April 15	Celebration of the Passion of the Lord, 7:30PM
Holy Saturday, April 16	Blessing of Food, 10:00AM, 10:30AM, 11:00AM, 11:30AM, 12:00PM, 12:30PM
Holy Saturday, April 16	Easter Vigil Mass, 7:30PM
Wielkanoc, April 17	Resurrection Mass in Polish, 10 AM
Easter Mass in Polish,	12 PM
Easter Monday, April 18	Mass in Polish, 7:30PM

Thank you to all who, even if they are not present at the Holy Mass, support our parish spiritually and materially. May God reward you! *Bóg zapłać!*



OLQP Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych leads prayers for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people as parishioners join in.

Prayers and Support for the People of Ukraine

OLQP Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych has been leading prayers for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Especially in these trying times, Fr. Jerzy has reminded us of the insightful and inspirational words of the Primate of the Millennium, Blessed Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński. The Cardinal noted that we can break the cycle of evil by loving our neighbor. People need love, respect, and freedom.

Cardinal Wyszyński urged people to focus on the needs of others, the family, and the whole nation. He encouraged people to demand more of themselves and, in this way, to change the world for the better. The Cardinal told youth that they should

“educate [themselves] in the spirit of sacrifice” because there may come a time when “only with sacrifice will it be possible to guarantee the freedom of our homeland.”

OPT

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Queen of Poland**
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Upcounty Community Resources Named Small Business of the Year

The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber (GGCC) awarded Upcounty Community Resources (UCR) as the recipient of the 15th Annual Small Business of the Year Award (SBY) on December 9, 2021, as a part of their Annual Celebration Dinner & Awards Ceremony. The award was presented to UCR Executive Director Jenn Lynn by AJ Nwoga with M&T Bank.

"We are honored to give this award to Upcounty Community Resources," said Marilyn Balcombe, GGCC President / CEO. "They are a great asset in our community."

The Small Business of the Year Award recognizes small businesses, which are a vital part of our economy and community. The award is presented to the small business that demonstrates success, community involvement, and excellent customer relations.

The Upcounty Community Resources was founded by a group of parents trying to find inclusive and enriching activities for their adult children with disabilities. These parents recognized the need for continued education and skills practice after the children completed their education. Seven years later UCR is serving five hundred families in our community.

The UCR programs teach employment, independent living, social & emotional skills practice in large and small groups, pro-



(l:r) State Senator Cheryl Kagan; Jenn Lynn, Upcounty Community Resources; AJ Nwoga, M&T Bank; and Marilyn Balcombe, Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber award Lynn with the Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber's 15th Annual Small Business of the Year Award at the Celebration Dinner & Awards Ceremony on December 9, 2021. Photo Credit: Hilary Schwab Photography

vides therapeutic art & music programming, as well as three respite programs. They boast a professional rock band, entrepreneurs, young professionals, talented artists, and advocates among their membership. They are proud to serve people who want to succeed through a variety of disabilities and meet them where they are and build on their gifts.

Community involvement & relationship building is important to UCR. Since the majority of the UCR programming happens within the community, UCR needs to ensure that their members are welcomed in their neighborhoods and businesses. By forging relation-

ships with local businesses, working within their establishments, mutually beneficial bonds form.

Part of the success of UCR is the ability to offer programs to their members for low to no cost. Scholarships are awarded every semester, and no one is left out of the program due to their inability to pay. They take their job of enriching the lives of the Upcounty's most vulnerable residents very seriously. They fiercely protect their participants, advocate for their needs on all levels of local, state, and national efforts. They are much more than a 'small business,' they are a family.

OPT

FORUM

Con't from page 3

Why Attend This Candidate Forum

The Candidate Forum is an opportunity for becoming faithful citizens. As Anthony Bosnick wrote in the December issue of *OPT*, there are three reasons for "Becoming Faithful Citizens."

1. "Lay people are called to participate in the political life of the society around us." Mr. Bosnick cited papal encyclicals and "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops since 2007 and available on its website: www.usccb.org/search?key=Forming%20Consciences%20for%20Faithful%20Citizenship.
2. "...we have seen the positive impact it (lay participation) has had on the governmental officials in Montgomery County."
3. "A third reason for our work is that we are transforming the world in Christ. ...Our work is part of the new evangelization, in line with the call of the popes since Paul VI nearly fifty years ago."

Not Our First Rodeo

Like our well attended 2018 Candidate Forum at Saint Jude,

each candidate will have equal time to address questions based on Catholic Social Teaching that emphasizes giving priority to the needs of the materially poor and vulnerable. More specifically the candidates will be asked about 1) Affordable Housing amid a crisis for low-income households, 2) Policing and Incarceration Alternatives, 3) Environmental Concerns/Climate Change, 4) Food Insecurity and 5) Barriers for Immigrants. Spanish translation will again be provided.

Not New but Improved

Unlike our Forums in 2010, 2014 and 2018, to accommodate those who are not able to attend in person, the Forum will be livestreamed and archived. As planning continues for the Candidate Forum the Justice & Advocacy Council needs to thank Joe Dempsey and Teresa Villanueva

of Catholic Charities and Ellen Donnelly of Saint Jude Regional Catholic School. The cosponsors are working with parishes in Montgomery County to publicize the Candidate Forum including parish bulletins, websites and e-mail messaging.

Join us in our work

The next Justice & Advocacy Council virtual meeting is Wednesday, March 23, at 7pm. For more information and to receive a link for the meeting, please get in touch with Larry Couch at lawrencecouch1@gmail.com.

Chris Farrell is a parishioner of Saint Andrew Apostle Catholic Church in Wheaton and a former member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. His email is mayorofarcola@gmail.com.

OPT

CANDIDATE FORUM
COUNTY EXECUTIVE of MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COSPONSORED by CATHOLIC CHARITIES
and
JUSTICE & ADVOCACY COUNCIL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022, 7-9 PM
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USE METRO BUS Q ROUTES FROM ROCKVILLE
OR WHEATON STATIONS
ATTEND IN-PERSON OR VIRTUALLY

ZURKOWSKI

Con't from page 1

pendence and completely parish-focused mission were responding to a hunger by parishioners for local news and creative parish responses to emerging issues. He was right. While a small number of pastors chose to prohibit parish participation, most parishes enthusiastically joined and continue to participate. Tens of thousands of Montgomery Catholics read the six annual *OPT* issues each year. By 2005, Paul's mission was achieved, and he turned the successful small business over to Larry and Kathleen Hamm who continue *OPT* and Paul's legacy.

After founding *OPT* in 1991, Paul's vision of Catholic engagement turned to the role Catholic businesses could play in local Catholic education and community engagement. He convened a few likeminded Catholic business leaders with last names like Fitzgerald, Cahill, Kane, Coakley and others who established the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County (CBN-MC), the first organization of its kind in the area and one of the first in the nation. Its mission is to engage Montgomery County Catholic business leaders in support of Catholic education and youth activities. CBN members help Catholic youth activities as advisors, funders, and advocates. They are a reliable corps of leaders to which Catholic schools and parishes can turn for assistance in many practical ways. By 2010, Paul was able to celebrate CBN's success as he moved on to other ventures. Since it began in 1991, CBN-MC has raised 1.6 million dollars for Catholic schools.

Paul recruited Chuck Short as a volunteer occasional columnist in 1992. In 2005, Chuck began writing for each of the six editions published each year. He continues to reflect with *OPT* readers each edition. He remembers Paul as "inspiring in his commitment to Catholic community...a clear and vivid view of servant leadership for each Catholic, especially business and community leaders." He goes on, "Through *OPT* and CBN-MC, I believe Paul has enhanced Catholic opportunity for many in our community. By honoring me with the opportunity to write for *OPT*, he enabled me to grow and live in greater spirituality."

Larry Hamm was working in the Washington office of McGraw-Hill Information Systems in 1979 when

he first met Paul, who was President of the Information Industry Association (now the Software and Information Industry Association). They worked together professionally for many years. Smart, handsome, and charming, Paul was perfectly cast as an association executive. Larry recalls that Paul had that one all-important attribute, "he genuinely liked people. He was always interested in finding out about what interested you." And he liked and understood the information business.

After Paul recruited both Larry and his wife Kathleen to be volunteer parish editors for his start-up inter-parish newspaper, Larry asked Paul how he got the idea for *Our Parish Times*. It seems that *OPT* was not his first information-product venture. While at the University of Wisconsin Paul supported himself in part by publishing monthly listings of events and activities surrounded by thumb-nail ads of the local businesses which were distributed free at all the dorms. "It's all about building community. If we recognize the priests, teachers, administrators, and lay leaders – the heavy lifters – that make our parishes and schools work, parishioners will want to read every issue and Catholic businesses will want to advertise their products and services." That was thirty years ago. *Our Parish Times* and CBN-MC are Paul's legacy to his local faith community.

As mentioned in the obituary on page 9, Paul is credited with having coined the term "information literacy." He first used it in 1974 in a proposal to the US National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Paul's concept was expanded upon and is now recognized as key to critical thinking about mass media and to active and informed citizenship. "Information maven Paul Zurkowski" gave the keynote address at the first European Conference on Information Literacy in Istanbul in 2012. The now annual international conference and the semi-annual *Journal of Information Literacy* are Paul's legacy to his profession.

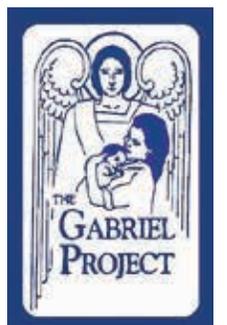
When Larry last saw him, over lunch several years ago, Paul rhapsodized about philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's notion of radical or spiritual energy and how it was now being equated to information or 'information content' by contemporary scholars.

Requiescat in pace.

OPT

Support the Gabriel Project of Montgomery County's Virtual Lenten Baby Shower

The Gabriel Project Cluster of Montgomery County, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization serves mothers and their families in crisis pregnancies. In the past, several supporting churches have held Lenten Baby Showers for our client families. Because of COVID, this year we are asking for support via our website, www.gpmoco.org. Click on our Amazon wishlist and choose from any number of items. You may also support the Gabriel Project by mailing a check to: Gabriel Project Cluster of Mont. County Inc., PO Box 626, 2001 Veirs Mill Road, Rockville, MD 20848-0626.



Call for Prayer and Fasting for Ukraine

Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued the following statement on Ukraine:

“On behalf of my brother bishops, I echo the Holy Father’s call for prayer and fasting to end the war in Ukraine. In times of trou-



ble, we call on the tender mercy of God ... to guide our feet to the way of peace (Lk 1:78-79). May our prayers, joined with those of people around the world, help guide those waging war to end the meaningless suffering and restore peace. Our Lady, Queen of Peace, pray for us.”

OPT

Temporary Protected Status Designation for Ukrainian Nationals in U.S.

On March 3, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas designated Ukraine for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). TPS allows foreign nationals to remain and work in the United States during a period in which it is deemed unsafe for them to return to their home country. In response to this designation and the growing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, Bishop Mario Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration, issued the following statement:

“I have watched with deep concern, along with so many others around the world, the unfolding events in Ukraine and the devasta-

tion facing the Ukrainian people. Many Ukrainians have demonstrated incredible resolve and bravery in the face of danger over recent days. Many others, especially children and the elderly, have been forced to seek safety, either within Ukraine or in neighboring countries. In these internally displaced persons and refugees, we are reminded of the Holy Family’s flight into Egypt and the vulnerability of our infant Lord.

“We welcome the Secretary’s designation of TPS for Ukraine, which provides important protections for Ukrainians already in the United States. As Catholics, we believe wholeheartedly in protecting the sanctity of every human life. This includes addressing situations in which people are needlessly put into harm’s way.

“The United Nations has indicated that this conflict could result in five million refugees fleeing Ukraine. As we have for many decades, the Catholic Church in the United States will continue to welcome and serve refugees from all walks of life. Though the importance of humanitarian assistance cannot be understated, we also call on the Biden Administration and Congress to ensure that the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program receives all necessary resources to reflect our country’s true capacity for providing refuge and welcome.

“... May Saint Joseph, who once sought safety for his own family, intercede for us and all those forced to leave their homes in the face of violence.”

OPT

Montgomery County Will Offer Reduced-Price Adult Bike Classes in Spring

Adults who want to learn more about riding bicycles will have the opportunity to take reduced-price classes this spring sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). “Adult Learn to Ride” and “Basic Skills” classes this spring will be offered for \$10 for County residents and free for Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) members.

Classes are led by WABA instructors and are designed for residents 18 or older. Bikes and helmets are provided to participants.

Classes will be offered in April, May and June. To register, visit the WABA website: <https://waba.org/learntoride/#adult>

The Learn to Ride Class is for individuals who have never ridden a bike before, have tried to

learn but have been unsuccessful or who have not ridden for some time. Classes will cover the basics of balancing, gliding, pedaling and stopping.

The Basic Skills Clinic is the next step for those who have recently taken a Learn to Ride class or who know how to ride a bike but have not been on one in some time. The class will focus on skills such as turning, shifting, braking gradually and weaving.

Classes run from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. on the following days:

- Saturday, April 9: Learn to Ride Class: Westfield Mall Nordstrom Garage), Bethesda.
- Saturday, April 30: Learn to Ride Class: Upper County Recreation Center, Gaithersburg.
- Saturday, May 7: Basic Skills Clinic: Wheaton Ice Arena (back

left parking lot), Wheaton.

- Saturday, May 21: Learn to Ride Class: GEICO (front parking lot), Chevy Chase.
- Saturday, June 11: Basic Skills Clinic: Montgomery College (Parking Lot 13), Rockville.
- Saturday, June 25: Learn to Ride: Burtonsville Park and Ride, Burtonsville

Select classes will offer a free e-scooter safety training and test ride from noon until 2 p.m.

There is no registration required for the scooter class and walk-ups are welcome.

The classes are an affordable way to include biking as another form of transportation. They also are a great way to prepare to participate in Bike-to-Work Day, Friday, May 20.

OPT

GALAPALOOZA

Con’t from page 15

school and parish poll, the committee opted for a virtual gala this year.

Members of the parish and school community sold raffle tickets over the past several months, with chances to win \$3000, \$2000, or \$1000 prizes. There were so many exciting options to bid on during the auction, including get-aways to Deep Creek Lake and Williamsburg. Handmade items from all of the classes were also

up for bidding. The auction was open virtually from Wednesday, February 23rd through Saturday, February 26th, giving bidders lots of opportunities to watch their most-wanted items! Visitors to the website could also browse packages, make bids, buy raffle tickets or Virtual Gala tickets, or donate to our wonderful Fund-a-Cause, Teachers’ Wishlist, or the Kelley Bula Scholarship Fund.

Galapalooza itself took place on a Gather.town platform, which allowed gala attendees to interact virtually, explore different virtual

spaces, chat with friends, and check out photos of the amazing items up for bidding.

Galapalooza recognized several award recipients: Parishioners of the Year: Ardie and Bill Camara, School Person of the Year: Theresa Bourbon, Religious Education Volunteers of the Year: Steven and Amanada Cennane, and Alumna of the Year: Claire Hannan.

Saint Mary’s sends a huge thank you to all of the wonderful committee members, volunteers and parishioners that helped to make Galapalooza a night to remember!

OPT



These girls are honing their coding skills.

TECHNOLOGY

Con’t from page 9

“likes” and “retweets” by both the Smithsonian Lemelson Center and Code.org. The 7th graders designed original animations highlighting black scientists; these animations can be used for Lower School students. After learning the foundations of graphic design, the 6th graders designed and developed their own Instagram post featuring a black scientist. The 6th grade also completed coding a retro arcade game, which was shared with their parents. It’s been fun hearing how

the parents are playing these games.

The Lower School students have been busy too. The 4th grade learned about comic strip design and digitized their Pourquoi Stories—origin stories from Africa, and the 5th grade learned about Secret Quilt Codes used by the Underground Railroad before learning about Google Draw tools and designing their own secret codes. This class also composed a haiku related to this secret code. Our 2nd and 3rd graders continue to develop their sequencing and conditional skills using both coding programs and «unplugged» activities.

OPT

MOCK TRIAL

Con’t from page 9

reporting. News coverage shared the work of sketch artists Julia and Emma who recorded the courtroom drama.

After receiving their instructions and deliberating carefully, the jury returned a verdict of “Not Guilty.” Johnny Cade’s innocence was

declared as a result of The State of Oklahoma’s having failed to prove Mr. Cade guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. The jury was thanked for their service.

“The entire mock trial experience—from pretrial work through the verdict being called, was an amazing experience for our eighth graders,” Mrs. Roby shared. “Everyone took it extremely seriously.”

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