



OUR Parish Times

High School Open House
Pull-out Section page 20-21

OCTOBER 2023

Living the Faith Together

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Abundance of Life

Autumn is a beautiful time to enjoy the abundance of life the Lord has given. With its spiritual and traditional holidays and festivities, opportunities abound to come face to face with our living God. I hope each of you will experience the season with awe, reverence



Chuck Short

Continued on page 18

Changing Thousands of Lives Through a Catholic Education

Looking back over 50 years of priesthood, I can clearly see that some of the best ideas with the biggest impact started from simple conversations. The Shepherd Foundation is one of



Fr. John Enzler

Continued on page 32

Small Miracles

Over the weekend my husband and I visited the University of Notre Dame. While the football game didn't turn out as we hoped it would, it was still a wonderful weekend. On Saturday afternoon



Patricia McGann

we attended Mass, and Father Monk Malloy was the celebrant. In his homily, Father Malloy spoke about his time as a student at Notre Dame. He graduated from Archbishop Carroll High School in Washington DC and was considered a strong student. He was also an outstanding basketball player and he was looking forward to playing for the Irish team.

His adjustment to college life was not a smooth one. The academic challenges he faced in the School of Engineering were too much for him. He did not play basketball, because freshmen were not eligible to play on the varsity team. He was floundering. He failed two classes his first semester. Things were looking bleak for his college career.

Continued on page 16

Shrine of St. Jude and St. Jude Regional Catholic School Honor Fr. Emil Kapaun

The student body of St. Jude Regional Catholic School—joined by school parents, parishioners, and honored guests from the military—celebrated its weekly school Mass outdoors on Friday, Sept. 22, in honor of Fr. Emil Kapaun, Army captain and chaplain during the Korean War. St. Jude's pastor, Rev. Paul D. Lee, STD was the principal celebrant, offering mass on the hood of a Korean War era jeep, harkening back to a practice that Fr. Kapaun would use on the battlefield.

Fr. Kapaun, who grew up in a small farming town outside of Wichita, Kansas, is currently recognized as a Servant of God. Men who served with him recalled his bravery, heroic virtue, and radical dependence on God. He provided hope and comfort through prayer and the sacraments to all his compatriots, regardless of their faith.

Some of the most compelling stories of Fr. Kapaun's sanctity took place in the POW camp where he and other American troops were brutally treated by their cap-

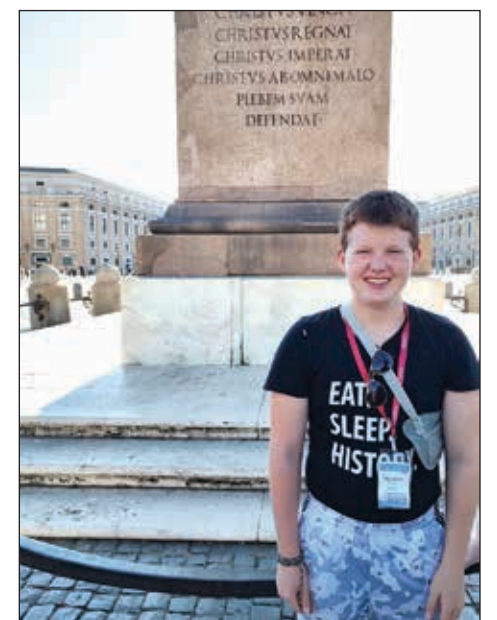


Rev. Paul D. Lee, STD, pastor of the Shrine of St. Jude, elevates the Body and Blood of Christ over the hood of a Jeep actually used in the Korean War, just as Father Kapaun would have in his ministry.

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Ray McKelvey showing his Maryland pride at the International History Olympiad



Rome provided the perfect backdrop for a history competition!

St. Patrick's Student Makes History

By Ray McKelvey, Seventh Grader

Hi, I'm Ray McKelvey and I love history. One reason I like history is that you get to learn about so many defining moments. These moments are important because they give us a deciding point on which we can focus our attention and anchor our point of view. Another reason I like history is the people you meet as you learn about history. While certain events may grab our

attention and be remembered forever like the signing of the Declaration of Independence or Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon, it is also important to remember people you may not know as much about, such as Simon Bolivar and Jawaharlal Nehru. These people are not just a part of history, but they have also made history.

Recently I went to Rome to compete in the International History Olympiad (IHO). The

IHO brings together the top history students from around the world. During my time in Rome, I had the chance to meet amazing history students from many states and countries as far away as Macau and Iraq. During the week of competition, we also went on tours all over the city and I saw many beautiful things. The churches there are amazing, and their architecture is exquisite.

Continued on page 25

100 Years of Blessed Sacrament School!

BSS will host a fabulous Birthday Bash in honor of its centennial on October 21, 2023. Founded by Holy Cross sisters in 1923, a fun filled party is planned, featuring a special Mass honoring long time priest Percival D'Silva, a heated outdoor tent covering the entire blacktop, a delicious dinner catered by world renowned Ridgewells, speciality cocktails and other libations, bands, a DJ playing popular songs from all the decades, singers and the fellowship of over 1000 alums, parents, parishioners, and friends!

One of the most exciting aspects of the whole thing is how many people are coming from all over the country to celebrate this milestone. Alums from some of the earliest classes and most

recent are planning to attend. Many grades are also planning parties to pre-game before the party. Former and current faculty will be feted at a special reception.

While the evening festivities are for people 21 and older, the current student body will be included during the school day. Students will get a special treat at lunch, and participate in contests to win prizes and get to wear a specially created 100th anniversary tee shirt. In addition, the 100th anniversary committee will be selling all kinds of cool 100th anniversary merchandise!

If you need more information about the Blessed Sacrament School 100th Birthday Bash, go to www.bsstoday.org/100. Let's go BSS Bulldogs!

OPT

The Avalon School Launches Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium

This fall the Avalon School is excited to be offering presentations from the level I Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) to our two sections of kindergarten as we work towards establishing a full atrium. Avalon is one of the only schools in the DC area to use the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in its elementary religion curriculum.

We proudly welcome Sophie Oriani as our first CGS Catechist. Holding a philosophy degree with summa cum laude honors from the Catholic University of America, Sophie is AMI certified and possesses certifications in CGS levels I and II, as well as for toddlers. Welcome, Sophie!

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is an approach to religious education and spiritual formation for children that is deeply rooted in Montessori educational principles and focuses on nurturing the child's relationship with God, helping him develop a sense of wonder and awe about his faith. The approach is centered around creating a sacred space, often referred to as the atrium, where children can engage with age-appropriate materials and activities related to the teachings of Christianity. These materials include Bible stories, liturgical objects, parables, and ele-



Sophie Oriani, of St. Jerome parish, leads the Avalon kindergarten in a Catechesis of the Good Shepherd lesson in the atrium.

ments of the Mass.

In the atrium, the child is given the freedom to explore and discover his faith at his own pace as he learns of the great love that the Good Shepherd has for him. Through the small group lessons, the atrium presents the elements of the Catholic faith in a way most appropriate to the developmental

stage of the child, encouraging hands-on experiences, contemplative reflection, and communal prayer.

With Mrs. Oriani's guidance, Avalon looks forward to the fruits of this contemplative approach on our students' spiritual formation.

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24th Annual Youth Coaches Hall of Fame Awards Breakfast

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The Truth of the Human Person: Engaging the Culture with Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body

By Maribeth Harper

Widespread confusion regarding gender is on the rise in our community and our culture at large. According to Gallup, nearly 20 percent of Gen Z (ages 18-25) claimed they were some variation of traditional male/female gender or sexual orientation in 2022. Holy Redeemer Parish is engaging the culture in a faithfully Catholic and Christ-like compassionate way with a year-long series on "The Truth of the Human Person." Focusing on

the authentic Catholic truth of our identity, this monthly Wednesday evening series will feature Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body, guest speakers, and thoughtful dialogue on the subject of adolescent gender identity.

Theology of the Body is Catholic teaching on what it means to be fully human — male and female. It is Saint John Paul II's grand proposal to the world of the deepest meaning of life and love made visible in the body. Theology of the Body answers the questions of every human life: *Who*

am I? Why am I here? How can I be happy? Through the Bible and Catholic tradition, Theology of the Body proposes a fresh view of God's love that leads to deep awareness of human dignity, identity, and purpose. This vision produces wonder, peace, joy, and a sense of reverence for oneself and others. Theology of the Body instills confidence in one's ability to live life as a gift to the world.

Parishioners and guests are invited to attend upcoming presentations on "The Truth of the Human Person."

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In the Footsteps of St. Ignatius: In All Things, Love and Serve

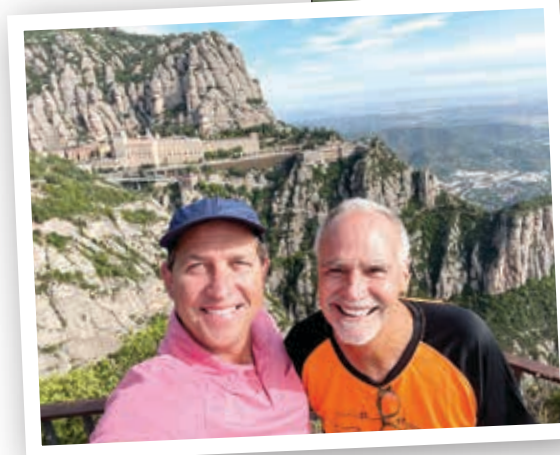
By Bill Haardt, Georgetown Preparatory School

During the summer of 2023, 27 Pilgrims from the Jesuit Schools Network of the USA and Canada embarked to walk in the footsteps of St. Ignatius of Loyola, 500 years later from the original Camino Ignaciano. Thanks to Fr. Jose Luis Iriberry S.J. and Chris Lowney, the Camino



Above: Pilgrims in the the Cave of Manresa – La Cova Manresa

Left: Pilgrims overlooking Montserrat (author Bill Haardt on left)



Ignaciano officially launched over 10 years ago, following on the heels of the growth of that other famous camino, the Camino de Santiago – the Way of St. James. Though both Caminos have history that goes back 500 years (Camino Ignaciano) and 1000 years (Camino de Santiago), Spain began to highlight and encourage walking the way relatively recently. The Camino de Santiago began in earnest in the 70's and then picked up steam when Spain began to advertise and welcome pilgrims in the 90's. The younger brother of the Camino de Santiago, the Camino Ignaciano now has a website and guidebook thanks to the hard work of the Jesuits in Spain and Fr. Jose

Luis Iriberry in particular who leads 12-15 pilgrimages each year. As part of the adult formation of Jesuit high school faculty and staff, I initiated the idea to officially launch a pilgrimage in the footsteps of St. Ignatius after taking Georgetown Prep students on the pilgrimage in 2017. Equally an important student experience, I did not want to forget the need for adult formation in our schools. Given the pace of life and the 24/7 plugged-in nature of the 21st century, a pilgrimage is time for reflection, slowing down and companionship as you are given time each day to walk 8-15 miles and to prayerfully walk alone and in silence at times and in conversation with others. As pilgrim Leah Hepburn, English faculty at Prep, shared, "As an extrovert, the first hour of silence made me nervous

at first, then I came to really value and appreciate that time, knowing there would be time for conversation later." The walking slows down your heart and mind and you begin to understand what St. Ignatius meant when he said, "To ask for the interior knowledge of all the goodness I have received, in order that, stirred to profound gratitude, I may be able to love and serve in all things." The other grace-filled part of the experience of pilgrimage is walking the land and visiting the home, churches and monasteries that St. Ignatius visited in the 1500's. There is something magical about being on this landscape and taking in the various regions of Spain as you contemplate St. Ignatius' own journey from his cannonball injury recovery at Loyola to his conversion at the mountain monastery of Montserrat and his deepest conversion at the Cave of Manresa where the Jesuit Spirituality Center resides today. Pilgrim Damon McGraw,

Theology faculty at Prep, described his experience in this way, "During the past nine days on our Ignatian Pilgrimage, I have experienced a cascade of blessings, graces, realizations, and consolations – too many to count, much less recount. Being immersed in these beautiful places, walking in the footsteps of Ignatius through Northern Spain from Loyola to Barcelona, alongside such great friends and colleagues in Jesuit education, has had a powerful effect on me that I am just begin-

ning to process. Perhaps a fundamental insight would be this: God made use of everything that made Ignatius who he was - the good, the bad, and the ugly – for divine purpose." Pilgrim Marcos Poole, History faculty at Prep, added, "At every step of the Camino, Ignatius was blessed with the beauty of nature, a constant reminder of one of God's greatest gifts. Although the journey was extremely difficult at times, his constant companion was the miracle of life all around him." We are all pilgrims! Buen Camino! St. Ignatius, pray for us!

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TEACHING

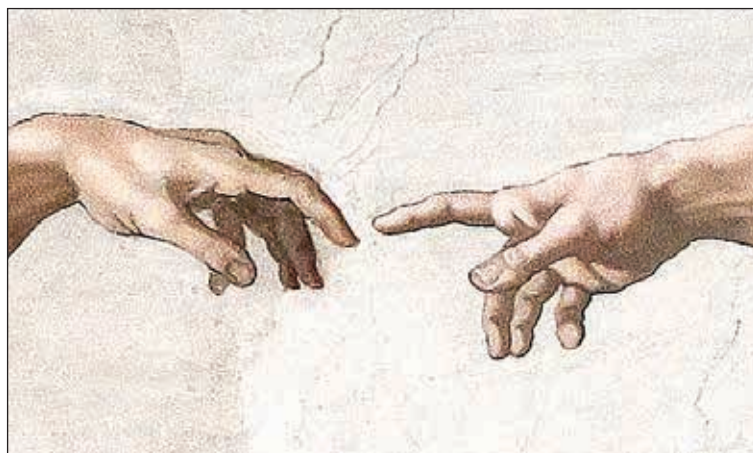
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held on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. in Holy Redeemer Catholic School's Herb Young Auditorium. The kick-off event on September 27, featured a Beckett Fund attorney who is representing parents of diverse faiths who have been denied the right to opt out of gender ideology instruction in Montgomery County Public Schools.

The schedule for November through June is:

November 8, Dr. John Grabowski, Professor of Moral Theology at Catholic University, will share his expertise on gender and thoughts about how Catholics can respond in charity to gender issues in schools and in sports.

December 6, a psychologist (TBD) will review the normal behaviors and vulnerabilities of adolescents.



Detail of "The Creation of Adam" by Michelangelo

Lent 2024, small group session on topics related to Theology of the Body for all who are interested.

April 10, a panel of Holy Redeemer and MCPS educators will discuss what happens when gender issues are raised in the classroom.

June 5, presentation on Theology of the Body by Rev. Walter Schu,

S.Th.D., assistant professor, Department of Integrative Studies at Divine Mercy University.

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Protecting Pregnant Women from Coercion

By Kathy Kelly

In early May, our new Governor, Wes Moore, did a post on his Facebook page asking us what are the issues we care most about in Maryland. The post included a link to a 1-minute survey, the introductory text of which mentioned access to abortion before mentioning any other priorities for his administration. As I proceeded to the survey section, I saw that while one could click checkboxes in front of issues one considered most important to oneself and one's family, that the abortion issue was listed in a one-sided manner: under "Reproductive choice and abortion access." Fortunately, there were also text boxes in which one could opine about priority issues, so I did so. But since social media is interactive, I was also interested in the comments below the post.

As a pro-lifer interested in legislative affairs and politics, I know that law is a teacher, and that bad law is a bad teacher. Since our state now has some new extreme pro-abortion laws in place, as well as a lot of abortion funding at the state and county levels, I decided to speak to the Governor's "pro-choice" instincts. I urged him to support a bill that gets stalled in committee each year without getting to the House floor for witness and debate - HB1043, the Coercive Abuse Against Mothers Prevention Act:

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb-site/Legislation/Details/hb1043>

The first comment below mine, where I had mentioned forced abortion, was perhaps typical of reactive discourse in our times. The commenter used the Laugh Out Loud initialism (LOL) and said that forced abortion wasn't even a thing. But

a second commenter drew my interest; she asked for a reference for an example of forced abortion, since she had never heard of it in this era. So I told her of sidewalk counselors who have encountered this situation, and of Feminists for Life, which has given talks on sex trafficking and how it feeds into forced abortion. But since she asked for a reference, I knew I also had to come back with something more substantive.

I later shared the link to a new report by the Elliot Institute on Forced Abortion in America. The Elliot Institute was founded in the 1980s by Dr. David Reardon, author of *Aborted Women: Silent No More*, to conduct original research on abortion's effects on women, men, families, and our society. I had met David in those days when I was serving as director of communications for an international pro-life organization and editing a newsletter on abortion aftermath. I was glad to see his institute is still producing important research in these days when there are so many misguided assumptions that all abortions are actually wanted and engaged in freely. The Elliot Institute is currently engaged in an UnChoice campaign, to raise awareness about unwanted, coerced, or forced abortions, and related risks and post-abortion harm.

So if you're ever run into someone who LOLs you and says that forced abortion is not even a "thing", don't hesitate to refer them to the experience of sidewalk counselors, or Feminists for Life, or to the Elliot Institute's report, *Forced Abortion in America* - <http://theunchoice.com/forcedabortion.htm>

OPT

Kathy Kelly is the Maryland director of *Democrats for Life*.



Thank you to everyone that came to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month with us! We had a blast celebrating with clients, volunteers, staff, and friends at the luncheon last week! Thank you to everyone that came and brought their favorite dish! We gifted one of our clients with a blender for having the most beautiful dish!

Centro Tepeyac: Building a Community to Provide for Our Needs

By Julie Kilmer

Centro Tepeyac's mission is to encourage, educate, and empower women and men to make life-giving decisions for themselves and their unborn children. They do this by being the first point of contact through gentle, compassionate counseling, practical support, and walking with our clients every step of the way. Want to know more? All are invited to come to Centro Tepeyac on October 28th from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm for our Open House! Come meet the staff and community, get to know the services we provide, and learn about our vision!

Our Centro Tepeyac team is working on growing in our partnerships with nearby parishes. We hope to develop strong relationships with the Catholic churches in the Archdiocese so that parishioners can take part in helping save the lives of the mothers and children that we serve.

Furthermore, Centro Tepeyac offer has recently started their free bi-lingual parenting classes every Friday. They also host free health classes with a nutritionist from Giant Healthy Services every month. Additionally, we are working on creating a program for parents to receive free faith formation classes. We are putting together a group that allows the parents to come together and receive a stronger Catholic formation and support from our volunteer teachers. We hope and pray that these bi-weekly classes will create a more holistic approach to supporting mothers in need.

There are many ways that you can support Centro Tepeyac and to learn about our mission. See some of our opportunities, as well as contact information below:

Centro Tepeyac is looking forward to reno-

Continued on page 16



Centro Tepeyac has been blessed with a steady stream of volunteers, including many family and friends of people already involved with the Center. There are many opportunities for volunteers as we try to expand our outreach into parishes and continue to improve our facilities for our expectant mothers and newborn babies.



Julie Kilmer, her grandma, Helen Kilmer, and other Centro Tepeyac community members at the National Hispanic Heritage Month Luncheon



For the month of October we are partnering with Seven Weeks Coffee. At seven weeks of development a baby is the size of a coffee bean—and for the first time, a heartbeat is clearly detectable. When you purchase a bag of coffee through this link, 10% will be donated to Centro Tepeyac! And if you use the code "Seven," you'll get 10% off your first order. Shop their Specialty Coffee here! sevenweekscoffee.com/?ref=CentroTepeyac

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Students of all ages had a great time dancing and having a blast at our family fun night.

Great Beginnings at St. Raphaels!

By Catherine Pulse

With the start of a new school year comes new friends, new faces, new classes; but one thing we can always count on is that we are all one family at St. Raphael School. This year's theme is "We are one," and was the subject of principal Teri Dwyer's welcome message on our opening day. Members of our school community came together for a welcome mass and celebration on the first day of school, August 28. Father Mike celebrated the joyful beginning of the new school year. As students sang and prayed together, all rejoiced as one unified group to honor God and remember all His wonderful blessings.

The first week of school allowed a new group of kindergarteners to be a part of the "big," school. We are fortunate to have three wonderful kindergarten teachers this year, with the return of the beloved Kim O'Connor joining Francene Krivka and Terri DeRaet. It was a week of firsts, with the fifth graders decorating new lockers, the sixth graders entering middle school, and the eighth graders preparing for their final year at St. Raphael School. New teachers were



Kasey Trees welcomes a new student to the St. Raphael's family.

welcomed, and their work moving forward is very much appreciated. Parents learned details about the upcoming school year, which traditionally takes place on the first evening of school, allowing parents to hear about what to expect the year to bring.

Students said a final goodbye to the summer over the Labor Day Weekend, some returned to the beach for one last time before the fall. Others played sports or enjoyed time with friends and classmates. They only waited a few days for more activities and fun at school, however, as the first family fun night took place on Friday, September 8. After all the hard work and planning, our "One big community," truly came together as one, yet again... Thunder came rolling in, and the moon bounce, tables, chairs, popcorn machine, activity tables and other entertainment were quickly relocated to the Trumpet room without a hitch, by the helping hands of our community. This true group effort allowed the fun to continue, joy and laughter could be heard for hours!

Parents of middle school students joined the teachers for Middle School 101. This session allows parents to follow the schedule of their students and attend mini classes to learn about what class will entail. Middle school students are up for the challenge that the team of teachers provide, and they are sure to learn very much from their knowledgeable leaders. Following this event, parents of eighth graders learned about the process of applying to high school. The St. Raphael experience prepares all students-kindergarten through eighth grade, for what lies ahead. This allows the students to excel and exceed expectations. This is clearly another example of how, "We are one."

Exciting events await on the horizon, Grandparent's Day, our Annual Golf Tournament and Angels on the Run! We will come together in love and faith as One, once again!



Fr. Salah receives the gifts offered by a group of students.

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St. Raphael School**

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Beginning the Year with Welcomes

By Bill and Alison Shields

For St. Bartholomew School students, the start of the 2023-2024 school year was more than greeting friends and teachers whom they hadn't seen since June. It also meant welcoming several administrators, teachers, and clergy who have joined the St. Bart's community and already made a positive and lasting impression on our students. In addition to our new principal, Mr. Giblin, a new middle school English teacher, Ms. Danver, now calls St. Bart's home. And, Fr. Alex Wyvill has joined Fr. Mark Smith and welcomed visitors to our classrooms and campus.

What better way to mark these welcomes and the beginning of a new year than a pizza lunch! The HSA and Student Council sponsored the first one of the year following the first day of classes. Parents, students, staff, and teachers gathered in the courtyard to catch up, give hugs and high fives and enjoy the beautiful, if warm weather. Students also had their



Fr. Alex Wyvill blesses students' backpacks on the first day of school.

backpacks blessed by Fr. Alex.

Heat and downpours didn't stop more than 300 guests from enjoying the annual St. Bart's Day BBQ on September 9. This event, one of the largest and most special, included families from both the parish and the school. Attendees tasted different foods from the potluck and grill, played BINGO, danced to DJ-hosted hits, and caught up with friends after the 5:00 pm mass.

OPT



Bobcats are all fired up for Homecoming 2023, the school's premier fundraising event on November 4, 2023.

Looking Ahead

A new group has been established at St. Bart's, and this time it's just for fathers. Launching its inaugural year, the St. Bart's Father's Club will build fellowship and community among fathers, allowing them to work collaboratively to meet the day-to-day

needs of the school – like lighting up the courtyard for the much beloved Trunk or Treat – and assist in developing and planning longer-term projects on campus, including development efforts for the school's operating expenses.

Just around the corner: *Homecoming*, the yearly auction, which is St. Bart's' premier fundraising vehicle to support critical school needs and initiatives is coming up. The annual event, to be held November 4, received a rousing kickoff earlier this month with a school-wide pep rally, complete with foam fingers, cheerleaders, music, and a Bobcat! The pep rally marked the launch of the auction website and first opportunity to purchase tickets to this wonderful event.

OPT

St. Bartholomew Parish
6900 River Road Bethesda, MD
20816

Rev. Mark Smith, Pastor
301-229-7933

St. Bartholomew School
Kevin Giblin, Principal
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Frank Maguire, OPT Editor
202-512-8226

More Chances for Eucharistic Adoration at St. Jane de Chantal!

St. Jane de Chantal Parish adds a wonderful opportunity for monthly adoration and reflection

By Eileen O'Connor

St. Jane de Chantal parish has always enjoyed opportunities for Adoration on *First Friday* Adorations and Sunday Vespers during Lent. But parishioners were thirsty for more time with our Lord. The parish started a series of monthly Holy Hours Tuesday, September 19. Approximately 50 people came to spend an hour with our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Hour was highlighted by a talk given by Dominican Brother Luke Neitzke O.P. Worshipers were greeted in the narthex before the hour began with complementary reading materials on adoration meditations, *Magnificat Adoration*

Companion, a script from Br. Luke's talk from a previous adoration Holy Hour, and the scripture reading for the evening's talk. Brother Luke spoke that evening on the *Scriptural Basis of Adoration* and the *Road to Emmaus*. He will lead every monthly Holy Hour and has plans for a reflection each time. As is the tradition at St. Jane de Chantal parish, beautiful music will also enhance the experience. All are welcome to come to the monthly Holy Hours on Tuesday nights at 7:00 pm. Each Holy hour will end with Benediction and the next Holy Hour will be October 10 at 7:00 pm. St. Jane de Chantal parish wants all to remember God's message that, "All are welcome in My house".

OPT



Nothing but smiling faces on the eighth grade class of 2024 and their chaperones as they enjoy the beautiful sunset at Camp Maria Retreat Center

De Chantal School's Eighth Grade Attends Spiritual Retreat

Students, teachers, and clergy annually attend Camp Maria retreat to rejuvenate their commitment to Christ and each other

By Catherine Tomsbeck

In Mid-September, de Chantal School's eighth-grade students and faculty spent two days at the Camp Maria Retreat Center in Leonardtown, Maryland. The retreat marked the 33rd year de Chantal students went to Camp Maria for spiritual reflection and eighth grade bonding. The annual retreat is an opportunity for students to reflect spiritually, participate in leadership activities, and bond as a class as they begin their eighth-grade year. Over the course of

the two-day retreat, students celebrated mass with the school's parochial vicar, Fr. Morgan, learned the importance and benefits of prayer as a way to keep close to God, and learned how to maintain a positive life attitude. Also, joining the students at Camp Maria were the school's principal, Mrs. Hamilton, and their teachers Mrs. Vicari, Ms. Dunne, and Mr. Molloy. The adults and children returned to school the following week renewed in their commitment to Christ and ready to lead the school.

OPT



Cross country's newest teammates are the eight and under who are ready to test their limits and learn from their older teammates.

De Chantal Fall Sports Start Off the Season with Happy Faces and Big Wins

CYO Cross Country and Soccer teams start off their seasons right

By Melanie Townsend and Rodrigo Marin

The St. Jane de Chantal CYO Fall sports teams always focus on building fundamental skills, good sportsmanship, and playing for the glory of God. The wins

they stack up are just icing on the cake. With the recent dedication and blessing of the school's beautiful new Reyes Field, the de Chantal CYO teams have felt the energy and it is reflecting on the field. The 2023 Cross Country season is well underway for

Continued on page 30



Our second-grade soccer team huddles before gametime to pray and get some last minute strategy from Coach Rodrigo Marin

St. Jane de Chantal Parish
9601 Old Georgetown Road
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301-530-1550

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Welcome to First Grade

By Kate Fogarty, First-grade Teacher

First Grade is in full swing and we are off to a fantastic start to the school year! It is inspiring to be part of The Woods Academy as we begin our learning together. We are all excited to get to know one another.

We are reading and exploring great books, including *Enemy Pie* by Derek Munson. This text teaches us the importance of kindness, sharing, and taking time to get to know others. Our class talked about friendship and what it takes to be a great friend. We decorated our own friendship pie and created a graphic organizer on what great friendship looks like. We wrote about friendship and displayed our work in our classrooms.

Each first-grade student also created and presented a unique "shield." The shield contains many drawings and symbols that represent what is important and special to each of the students. For instance, some students



First-grade students show off their "shields".

decorated their shield with sports, art, family, and favorite foods. As we created our individual shields the students identified both similarities, differences, and unique interests. All of our first graders did a marvelous job speaking and listening to others. It has been wonderful learning new routines and engaging in a myriad of literacy activities.

OPT

The Teachers I Loved Best

By Jodie Shoemaker, Associate Head of School



Teachers at the Woods Academy began the year with professional development in Responsive Classroom.

Hopefully, all of us can look back at our school experience and recall a favorite teacher. What made this educator memorable? What makes us fondly reflect about the time we spent in their classroom? In his book, *The Teachers I Loved Best*, Taylor Mali celebrates the actions of encouraging, inspiring, and supportive educators revealing that the teachers that we love the best are the ones who love us. During one of our first faculty meetings this school year, I read this book to the faculty and staff and asked them to think and share about their favorite teachers. The energy from these stories of love became some extra motivation for our work at The Woods Academy this school year.

As we kick off a new year, we are hyper-focused on community. Just as important as content and curriculum, community, or more specifically a safe and joyful community, directly impacts academic success at all ages. In a previous post, we noted the importance of prioritizing relationship building in education. For this reason, we spent some time during our Teacher In-Service week in August participating in a Responsive Classroom workshop. "Responsive Classroom is a student-centered, social and emotional learning approach to teaching and discipline. It consists of a set of research, and evidence-based prac-

Continued on page 32

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A Special Blessing to Celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

There was excitement in the air as Holy Cross Religion Education students left the school building after their second session. Each met their parents with expressions like, "It was so cool!" It is always a joy to hear children share positive feedback from their class, but in this instance, the students were talking about a special blessing given to them by Father Wyble on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.



Father Wyble instructs middle school Religion Education students about the history of the True Cross.



A close-up of the reliquary holding two slivers of wood from the True Cross, positioned as a cross.

The students were in awe as Father Wyble visited each classroom and presented the relic of the True Cross with a brief history and a special blessing. Father Wyble, let the students see the relic up close and there was a deep reverence that overcame the children as they inspected the two slivers of wood positioned as a cross in the reliquary.

Relics are sacred articles of faith that inspire deeper faith and devotion among Catholics. They are tangible connections to our Lord and the saints who draw us to the spiritual realities they represent in the universal call to holiness. May the children of Holy Cross Church be blessed and continue to be inspired to grow deeper in faith and love of God!

OPT

Holy Cross Parish and School Picnic: Perfection!

Holy Cross parishioners and school families gathered to celebrate at the annual Holy Cross picnic on Friday, September 15. Happy conversations and laughter filled the air as families enjoyed an evening of fellowship and a delicious barbecue spread with all the fixings.

The picnic coincided with Father Perkins' birthday this year, so he was celebrated with a cake and a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday" by the Hometowne Chorus, an a cappella group of parishioners. The trio entertained the crowd with other songs, including "Java Jive," "Coney Island Baby," "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," and others.

Boy Scouts from Troop 463 were on hand as volunteers to help set up and monitor the beverages table and clean-up. Home and School Association volunteers did a brisk business selling spirit wear, like hoodies and shirts.

Several ministries showcased their work. The Holy Cross Father's Club distributed information about the newly formed group. The Respect Life Committee held a raffle and promoted their annual Bingo night on October 14 in support of Centro Tepeyac. Social Concerns showcased their vibrant ministry and announced their winter clothing drive for Gabriel Project. More details can be found in the Holy Cross bulletin.

A number of activities kept the youngest picnickers enthralled. Cotton candy, funnel cakes, and the popcorn maker were big hits, as were the bouncy house and miniature golf course set up on the field. Even a ride on the playground swings or a trip down the slide was a special occasion with parents there to



At the picnic, faculty and staff sported spirit wear with the words, "Teaching is a Work of Heart."

share the moment.

"Everyone always looks forward to the picnic each year as the parish and school unite as a family. Many Holy Cross alumni also stop by to visit, too, making it truly a family reunion," commented principal Lisa Kane. "It is a gift to be part of such an amazing group of people."

A special thank you to the Home and School Association, members of parish ministries, and all of the volunteers who worked together to make the evening memorable.

OPT

Holy Cross Parish

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Holy Cross School

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Lurana Hogan, Parish Editor
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Buddies Celebrate the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

On Thursday, September 14, the seventh grade joined their second-grade buddies for a special treat to celebrate the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Father Wyble joined the students to say a blessing, but he also happily assisted the teachers and engaged with students to share a kind word and a smile.

The seventh graders helped their younger buddies to understand what it means to exalt the Holy Cross and reminded them how to properly say and make the sign of the cross. Each second grader received a bookmark from his or her buddy, created by seventh-grade homeroom teacher, Mrs. Hogan, which depicted these concepts.

Afterwards, everyone decorated homemade cross-shaped cookies with green icing and sprinkles, all supplied by Mrs. Falcone. It was a sweet end to a special buddy activity.

OPT



Seventh-grade students teach their younger buddies the meaning of the word exalt and demonstrate how to reverently make the sign of the cross.



ABOVE: Two buddies work together to frost and decorate their cookies before enjoying the treat.

LEFT: A second-grade student shows off his cookie masterpiece!



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Members of Chantry performing at a prior St. Bernadette's concert.

Upcoming Chantry Performance at St. Bernadette's

St. Bernadette's will be hosting Chantry on Sunday, October 15 at 3:00 p.m. Chantry is a DC based choral group that performs early music

ensemble pieces from the Renaissance and Baroque eras.

The concert at St. Bernadette's will include performances of *Missa Quam pulchri sunt* and *Pange lingua "more hispano"*. Both pieces are by Tomás Luis de Victoria, one of Spain's greatest composers and one of Monsignor Smith's favorites! The afternoon promises to be a spectacular event with the beauty of liturgical music on full display.

St. Bernadette's parishioners can purchase half price tickets through the rectory. General admissions tickets can be purchased at chantrydc.org or at the door. Visit chantrydc.org for more information.

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Bartholomew Smith, Pastor
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St. Patrick

A Great Eucharistic Revival is Taking Place!

St. Patrick Church will hold its 5th annual Eucharistic Procession down Norbeck Road on Sunday, October 29 at 2:00pm. The theme of this annual event is Reparation to our Eucharistic Lord. All parishes are invited to join as we process from Manor Country Club to St. Patrick's. Park your car at the St. Patrick's parking lot. From there walkers can catch the shuttle buses between 1:00 – 2:00 pm, which will trans-

port us to the front lawn of Manor Country Club. A tent for shade and comfort stations will be provided during the wait time. The Eucharistic Procession, with police escort, will begin at 2:00 pm and takes a little under an hour. Prayers of Reparation will begin in the church immediately upon arrival. The gentle route is just under 1 mile. Come and follow our Lord as He makes His way in our community!

OPT

More St. Patrick News on page 27



On Monday, September 11 our school community came together to remember and honor the events of this day twenty-two years ago through a special prayer service led by fourth-grade class. This solemn and meaningful occasion provided an opportunity for reflection, unity, and remembrance as our young students led us in prayer.

KAPAUN

Con't from page 1

tors. Denied food and medical attention and exposed to the bitter cold, Fr. Kapaun did what he could to practice the corporal works of mercy for his men. He would leave his barracks at night to attempt to steal food from the Chinese and North Korean troops, praying first to St. Dismas, the Good Thief for both heavenly aid and forgiveness!

However, Fr. Kapaun offered his fellow POWs much more than food and blankets; he provided hope to all of those in the camp. He relentlessly offered secret blessings, since public prayer was not allowed, and witnessed to Christ to his Communist captors, risking martyrdom.

After becoming sick shortly after Easter in 1951, Fr. Kapaun was moved to the "hospital" where he was left alone to die. As he was being moved, he told his men not to worry about him, saying, "I'm going where I always wanted to go, and when I get there, I'll say a prayer for all of you."

Fr. Kapaun's body was lost to a mass grave after his death, meaning he was never able



Servicemen salute the flag and recite the Pledge of Allegiance while the colors are presented by the St. John's College High School Color Guard, of which SJRCS Class of 2022 graduate Nathan Negash is a member.

to have a Catholic funeral. It was not until 2021 when his body was successfully identified and transported back to Wichita, Kansas that he was able to have the Rite of Christian Burial.

The St. Jude's community celebrates this great man and his amazing faith every other year with an outdoor Mass and looks forward to following his path to sainthood!

OPT



Rev. Paul D. Lee, STD, pastor of the Shrine of St. Jude, along with Father Noboa, Father Kosty, SJRCS Principal Jeanne Donatelli, and SJRCS Vice Principal Katharine Balog gather after Mass with very important guests and members of the community. We pray for these men and women who have served or are currently serving our country. Photos by Rebecca Sella.

Mercy's Teachers are Summer Learners

The summer months were learning months for many of Mercy's teachers as they utilized some of their downtime for professional development. Just another example of the dedication and commitment of our teachers! Their summer learning included:

- A graduate class at Washington Trinity University on teaching Shakespeare to young adults.
- An Archdiocese of Washington summer course, "Inclusion: Accessible Education for All."
- "Teach Like a Champion" book study,

which clarified the importance of reading fluency which enables a student to free up their working memory so comprehension may become possible.

- "Technology for Instruction and Management" and "Processes and Acquisitions of Reading" which teach strategies to enhance the use of technology and strengthen the development of early reading and writing skills.
- A webinar, "Dealing with Difficult People and Difficult Conversations for Teachers" offered through NCEA.

OPT



Building a foundation! Mercy's Middle School students participated in a comprehensive study skills program during the first week of school.



Bringing back a school Mass tradition! Mercy flags will once again be a part of a select number of special Masses throughout the year.



Newly assigned Prayer Partners shared a book and got to know each other in preparation for the Opening School Mass.

Interscholastic Soccer Expands at Mercy

Mercy launched its first ever Interscholastic Soccer Program last spring, fielding a Boys' Middle School Team. The team was comprised of 19 student-athletes in grades 5-8. This fall, we have expanded the program to include a Middle School Girls' team as well! The goals of this program are to offer the opportunity for students to grow athletically as individuals, teammates, and as leaders, to promote scholarship in athletics, to grow school spirit through athletics, and to build student enthusiasm for the creation of more interscholastic sports at Mercy.

This fall, the teams will each play a competitive five-game schedule against local private and parochial schools as well as several D.C. charter schools. The participants raise funds to pay for transportation, referee fees, new equipment, and athletic scholarships by


selling gourmet popcorn. The teams raised a combined \$7,000! Continuing their partnership with *Leveling the Playing Field*, the student-athletes collect used athletic equipment, which is then donated to youth athletic programs in low-income communities.

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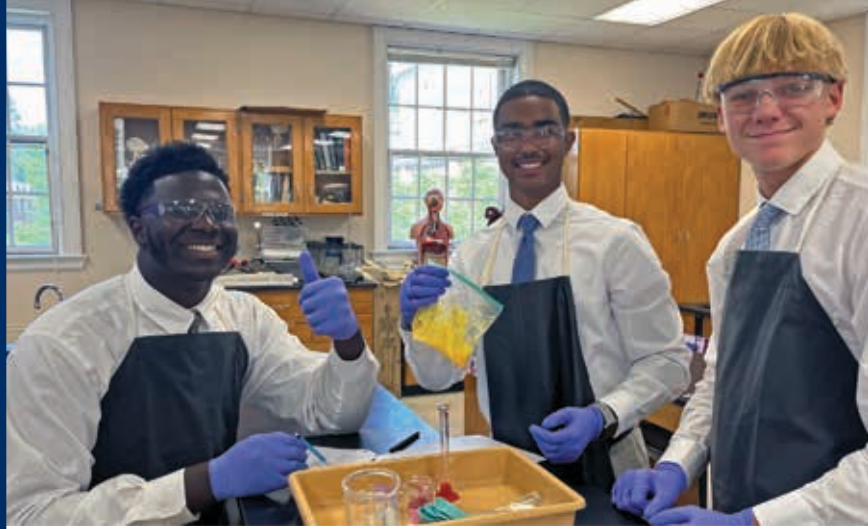
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Above and below: Our Lady of Lourdes priests and parishioners participated in a meditative Cross Walk throughout the Washington area, arriving at St. Ann's, their final stop.



Cross Walk Pilgrimage

On September 16, approximately 70 members of the faithful joined Father James Morrison and Father James Glasgow for a uniquely local and prayerful experience. The Cross Walk pilgrimage began with 8:00 am Mass at St. Mary's Church in Rockville. From there, the group walked 12 miles, stopping at Holy Cross Church in Garrett Park, Our Lady of Lourdes in Bethesda, and St. Ann's Church in Tenleytown. Throughout the journey, group members carried a large, wooden cross.

The journey was inspired by the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, a feast which celebrates the victory of Christ's cross and our own crosses when we carry them with Jesus. Father James Morrison, who organized the event, explained, "My desire for the pilgrimage was to start local Catholic traditions to cultivate our faith and enrich our ties of community." Local Catholics should be encouraged to hear that they can expect more similar pilgrimage opportunities in the future.

OPT



Above: Many members of the OLOL school community chipped in to make the Back-to-School picnic a tremendous success. Photo by Katie Crandlemire Photos

Below: Priests, teachers, students, and parents celebrated with a cookout, dancing, and fellowship at the Our Lady of Lourdes Back-to-School picnic on Friday, September 8. There is no place like OLOL! Photo by Katie Crandlemire Photos



Our Lady of Lourdes parishioners enjoy delicious handmade pupusas during a Community Sunday after the 1:30 pm Mass.

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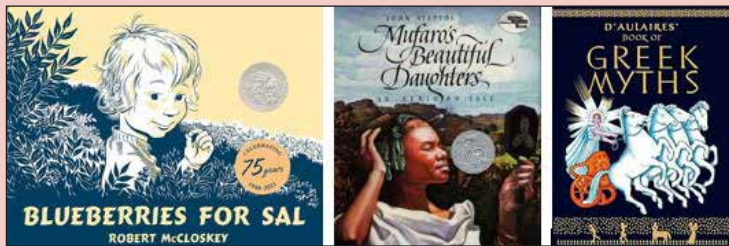
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301-654-5376

Exploring Literature and Scripture as Children of God

By Ann Enkiri

At Holy Redeemer School, students are nurtured in the dignity of having been created by God in the image of God. Across the curriculum, teachers help students to grow in the knowledge that each one is created as a unique gift. Throughout his priesthood, Saint John Paul II used plays, poetry, art and stories to awaken young people to the wonder of their humanity, the purpose of love, and



Classic children's books used by K-5 teachers to discuss Catholic teaching

the beauty of their culture.

Teachers from Kindergarten through Fifth Grade, use the ele-

mentary Theology of the Body

Continued on page 34

Sweet Tradition Lives on at Holy Redeemer PreK

For as many years as anyone can remember, preschool students at Holy Redeemer have been celebrating the arrival of a new baby in the family with... egg cartons! When a PreK student is blessed with a new brother or sister, that student and their classmates get to work painting egg carton cups. The newly minted big brother or sister is asked to pick paint colors for the project, which sometimes results in a multicolored bouquet, and other times a monochromatic one. Pipe cleaner stems are attached and the flowers are then arranged in a decorated play-dough filled cup. The following day, that proud student gets to bring the bouquet home to their new baby. Apparently some of these bouquets have been saved and



HR third grader Kevin and his brother Connor (seventh grade) pose with bouquets made for them when they were born.

treasured for years!

Current PreK teacher Kathryn Wasp even recalls painting egg carton flowers when SHE was a 4-year-old at Holy Redeemer and there was a new baby in the school family! "I absolutely remember painting them" said Mrs. Wasp "we all got to do 1 and whoever had the new baby could do 2 if they wanted."

In the past year, Holy Redeemer's youngest cardinals have created a whopping 14 egg carton flower bouquets for 14 new babies born to PreK families in the school, not to mention at least 7 others who were born over the summer when school was not in session. At this rate, we are well on our way to filling our 3-year-old PreK classes in 2026!

OPT

New Faculty Members Enrich Faith-Filled Learning at HR

Meghan Davis, PreK 4 Teacher FL names

I am the new PreK 4 teacher at Holy Redeemer. I have been a part of the Archdiocese of Washington for my whole life. Growing up, I attended St. John the Baptist and Good Counsel High School. I then attended Radford University for my undergraduate degree. After college I began teaching at St. Peter's in Olney for many years. While teaching, I attended The College of Notre Dame of Maryland and received my master's degree. My husband and I live in Kensington, Maryland with our three children. My favorite thing to do in my free time is run and spend time at the beach with my family. I am very excited to be teaching at Holy Redeemer and look forward to a year filled with lots of fun and learning with my fabulous 4s!

Kelly Elliott, Resource Teacher

I grew up in Chevy Chase and attended Blessed Sacrament School. As a child, I always loved participating in the Greg Gannon Food Drive. With three children at Holy Redeemer Catholic School, my husband and I are looking forward to the friendly rivalry between Holy Redeemer and Blessed Sacrament when the drive is underway this year. From our home in Kensington, my family loves making our way to the water for fishing, crabbing, and kayaking. A graduate

of Washington College, my master's degree in Special Education from American University, and my previous employment at The River School in Washington, D.C. have prepared me well for my new role as a resource teacher. I am so happy to support children and teachers with differentiated approaches for student mastery of content and skills.

Megan Martin, Guidance Counselor

I am the new school counselor at Holy Redeemer. I grew up in Pennsylvania with my mom, dad, and older brother, but moved often as my dad was in the Air Force. I enjoy going on hikes, camping, and cheering on the Orioles (GO ORIOLES!!). Prior to coming to Holy Redeemer, I was a self-contained special educator in Baltimore County for five years. I graduated from Towson University in

Continued on page 24

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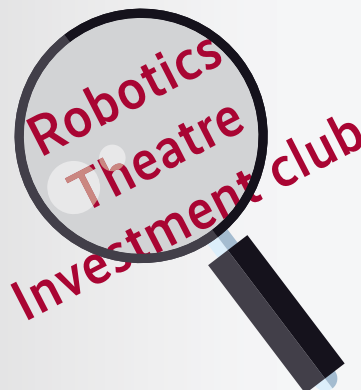
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It was an all-out tug-of-war at this year's picnic!

Back to School Picnic

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Assistant Principal: Katherine Schultz
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Much fun was had at the Back-to-School Picnic! To kick off the start of another school year, the HSA hosted another stellar picnic, complete with bouncy castles, water slides, ice cream and more! Mary of Nazareth students, teachers, and their families had fun in the sun celebrating their return to our MoN campus. It was a beautiful evening when the MoN community thrived as families reconnected after a summer away. Students took part in a spirited game of tug-of-war, soccer games, and had fun tossing the ball around the new gaga pit. There was also an HSA fundraiser for the eighth-grade New York trip, which was a smashing success! The back-to-school picnic is a fan favorite serving as a fresh reminder to why there's no place like MoN!

OPT

Author Visit!

First-grade students at Mary of Nazareth were filled with excitement a few weeks ago as they welcomed a very special guest. Salvacion "Roselle" Reyes, a talented author, flew by their classroom wearing some monarch butterfly wings to read her new book, *Mona in A Mesh*. This captivating tale follows the journey of a young girl named Mona, who embarks on a remarkable adventure. Through the captivating story of a monarch butterfly's life cycle, Mona and first graders learned about empathy, friendship, and understanding while watching the life cycle of a monarch butterfly unfold.

Ms. Reyes is not the first author to visit the children, nor will she be the last as Mary of Nazareth loves hands-on, interactive learning and what better way to experience a story than with the author themselves!



Author Roselle Reyes sharing her book with Mary of Nazareth first graders.

OPT



The eighth-grade boys looking dapper as they prepare for the evening's cotillion class.

OPT

Cotillion Kick-Off

Both MoN students and students from other parishes donned their finest ties and dresses as another year of cotillion began! The eighth-grade cotillion is designed to help students develop social skills, confidence, and an understanding of proper etiquette for formal events and social gatherings. Over the next few weeks eighth graders from both inside and outside the MoN community will polish up their best table manners while also connecting with other students.

OPT

McGANN

Con't from page 1

Fortunately, for this young man he found himself in the company of people who took the time to know him; people who helped him discover that engineering was not the appropriate major for him; and helped him to change his major to English.

Monk's academic career took off from there. His basketball career presented him with challenges and frustrations throughout his time at ND, though. He got very little playing time, but he stuck with the team throughout his four years. He graduated in good standing, and immediately entered the seminary. As unlikely as it seemed for young Monk Malloy during his early days at Notre Dame, in 1987 he was appointed to be the President of the

University of Notre Dame, and he held that position until 2005.

Some might say that it was a miracle that Monk graduated after such an inauspicious start, and an even greater miracle that he eventually became the president of this great Catholic University. Those aren't the miracles, though. The miracles came in the form of the small moments, the people along the way who generously shared their presence and their guidance during his struggles. It was all the seemingly insignificant decisions he made along the way – to study a little harder, to ask for help, to stay with the team when he realized he was not going to be a star, to keep trying and praying.

We understand that grace is a gift from God, meant to move us along the path toward Heaven. Grace came to Monk in many ways over his years at Notre Dame, and last

week he became a source of grace for those of us who heard his homily. We were reminded that when nothing seems to make sense in our lives, we needn't wait around for a miracle to change our circumstances. Rather, it's the small miracles we encounter that matter. It's the grace that comes from kind words, it's the hope that someone holds for us when we have none. The pats on the back or the firm push from the back, and the simple presence of a friend or a team of friends – these are what keep us going in the right direction.

Grace comes to us in the form of that person who spends the time to help us decide, the person who convinces us otherwise when we think we've exhausted all options, and the person who insists that we'll be fine even when we're pretty sure we won't.

OPT

CENTRO TEPEYAC

Con't from page 4

vating our play area for children to enjoy while their mothers are in counseling sessions or taking a class. We are collecting toys, a small table and chairs, and other items for this space.

There are several part-time job openings, such as a Spanish speaking counselor and director of development, open with Centro Tepeyac. If you would like to offer your expertise, vol-



The American Heritage Girls helped provide adorable personalized onesies for our new babies.

unteer, or financial or material support, these could be great opportunities.

You can also offer material assistance by shopping our Amazon Baby registry (listed as Centro Tepeyac Silver Spring) to send donations right to our center.

Centro Tepeyac, most importantly asks for your prayers. We entrust our work to Our Lady of Guadalupe to protect the mothers who cry out for support and their children. Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!

OPT



Mary of Nazareth
Catholic School

Welcome

Building futures.
Building faith.

Open House | October 17th

14131 Seneca Road
Darnestown, MD 20874
www.maryofnazareth.org





Upcoming FALL Events Registrations are open!



SEPT TO OCT 8-WEEKS

T-ball , Coach Pitch, Rec & Travel Teams

Potomac & Rockville locations



OCT 21 TO DEC 10

Flag Football PreK - 9th Grade

Instructional, Parent QB, Kid QB
End-of-season playoffs and Super Bowl



DEC TO FEB 8-WEEKS

Instructional 4-years to 2nd Grade 1st Grade Developmental League 2nd/3rd Grade Competitive League

**MORE
INFORMATION**

kidball.org
kidballbaseball@aol.com



SHORT*Con't from page 1*

and joy.

In October's abundance, there are unique opportunities for parish service and action. In a moment, we will reflect on the major theme of the month, the dignity of all human life. Let's start with a few celebrations. **Potomac Community Resources**, a multi-parish non-profit serving hundreds of adults with developmental differences for 30 years, will hold its annual Patricia Sullivan Benefit Dinner on October 21. PCR is a model opportunity in our Catholic community because of its inclusive programming and multi-parish engagement. It's an ideal program to support during

this respect for life month, as its core mission is dignifying human life through full inclusion of people in a wide range of activities and opportunities. This year's awards will be given to: **Larry Ryan, Leadership; Beth Zeidman, Outstanding Adult Volunteer; Ridgely Bryer, Outstanding Youth Volunteer; and Catholic Charities, Outstanding Community Partner.** Congratulations to the Director, Steve Riley, for another year of amazing service. To attend or contribute, go to www.pcr-inc.org or call 301-365-0561.

Also in October is the Catholic Business Network's Annual Youth Coaches Hall of Fame Awards Breakfast on October 11. Our parishes are blessed to have many CYO teams serving our children.

These rely on dedicated volunteers who coach and support the sports teams. While all CYO coaches are honored at the breakfast, a few are selected each year for their excellence in service to youth sports. **This year the honorees are Tim Muttin, Blessed Sacrament; Joe Reyda, Holy Redeemer, Catie Skibo, St. Jane de Chantal, and Brendan Quinn, Our Lady of Lourdes.** This is an opportunity to celebrate and support all those who make CYO sports possible for our children (and their cheering grandparents!) To support the Catholic Business Network, go to cbnmontgomerycounty@gmail.com. If you miss this opportunity, there is another. The Annual CBN Gala will take place on December 1, 2023.

Prepare your shopping lists for the annual St. Patrick's (Rockville) yard sale benefiting Haiti on October 14. Each year hundreds of people descend upon St. Patrick's for bargains. The event demonstrates faith in action in several ways. Thousands of dollars are raised to assist the poor in Haiti. Local needy benefit from the affordability of the goods. The parish and school communities are enhanced through serving together, including multiple generations and differing abilities. Recycling thousands of items reduces waste going to the landfill. To learn more, contact Christie Anne Short at cashort2002@yahoo.com

October is the month the US Bishops designate to respect and the dignity of all human life, from

conception to natural death. Their teaching is abundantly clear as is the second of the great commandments of Jesus. Yet the practical application of this imperative has caused enduring dissent and suffering within the Church. Spiritual and personal disagreements continue to weaken the Church and local parishes. I pray that God will help us reach resolution on this fundamental spiritual matter.

Let's focus on areas we likely agree and take effective action within and among our parishes to promote abundant life for all. Hubert Humphry said that communities can be judged on how they care for people, especially for **those at the dawn of life, those in the shadows of life, and those in the dusk of life.** Each person is valued and respected when communities behave in ways that assure the dignity of each life through justice and compassion. There are no shortcuts or half measures to the abundance of life.

Centro Tepeyac is a non-profit Catholic family service center operating in the Catholic Charities Center in Wheaton amid a half dozen Catholic parish communities. It exemplifies a mission that supports the fullness of life. Centro Tepeyac was established in 1990 by a dedicated group of local Catholics concerned there were inadequate pro-life services available to local Latino women and their families. The center is unique as it provides professional and volunteer Spanish speaking counselors who not only assist women with crisis pregnancies to keep their children, but also provides a range of supportive services to families including counseling, referral, education, and essential material items such as food and diapers. Out of despair and poverty, low-income women may turn to abortion because they lack the material and emotional supports needed to provide for a healthy child. Centro Tepeyac helps in every way, not only during pregnancy, but after childbirth as long as necessary. To continue to support pregnant women and young families, they require abundant support. Food alone is an urgent need for their clients. Centro Tepeyac is ideal for parishes who wish to support a comprehensive pro-life activity, to behave in ways which support the dignity of all life. The new Director, Julie Kilmer (St. Jude's) is committed to serving every woman who seeks help. Julie is a recent college graduate and commissioned officer in the Army Reserves. She has the passion, commitment, and skill to lead her team in protecting and enhancing human life. She and her team deserve our help. I urge every parish to support this effective program in its mission to assure an abundance of life for low income, Latino women and their children. Tepeyac needs food, diapers, clothes, other material support and volunteers. Contact Julie Kilmer at 301-587-9516 or go to centrotepeyac.org.

God bless!
Chuck Short
Cshort52verizon.net

Transparency and Trust.

That's Our Commitment to You.



As a Leader in Community Service, We Believe in Giving Back.

**YELLOW RIBBON FUND | PET ADOPTION PROGRAM
CHILD SAFETY SEAT PROGRAM**

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Recycle Over 80% of Solid Waste Stream**

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North America with this
distinction.**

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OPEN HOUSE
SATURDAY OCT. 28

10:00AM-1:00PM

Come see what Joy can do.

A healthier, smarter way to prepare for college and life.

CONNELLY SCHOOL OF THE
HOLY CHILD

HOLYCHILD.ORG
301-365-0955
9029 Bradley Blvd.
Potomac MD

DeMatha Catholic High School

The Brotherhood of Faith-Filled Gentlemen and Scholars

Open House
November 5th
Doors Open 10:30

Register online:
www.dematha.org/admissions



Faith Community Service Academics Music & Arts Athletics

Archbishop Carroll
 Larry Savoy '93, President
 Elana Gilmore, Principal
 Judith Condezo, Director of Admissions
 admissions@achsc.org
 202-529-0900 ext 135
 4300 Harewood Road, NE
 Washington, DC 20017

CO-ED
 Highly competitive athletic programs: Football, Basketball, Track & Field, Soccer, Volleyball and Baseball
WCAC
LIONS
Green & Gold

SPECIALIZED Educational Programs
 Jim Vance
 Media Program
 Project Lead The Way
 STEM/Engineering
 Fine Arts

OPEN HOUSE
Sunday
October 29
 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Early Application Deadline **DEC 8, 2023**
 Financial Aid Application Deadline **DEC 2023**

Early Admission Notification **FEB 16, 2024**
 Registration Deposit Due **March 15, 2024**

Freshman Class Size: 130 • Tuition: \$17,463 • PRO DEO ET PATRIA • www.archbishopcarroll.org

the Avalon School
 R.J. Hawley Executive Director
 Richard B. McPherson President
 Kevin J. Davern Head of School
 Istvan Teleki Director of Admission
 11811 Claridge Road, Wheaton, MD 20902
 301-963-8022 www.avalonschools.org

Boys Grades K-12
 Baseball
 Basketball
 Soccer
Exceptional Faculty

Small Classes • Personal Attention • Content-Oriented Curriculum • Advanced Placement (AP) Courses • Latin • Spanish • Advanced Mathematics Program • Full Religion Program • Actors Guild • Poetry • Journalism • Dress Code • Interscholastic Sports

Open House
Sunday, November 5
 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Steps to Admission:
 • Application
 • Shadow Visit
 • Teacher Recommendation
 • Transcript
 • Family Interview

Priority Freshmen Application Deadline **Jan. 19, 2024**
 Freshmen Notification **Feb 16, 2024**

Rolling Admission for all other grades
 Financial Aid Deadline, **Jan. 31, 2024**

Avg. Class Size: 13 • K-2 Lower \$9,900 • 3-5 Elementary \$14,975 • 6-8 Middle \$16,530 • 9-12 Upper \$19,255 • For information: Istvan Teleki 301-963-8022

Brookewood School
 R.J. Hawley Executive Director
 Richard B. McPherson President and Head of School
 Helen Williams Director of Admission
 10401 Armory Avenue, Kensington, MD
 301-949-7997 www.brookewood.org

Girls Grades K-12
 Basketball, Cross Country, Field hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Volleyball
Bengals
Blue & White

College Prep • Small Classes • Personal Attention • Experiential Learning • Advanced Placement (AP) Courses • Actors Guild • Diverse Student Body • Fine Arts • Engaging Religion Curriculum

Open House
Brookewood's Open House is Saturday, October 28 from 1-3 p.m.

Steps to Admission
 Shadow Visit
 Application
 Transcript
 Recommendation
 Family Interview

Freshman application deadline **Jan. 12, 2024**
 Admission Notification **Feb. 23, 2024** by email

Rolling Admission for all other grades
 Financial aid deadline of **Jan. 31, 2024**

Average Class Size: 14 • Tuition: Grades K-2 \$9,900 Grades 3-5 \$14,975 Grades 6-8 \$16,530 Grades 9-12 \$19,255 • For more information: Helen Williams 301-949-7997

DeMatha Catholic High School
 Fr. James Day, O.S.S.T., President
 Dr. Daniel McMahon, Principal
 Mr. Brendan Shea, Admissions Director
 www.dematha.org • 240-764-2210
 4313 Madison Street, Hyattsville, MD 20781

Boys
 15 music ensembles, 45 athletic teams, dozens of clubs, and the new Cross Center for Engineering, Arts, and Robotics.
Stags
Red, White & Blue

Curriculum
 College Prep, Honors, Advanced Placement level courses to meet needs of a diverse student body.

Open House
Sunday, Nov. 5
10:30 a.m.

Entrance Exam: Archdiocesan HSPT required

Freshman Application Deadline **December 15**
 Financial Aid Application Deadline **December 15**

Freshman Notification of Admission **Feb. 2024**
 Registration Deposit Due **Mid-March 2024**

Freshman Class Size: 230 • Tuition: \$21,950 • Application / Financial Aid: Admissions Office 240-764-2210

ES Elizabeth Seton High School
 Dr. Lisa Grillo '89 President
 Rosalyn Cruz Director of Admissions
 5715 Emerson Street
 Bladensburg, MD 20710
 301-864-4532 www.setonhs.org

Girls
 Our athletic program fields 22 teams in 13 interscholastic sports. We offer over 30 clubs for extra-curricular participation.
 Washington Catholic Athletic Conference
Roadrunners
Scarlet, Gold, and White

Pre-Career Programs
 Pharmacy Technician, Agnes M. Brown Law Program, LEAD (Engineering Program), Young Women's Entrepreneurship Program
 • AP & Honors Courses
 • Scholars Program
 • Small classes and personal attention

Open House
Sunday, November 5
11-2 pm

Entrance Exam Archdiocesan test results required.
 Schedule a student visit at setonhs.org/visit

Archdiocesan Financial Aid Application Required

Notification of Admission **February 16**
 Registration **March 8**

Total Enrollment 530 Students • Tuition \$19,077

Georgetown Preparatory School
 10900 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda, MD
 www.gprep.org 301-493-5000
 Rev. James R. Van Dyke, S.J., President
 John Glennon Jr., Headmaster
 Brett Graham '92, Admissions Director

Boys
 500 students
 28 AP Classes
 9 Honors Courses
 16 Different Sports
 80 Clubs and Organizations
Hoyas
Blue & Gray

Global Boarding School
 120 Residents
 6 Continents
 19 Countries
 14 U.S. States
 Immersion Trips
 Language Trips

Open House
Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023
 12 - 3 p.m.
 Grades 6-8 Welcome

Admissions Process Visit
 www.gprep.org/steps to learn about admissions and register for Hoya for a Day

Application Deadline **Dec. 15, 2023**
 Supplemental & Aid Deadline **Jan. 19, 2024**

Notification of Admission **February 2024**
 Registration Deposit Due **March 2024**

Forming Men of Competence, Conscience, Courage & Compassion; Men of Faith, Men for Others since 1789 • Tuition: Day: \$42,190 Boarding: \$69,365

Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School
 Dr. Barbara McGraw Edmondson, President
 Leonor Ponzio, Principal
 Janet Donnelly Keller, Director of Admissions
 202.337.3350 • www.visi.org
 1524 Thirty-fifth Street NW
 Washington, DC 20007

Girls 9-12
 A Catholic High School in the Salesian Tradition Educating Women of Faith, Vision, and Purpose Since 1799 • Small Class Sizes • 100% College Acceptance • Bridge Program at Georgetown • AP & Honors • Extensive Service Program • ISL Champion Athletics • Dynamic Performing and Fine Arts • Strong STEM Focus • More than 50 Clubs
Cubs • Gold, White & Green

OPEN HOUSE
Saturday
Oct. 14, 2023

Learn more about the admissions process at www.visi.org

Freshman Application Deadline **Dec. 1, 2023**
 Financial Aid Appl. Deadline **Jan. 8, 2024**

Freshman Notification of Admission **End of February**
 Registration Deposit Due **Mid-March 2024**

Freshman Class Size: 126 • Tuition: \$35,450 • Financial Aid: Janet Keller @ 202.337.3350 ext. 2241

Gonzaga College High School
 19 I St., NW, Washington, DC 20001
 Rev. Joseph E. Lingan, S.J., President
 Mr. Thomas K. Every II, Headmaster
 Mr. Andrew C. Battaile, Dean of Admissions
 202-336-7101

Boys
 7 Freshman, 16 Junior Varsity, and 17 Varsity Sports
 Washington Catholic Athletic Conference
Eagles
Purple & White

Comprehensive advanced placement and honors courses; small class size; education with a conscience and a focus on social justice in the tradition of the Jesuits.

Open House
Sunday
November 19
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Entrance Exam Archdiocesan test results are required.

Application Deadline **December 14**
 Financial Aid Appl. Deadline **December 18**

Notification of Admission **Feb. 23, 2024**
 Registration Deposit Due **March 11, 2024**

Freshman Class Size: 245 • The Catholic, Jesuit school located in the heart of our nation's capital city. • Tuition: \$28,240

High School Open House Dates

The Academy of the Holy Cross
 4920 Strathmore Ave., Kensington, MD 20895
 Kathleen Prebble, President
 John Sullivan, Principal
 Barbara Murray & Nancy Salmerón, Admissions
 www.academyoftheholycross.org
 301-942-2100 • admissions@academyoftheholycross.org

Girls
 17 AP Courses
 Vast Performing/Visual Arts
 30 clubs and activities
 17 Varsity Teams
Washington Catholic Athletic Conference
 Tartans • Lavender & White

Special Programs
 Sancta Crux Scholars
 Madeleva Scholars
 Gillespie STEM Scholars
 Project Lead the Way Engineering
 Dual Credit/Enrollment
 Senior Project Internship

Open House
Sunday, Nov. 5
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Scholarships Available
 Merit
 Performing Arts
 STEM
 Visual Arts

Application Deadline **Dec. 8, 2023**
 Financial Aid Appl. Deadline **Jan. 8, 2024**

Notification of Admission **February 2024**
 Registration Deposit Due **March 8, 2024**

Tuition: \$30,450 • Financial Aid Available

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL HIGH SCHOOL
 A Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School
 17301 Old Vic Boulevard
 Olney, MD 20832
 John Ciccone, President
 Thomas Campbell '93, Principal
 Maria Nichols '04, Executive Director of Enrollment Management
 Admissions@olgchs.org • www.olgchs.org

COED
 Offering a comprehensive college prep curriculum including the IB Program, AP and Honors courses, the STEM Program, and the Ryken Program.

Home of the Falcons
 Extensive co-curricular activities, 40+ sport teams, Performing Arts, Speech & Debate and over 50 cultural and academic clubs.
 Member of the W.C.A.C.

Open House
Sunday
October 22, 2023
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Prospective Parent Information Night
 Tuesday
 Sept. 26, 2023
 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Freshman Application Deadline **Dec. 1, 2023**
 Freshman Financial Aid Appl. Deadline **Dec. 1, 2023**

Freshman Notification of Admission **Feb. 22, 2024**
 Freshman Registration **Friday, March 8, 2024**

Tuition \$29,350

ST. ANSELM'S ABBEY SCHOOL
 4501 SOUTH DAKOTA AVE, NE
 WASHINGTON, DC 20017
 Mr. John Corrigan, '83 Interim Headmaster 202-269-2350
 Mr. Brian Gilbert Director of Admissions 202-269-2374
 admissions@saintanselms.org www.saintanselms.org

Boys
 Soccer, Cross Country, Basketball, Swimming, Wrestling, Tennis, Baseball, Track, Golf, Fencing
Potomac Valley Athletic Conference
Panthers

Special Programs
 Challenging academic program for students of above average ability in grades 6-12

Open House
Sunday
November 12
12:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Benedictine School

On the grounds of St. Anselm's Abbey on 42 acres in NE Washington
 Entrance Exam: Oct. 14, Nov. 11, Dec. 9, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, Apr. 20

Financial Aid Appl. Deadline **Feb. 3, 2024**

Notification of Admission: **Feb. 23** for Upper School **March 3** for Middle School
 Registration Deposit Due **March 3, 2024**

Freshman Class Size: 35 • Tuition: \$34,000 Middle; \$35,000 Upper • Financial Aid: Mr. Mark Commins mcommins@saintanselms.org

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL | Est. 1851
 Mr. Jeffrey W. Mancabelli, President
 Mr. Christopher J. Themistos, Principal
 Mrs. Susan Hinton, VP of Enrollment Management and Administration
 202-363-2316 • www.stjohnschs.org
 2607 Military Road, NW, Chevy Chase, DC 20015

COED
 24 AP Courses
 16 Honors Courses
 29 Varsity Teams
 60+ Clubs and Activities
 1:1 iPad Program

Special Programs
 Scholars Program
 Benilde Program
 Cadet Corps
 Entrepreneurial Center for Innovation & Social Impact
 Center for Performance & Leadership
 Visual & Performing Arts Wing

Open House
OPEN HOUSE
Oct. 22, 2023

Entrance Exam
 Archdiocesan HSPT results are required.

Application Deadline **Dec. 8, 2023**
 Financial Aid Appl. Deadline **Jan. 29, 2024**

Notification of Admission **Late Feb. 2023**
 Registration Deposit Due **Mid-March 2024**

Tuition: \$23,950

SAINT JOHN'S CATHOLIC PREP
 Will Knotek, Head of School
 Mary Catherine James Director of Enrollment
 3989 Buckeystown Pike
 Buckeystown, MD 21717
 E-mail: MJJames@SaintJohnsPrep.org • 301-662-4210

Special Programs
 Frederick County's Only Private Catholic High School • Founded in 1829 • College Prep Curriculum
 • Guaranteed College Admission and Scholarship Program • AP and Honors Courses • Mount St. Mary's Dual Enrollment • AOPA STEM Program • 20 Athletic Teams • 20+ Student-Run Clubs • Student Support Center including School and College Counseling and Academic Support

OPEN HOUSE
Sunday
Nov. 5, 2023
12:00-2:30PM
 Optional Mass at 11:00

Schedule your Private Tour and Shadow Visit

HSPT or Institutional Testing Required
 Priority Application Deadline **Dec. 15, 2023**

Financial Aid & Scholarship Deadline **Feb. 1, 2024**
 Notification of Admission **Feb. 15, 2024**

VIKINGS Green, Gold & White
 School Size: 280 • Tuition: \$19,775 • Financial Aid: MJJames@SaintJohnsPrep.org • www.saintjohnsprep.org

Mr. Jeffrey Palumbo, President/Principal
 Mrs. Stacy Springer, Director of Enrollment Management

PALLOTTI ST. VINCENT HIGH SCHOOL
 113 ST. MARY'S PLACE, LAUREL, MD 20707
 301-725-3228 Ext. 2202 • www.pallottihs.org

Coed
 Over 25 varsity athletic teams; Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)-Boys; Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (IAAM)-Girls

College Prep Curriculum
 Honors & AP Courses
 96% College Placement
 Accelerated Science & Engineering Programs
 Visual & Performing Arts Program
 Learning Center

Open House
Sunday, Nov. 5
2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Visit the web site for 2024-2025 application!

Admissions Application Deadline **Dec. 15, 2023**
 1:12 Teacher Student Ratio

Financial Aid Application Deadline **Jan. 3, 2024**
 Notification of Admission **Feb. 15, 2024**

Tuition: \$19,300 Variable Rate / \$20,600 Locked In Rate
 410 Students • admissions@pallottihs.org

Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart
 Catherine Ronan Karrels '86, Head of School
 9101 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814 • www.stoneridgeschool.org
 301-657-4322 • Average Freshman Class Size: 95 • Tuition: \$44,900 • Financial Aid Available

Girls Grades 1-12 (Coed PK-K)
 Basketball, crew, cross country, equestrian, field hockey, golf, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, squash, swimming/diving, tennis, track & field and volleyball

Special Programs
 Honors / AP Courses
 Social Action
 Network Exchange
 STEAM Certificate
 1:1 Laptop

Open House
Upper School
Sunday
October 15, 2023

PLEASE VISIT www.stoneridgeschool.org to learn more about our admission process

Application Deadline **Dec. 1, 2023**
 Financial Aid Deadline **Jan. 15, 2024**

Decision Notification **Feb. 23, 2024**
 Contract Due Date **March 2024**

THE HEIGHTS SCHOOL
 10400 SEVEN LOCKS ROAD
 POTOMAC, MARYLAND 20854
 Alvaro J. de Vicente, Headmaster
 Richard S. Moss, Director of Admissions
 301.365.0227 • ADMISSIONS@HEIGHTS.EDU
 HEIGHTS.EDU

Boys 3-12
 The Heights forms "men fully alive" through a rigorous curriculum implemented with a highly personal approach to education and character.
Cavaliers
Red & White

Challenging liberal arts; innovative science and math; small classes; individual mentorship; WCAC Athletics; extensive extracurriculars; rich sacramental life.

Admissions
Fall Open House: October 21, 2023
 Contact us anytime at 301.365.0227 or visit heights.edu/process

Upper School Applicants Admissions Deadline **Dec. 15, 2023**
 Financial Aid Appl. Deadline **Dec. 15, 2023**

Admissions/FA Notification **Feb. 15, 2024**
 Enrollment Deadline **Mar. 15, 2024**

Freshman Class Size: 70 • Financial Aid: Jim McNiff (CFO) 301.365.0227

St. Mary's Parish
520 Veirs Mill Road Rockville, MD
Msgr. Robert Amey, Pastor
301-424-5550
St. Mary's School
Mrs. Debby Eisel, Principal
301-762-4179
Mrs. Debby Eisel, Parish Editor
301-762-4179

A Prayerful Cross Walk from Montgomery County to Washington, DC

By Maureen Britti

On a sun-drenched Saturday, September 16, when a chilly morning turned into a warm afternoon, some 65+ pilgrims, celebrating

the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, carried a life-size cross and walked approximately 12 miles from St. Mary's Church in Rockville to St. Ann's Church in NW Washington, DC, including stops at Holy Cross Church in Garrett Park and Our Lady of Lourdes (LOL) in Bethesda.

Organized by Parochial Vicars, Father James Morrison (LOL) and Father



Father James Glasgow (R) and Fr James Morrison (L) celebrate Mass in St. Mary's historic chapel. Photo by Cindy Zelaya

James Glasgow (St. Mary's), the day began with the two priests celebrating Mass in St. Mary's historic chapel at 8:00am. In his homily, Father James Glasgow spoke of the importance of pilgrimage as a form of prayer, and especially how the intention for which one embarks upon a pilgrimage is the religious analogue (and probably forerunner) of charity walks such as the Race for the Cure. However, Father James said, "they are importantly distinguished by this fact: in a pilgrimage one affects directly and immediately the intention" for which he or she is walking.

Continued on page 34



St Mary's parishioner Leticia Manlapaz and team set out breakfast for pilgrims. Photo by Maureen Britti



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

A GREAT PLACE TO GROW!





JOIN US FOR AN OPEN HOUSE!
OCTOBER 17TH AT 9 AM
NOVEMBER 13TH AT 9 AM

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL PROVIDES EACH CHILD A FAITH BASED, ACADEMICALLY RIGOROUS CURRICULUM. SEE WHERE FAITH, KNOWLEDGE, AND SERVICE COME TOGETHER TO FORM RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS IN OUR EVER-CHANGING WORLD

600 Veirs Mill Road, Rockville, MD 20852
301-762-4179
www.stmaryschoolrockville.org/admissions

CALL FOR
YOUR
PERSONAL
TOUR
TODAY!

St. Mary's Parish and School Welcome Three International Teachers through Cultural Exchange

St. Mary's Parish and School extend a warm welcome to three international teachers by partnering with Greenheart Exchange, a cultural teacher exchange program. Ms. Guadalupe Molina, from Argentina, is fluent in Spanish and English and certified as an English as a foreign language teacher as well as a Spanish teacher. Ms. Christine Espina comes from the Philippines and is serving as our third-grade teacher. Mr. Arbea



Welcome to (L-R) Ms. Guadalupe Molina, Ms. Christine Espina, and Mr. Arbea John Baguio!

John Baguio, also from the Philippines, is teaching middle school Math and Religion. These teachers will not only teach our curriculum, but will participate in a cultural

exchange to help our students learn more about their home country. St. Mary's is blessed with these wonderful educators who have been raised in Catholic Schools and are called to deliver the word of God each day!

OPT



St. Mary's School Faculty and Staff are excited for all that our new school year has in store. Our teachers returned this August to new windows and blinds in every classroom. We are thankful to all of our veteran teachers who returned to St. Mary's for leading the way to help our newest staff members learn why St. Mary's School is a great place to grow!

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St. Jude Regional Catholic School Welcomes New Staff

By Michelle Ardillo

St. Jude Regional Catholic School (SJRCs) announces new teachers and faculty changes for the 2023-2024 school year.

Two alums return to SJRCs to teach in the Pre-K wing. Caroline Hanlon '09 is the new PreK-4 teacher. She obtained a BFA and MA from Savannah College of Art and Design and enjoys crafting, reading, and illustrating. JoAnn Cordero '05 is the aide in PreK-4 and travels to school with her son Joaquin, who is a student in PreK-4.

Ashley Stept grew up in Germantown and begins her SJRCs career (5th year teaching) as the second-grade teacher. She holds BA and MA degrees in education, and in her spare time plays the violin and enjoys tap dancing.

Andrea Barish is no stranger to the SJRCs school and parish community. She joins the staff as the third-grade teacher, and last year served as president of the Home and School Association as an SJRCs parent. Of her six children, four are Bulldog alums and two are current Bulldogs. She and her husband Rich are active in SJRCs parish life, serving in many ministries of the church.

Samantha Miller joins the faculty as seventh-grade homeroom and English and literature teacher for grades 7-8. A graduate of St. Mary's



The 2023-2024 school year at St. Jude Regional Catholic School brings new teachers, from left to right: Ms. Caroline Hanlon (SJRCs '09), Pre-K 4; Mr. Francisco Tapia, Spanish; Ms. Samantha Miller, 7th grade Homeroom, 7th/8th ELA; Mrs. Andrea Barish, 3rd Grade; Ms. Ashley Stept, 2nd Grade; Ms. Kellie Dunston, Resource; and Mrs. JoAnn Cordero (SJRCs '05), Pre-K 3. Photo by Rebecca Sella.

College in Notre Dame, Indiana, Ms. Miller is an avid reader who has created a wonderful classroom library for her students.

Native Texan Kellie Dunston is our Director of Resource for SJRCs. She comes to us with six years of teaching experience. Ms. Dunston loves reading and football and feels blessed with the opportunity to be a part of the SJRCs community.

Francisco Tapia brings his energy and enthusiasm to the hallways and classrooms as the new K-8 Spanish teacher. Mr. T, as he is called, and

his wife Catalina are from Chile, and parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes, where their daughters attend school. He holds BA and MA degrees from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

Lucy Young '15 joined the faculty in January as the upper school religion teacher. Ms. Young prepares students for the various ministries at the school's weekly liturgies and also coaches soccer and basketball. Ms. Young graduated from UMD with a degree in Hearing and Speech Science with minors in Spanish and Disability

Studies.

Betania Gonzalez joined the faculty in the spring semester of last year as Pre-K through 8 art teacher. A graduate of Trinity Washington University and a natural-born teacher, Ms. Gonzalez's warm personality and positive attitude are a wonderful addition to the faculty.

Mike Norris moved from the upper school wing to the lower school wing and is the new fourth-grade teacher. Mr. Norris's dry wit and quick retorts come second to his beloved golden retriever, Chubbs, who thrills everyone when he visits. This is Mr. Norris's 19th year teaching, seven years as a fourth-grade teacher.

Katharine Balog moved from the fourth-grade classroom to the school's front office where she is

serving the school as assistant principal. Mrs. Balog is also teaching sixth-grade history this year. She holds a BFA from WVU and a MS in Educational Leadership. Mrs. Balog has been at SJRCs since 2010.

Long-term substitute teachers Michelle Ardillo and John Sella are teaching 5th and 6th grade language arts. Mrs. Ardillo came out of retirement (again) to teach fifth and sixth grade English while Mr. Sella (also out of retirement) is teaching fifth and sixth grade literature. They are sharing sixth grade homeroom responsibilities. This is Mrs. Ardillo's 19th year with the ADW. Mr. Sella is right at home with three family members also on staff at SJRCs.

OPT

Novena to St. Jude, October 20-28

The annual Solemn Novena to honor St. Jude Thaddeus will be held from October 20-28 at 7:00 p.m. at the Shrine of St. Jude. The guest speaker will be Msgr. John Enzler. The novena will conclude with Solemn Mass on October 28 and a reception in the Thaddeus Room. Check the parish website for more information: Shrine of St. Jude Catholic Church - Rockville, MD (shrinestjude.org).

OPT

Shrine of St. Jude Parish

12701 Veirs Mill Road
Rockville, MD

Fr. Paul D. Lee, STD,
Pastor
301-946-8200

St. Jude Regional
Catholic School
Jeanne Donatelli, Principal
301-946-7888

Maureen Martin,
OPT Editor
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SJRCs Student and Teacher Travel to World Youth Day in Portugal

By Michelle Ardillo

St. Jude Regional Catholic School art teacher Betania Gonzalez and eighth-grade student Charles Anani traveled to Portugal this summer to attend World Youth Day (WYD). Both Ms. Gonzalez and Charles belong to the



SJRCs art teacher Betania Gonzalez and 8th grade student Charles Anani traveled to Portugal this summer to attend World Youth Day. Photo by Rebecca Sella.

Neocatechumenal Way, an itinerary/process in faith formation in the Catholic Church founded in 1964 near Madrid, Spain. Besides Portugal, Ms. Gonzalez has attended WYD celebrations in Spain, Brazil, Poland, and Panama, while this was Charles's first WYD.

Continued on page 34

Welcome Back Picnic!

By Cindy Flores, HSA President

On Saturday, August 26, the St. Jude Regional Catholic School Home & School Association hosted a Back-to-School Picnic to welcome our wonderful students, families, and faculty. This family-oriented back-to-school bash provided a platform for our St. Jude community to connect with friends, get excited to return, and ease any anxiety about starting the new school year.

Families enjoyed the delicious food (grilled and served by our amazing St. Jude Athletic Association), games, arts/crafts, and informational booths. The event wouldn't have been successful without the collaboration of our wonderful clubs/organizations and teachers: St. Jude Athletic Association (SJAA), School Advisory Board (SAB), Drama Club, Choir (Mrs. White), MOMS Club, Administration Team, and Ms. Cruz. They ran all the informa-



SJRCs students Rafael and Lucas celebrated a return to school at the SJRCs Back-to-School Picnic in August. Photo by Rebecca Sella.

tional booths and provided resourceful information about their purpose/mission. We stand firm for our community and are committed to have an amazing school year.

Thank you to everyone who attended! WE ARE ST. JUDE!

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Open House

10/17, 6:30-8:30 PM
STJUDEROCKVILLE.ORG



Our eighth-grade students are ready to lead the school this year! Their spirit and enthusiasm will be more important than ever. St. John the Evangelist school is experiencing record enrollment. Here's to a great year of inspiring hearts and minds together!



Our first Friday mass of the year was a wonderful way to celebrate God's love together as an SJE community. It felt even more special, as this was the first time we returned to our pre-Covid Mass traditions.

“Look up!”: SJE Pilgrimage Helps Set the Path for the Year Ahead

“Look up!” Two words echoed as a reminder by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to keep our focus on God. This simple reminder served as a foundation for our Confirmation candidates’ pilgrimage to Emmitsburg to visit the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. The September 25 pilgrimage included a guided tour of the grounds of the Sisters of Charity first convent and school in Emmitsburg. Students were able to see the humble home and classrooms that served as the birthplace of Catholic education in the United States. Additionally, the pilgrims were able to enjoy a moment of prayer and reflection at the replica grotto dedicated to Our Lady of



St. John the Evangelist Confirmation candidates gather for a group picture at the foot of the Cross, located near the cemetery of the Sisters of Charity in Emmitsburg.

Lourdes nearby at Mount St. Mary’s. It was a beautiful way to begin the school year and to look to God as we prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation this spring!

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Students get a glimpse of what a Catholic school classroom looked like when Mother Seton was teaching!

The beautiful Grotto, a replica of the Grotto in Lourdes, France, served as a great place for prayer and reflection.



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NEW FACULTY

Con't from page 15

Elementary/Special education and earned my master’s degree at Loyola University in School Counseling. Currently, I am working toward my LGPC. This year I hope to impact my students by providing a safe environment where they feel welcome and safe to come and talk to me, provide academic strategies, provide social and emotional tools, so our students at Holy Redeemer can become their best selves.

Theodore Scott, Middle School Math Teacher

As an experienced educator and devoted father, I am honored to join the Holy Redeemer community and nurture your children’s spiritual and academic growth this academic year. With over 15 years in education, a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice, a master’s degree in special education, and extensive experience with middle school students, I am committed to creating a thriving learning environment. Alongside my wife, a Major in the Army, and my three children, two of whom now attend Holy Redeemer, I share

a deep Catholic faith and passion for community service through various coaching duties, scouting, and other activities. I aim to enrich your children’s development across academic, spiritual, and personal domains. Together, we will create an environment where your children can thrive.

Ms. Claudia Silva, Third Grade Teacher

Born and raised in the DC area, I attended St. Ann’s Academy and St. John’s College High School. My parents, brother and I are very close, traveling together every summer to visit Portugal because our family is from there. I had the very best first-grade teacher who inspired me to be a teacher when I grew up! I am living proof that teachers really do impact children’s lives one day at a time. I graduated from Salisbury University with a B.S. in Early and Elementary Education. Prior to joining the faculty at Holy Redeemer, I worked for two years as a first-grade teacher in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. My favorite scripture is Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

OPT

Tuition-Free Pre-Kindergarten at SFIS

Right: Prekindergarten Team with Director, Jan Williams, sitting in the center.



Left: Circle time with music.



Above: Pre-K students attend the weekly school Mass, including the recent Mass celebrated by Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala.



Above: Students dressed up according to family heritage.



Above: Learning about transportation. Right: Books and reading are very important!



Right: Outdoor play is an integral part of the program.



Jan Williams, our Preschool Program Director, describes our wonderful program for the littlest ones at our school: The Early Childhood Program of Saint Francis International School is a high-quality Prekindergarten program for three and four-year-old children. In coordination with the Maryland State Department of Education, we offer access to high-quality full-day Pre-K at no cost to three- and four-year old children from families earning incomes at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level. This tuition-free program is also available to families, regardless of income, if they have children with disabilities, are experiencing homelessness, or living in homes in which English is not the primary spoken language.

We currently have two classes for 3-year-olds and three classes for 4-year olds. Each class has a maximum capacity of 18 students with two teachers providing instruction. We utilize a project-based curriculum from the University of Maryland, “**Children Discovering Their World**”. The program is very interactive and can be described as “play with purpose”. Our primary goal is to ensure that our children “graduate” from our program ready for Kindergarten. In addition to our Maryland standards-based curriculum, we use an age-appropriate religion curricu-

lum. We focus on teaching the whole child.

We currently have openings for both 3- and 4-year-old children, whether you are looking for a tuition-free program or not. If you are interested, please contact Ms. Teresa Perez, our Admissions Director, at office@sfismd.org or 301-434-2344 to schedule a visit. You can also join us on October 28 for our Fall Open House, 9AM-2PM. In addition, you may apply online at saintfrancisinternational.org. You will need the following documents to apply for the tuition free program:

- Child’s Birth Certificate
- 2 Proofs of Address
- Child’s Social Security Card
- Parent ID
- Copy of Last Year’s Taxes

We have a wonderful program that has a proven track record of academic success and social-emotional development of our students. It is a fun program that builds on the diversity of our staff and our students to support our children becoming instruments of God’s peace, scholars, and global citizens. We would love to have your family join our SFIS family. **OPT**

STUDENT

Con’t from page 1

Throughout this whole week though it felt as though I was looking at something that was long gone, then came the Catholic History Bee. When I got the results of the Catholic History Bee and learned that I was advancing to the finals I was very happy. It felt like a big victory. The finals were held in St. Peters Square. It was beautiful. Going into the final round my goal was to finish in the top three. As I answered question after question about Mother Teresa, Our Lady

of Guadalupe, and my Catholic faith, I felt exhilarated. When the finals were over and I had won, it felt like the best moment of my life. By the end of the week, in addition to winning the Gold Medal in the Catholic History Bee, I had done well in the overall competition. I finished 12th in the individual Olympiad standings for my division. When I look back over the week, it is the moment at the Catholic History Bee that stands out as the defining moment. I look back and remember that not only was I a part of history, but in that moment, I made history. **OPT**

St. Francis International School
www.saintfrancisinternational.org
Sam Chapa, Principal

1500 Camillus Drive
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Mother of God School Students Commemorate the 22nd Anniversary of September 11, 2001

By Melissa Furman Sloan, Principal

As time passes, the reality of September 11, 2001, becomes something for a history book. Our students and new teachers were born after that impactful day. Every year, Mother of God School chooses to continue to honor both the men and women who died that day and also the courageous men and women who risked their lives to save others.

The ceremony started in a new way this year with a reading of Mattie Sepanek's poem *For Our World*. Mattie was a beautiful local young man who had a rare neuromuscular disease that cut his life short at the age of 13. During his time on Earth, he was a witness to our Catholic faith and God's infinite love for us. Mattie wrote this poem on September 11, 2001, when he was only 11 years old.

The eighth graders, along with their teacher, Mr. Davy, led the school in reflection, prayer, and song focused on the events of

Right: Kindergarten students stand respectfully and reverently during the 9/11 ceremony.

Below: Eighth graders lead the school community in prayer, reflection, and song.



Above: Eighth graders replace our daily American flag for the day.

Left: A memorial flag that was flown on the 10th anniversary of 9/11 at Ground Zero acknowledges the names of each person who was killed on September 11, 2001.

September 11th and the subsequent days in 2001. Mr. Davy led the students in "America the Beautiful," and the eighth grade led us in St. Francis' *Peace Prayer*.

The American and Maryland flags, which are raised and lowered daily by our eighth graders, were replaced with a special flag that is flown at half-staff at Mother of God School every September 11th. A friend of the school, the late Mrs. Barbara Rakl, donated this special memorial flag. Adorned in the shape and colors of the American flag, this memorial flag includes the name of each person who died and it was flown at Ground Zero on the 10th anniversary of September 11, 2001.

This important commemoration is intended to inspire students to pray for peace but also remember and honor all the first responders, clergy, and average citizens who collectively joined together to serve those in need on that devastating day. May God bless America.

OPT

Learning and Experiencing through Project-Based Learning

By Melissa Furman Sloan, Principal

Every Friday, Mother of God middle school students spend two periods in Project-Based Learning, or PBL. PBL is a time when students work together in mixed age groups on an interdisciplinary and high-interest project that covers Religion, Language Arts, Public Speaking, History, and S.T.E.M..

This month, the students at Mother of God School focused on an Irrigation Project. During Part One of the project, students researched the history of irrigation and modern irrigation techniques and trends. In groups, students researched a specific ancient civilization and how they moved water. Students learned about the links of irrigation to the Bible and other civilizations and how it is critical to the development and sustaining of a civilization to move water effectively. After the research was completed, groups presented their findings to their middle school peers.

During Part Two of the project, students participated in the engineering challenge. The challenge required students to utilize knowledge gained during part one of the project to plan and execute their own irrigation sys-



Top left: Mr. Davy assists students after their trial run to improve and adjust for the engineering challenge during Project Based Learning. Above left: Middle school students move two cups of water through their irrigation system into two equal amounts into two different cups.

Top right: Middle school students participate in the engineering irrigation challenge. Above right: Middle school students create a system to move two cups of water at least three feet without losing any water.

tem. The challenge was to create a system that moved two cups of water over a distance of three feet and then split the water into two smaller cups in equal amounts without losing any water in the process. After the design phase, groups built and tested their designs and subsequently made final adjustments before competing in the challenge. The students did a fantastic job, and three groups lost less than an ounce of water during the process.

Part Three, the final part of the project will combine the knowledge and experience gained to recreate a model of an ancient civilization's irrigation system. Students will examine the source of the water and the method used to move the water without destroying the town. After the presentation of the models, the entire middle school will come together to present their data and findings from all three parts of the project.

This project was a great start to PBL for the year. Students love learning in an inquiry and hands-on approach that connects and combines the many subjects taught throughout the year.

OPT

Mother of God School
20501 Goshen Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Mr. Hall Miller,
School President

Mrs. Melissa Sloan
School Principal
301-990-2088
www.mogschool.com

Fifth graders jump into a new year by making new friendships with the amazing new families and students who have joined our school community this year.



New students are seamlessly welcomed and included in our school family through friendship and fun!

An Abundance of Vocations

By Msgr. Charles Parry

The parish of Saint Patrick in Rockville is very blessed to have six young men of the parish community discerning a vocation to the priesthood. This is a great and treasured gift of the local church. Three of these young men are in seminary for the Archdiocese of Washington: one is a transitional deacon; another will be ordained a transitional deacon in Rome in October; the last of these three is in minor seminary at the Saint John Paul II Seminary in Washington, D.C. Of the others, one is in seminary studying for the Dominicans – the Order of Preachers; another is studying for Opus Dei – the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross; and the last is studying for the Priestly Fraternity of the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo. Our parish experiences great joy in these young men who exhibit such courage in their discernment of a priestly vocation.

We have a Vocation Wall in the church that exhibits the photograph of each of these priestly candidates. Our prayers for them are continuous. At each and every Mass during the weekday



Photos of each of our young men discerning the priesthood remind the entire parish to pray for vocations.

and the weekend, the parishioners pray a particular prayer for priestly vocations. This prayer is being answered! The Lord has blessed us with vocations to the priesthood and there are more young men speaking about this vocation as something that

Continued on page 36

Yard Sale for a Cause: Join Us to Support Life Connection Mission

In a world filled with uncertainty and challenges, there is no greater act of compassion than reaching out to those in need. “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me” (Matthew 25:35-36). This is exactly what our community is doing as we come together for our annual yard sale that promises to be much more than a bargain-hunter’s paradise, it’s a lifeline for the children of Life Connection Mission in Montrouis, Haiti.

Haiti, a country known for its vibrant culture and resilient spirit, has been grappling with political and social unrest for years. Recent events have only exacerbated the dire situation, leaving the nation in turmoil. Amidst this turmoil, the most vulnerable citizens, the children, are suffering the most.

Our mission is clear, and our community is ready to help support the education and medical needs of the children at Life Connection Mission.



Last year’s yard sale was a huge success, with many donations and funds raised.

But we can’t do it alone, we need your donations and shoppers like you to make this event a success.

Christie Anne Short, Principal of St. Patrick’s School, doubles as President of the local nonprofit in Haiti, where she has been bringing awareness and raising funds for this important mission for years. Our goal is to raise over \$40,000 and with your help, we can do it again this year. Proceeds from this event will go to upgrading the solar energy system, supporting the programs operated daily by LCM to feed and educate children, and tending to the medical needs in the community.

Join us as we turn yard sale treasures into tools for transformation on Saturday, October 14 from 8:00am – 2:00pm at the St. Patrick’s Parish

Center. Prior to the yard sale, donations will be accepted on Saturday, October 7, 9:00am – 2:00pm and Sunday, October 8 from 10:00am – 1:00pm. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Christie Anne Short at christianne@lifeconnectionmission.org or visit the website to learn more about LCM’s great work in Haiti. www.lifeconnectionmission.org.

OPT

St. Patrick’s Parish
4101 Norbeck Road
Rockville, MD

Rev. Msgr. Charles J. Parry
Pastor
301-924-2284

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

Parish Editor
Contact parish office

More St. Patrick News
on Page 12

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2024 Social Security COLA

The Social Security Administration will announce the official 2024 COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) in October 2023. The Senior Citizens League, an advocacy group, released a report Sept. 13 predicting the Social Security COLA for 2023 will be 3.2%. If that proves accurate when the Social Security Administration announces its official COLA in mid-October, it would raise the current average annual benefit of \$1,656 by \$57.30.

Inflation in July, August, and September 2022 will determine the COLA that Social Security and SSI beneficiaries will receive next year. The COLA takes effect in December, and the updated benefits are paid out starting in January 2024. The Social Security COLA is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), a slightly different measurement than the CPI-U. The COLA is calculated by using the average rate of inflation in the third quarter of the year. When those figures come out, the data for July, August and September will be added together and divided by three to get the average. The 2023

number will then be compared with the third quarter average of 2022 to determine the percentage of change for 2024. September's CPI numbers are expected to be announced on Oct. 12.

In 2023, retirees received the highest COLA in 40 years — (8.7%), but nobody is getting rich. The reality is that the dollar amount of the COLA increase received is meager at best, with the average monthly retiree benefit only \$1,790 in 2023. Social Security benefits are modest, replacing roughly one-third of a middle earner's average wages, according to the Social Security Administration's Office of Chief Actuary. Making matters worse, most older adults claim Social Security benefits before reaching full retirement age and receive permanently reduced benefits.

According to by The Senior Citizens League, Social Security benefits have lost over thirty percent of their purchasing power since 2000 due in large part to inadequate COLAs and rising health care costs.

Source: *The Senior Citizens League*

OPT

Holy Cross Hospital Specialty Services for Seniors

Maryland's senior citizen population is expected to grow significantly over the next decade and Holy Cross Health has already answered the call with services created especially with elder patients in mind. This forward-thinking approach means ensuring support both physically and mentally, inside and outside of the hospital. These services are not just for HCH patients, but for caregivers and family members too. HCH understands that older adults have unique needs and has designed a comprehensive package of services to help seniors enjoy the best quality of life possible.

Holy Cross Hospital has a long-standing commitment to the

Montgomery County senior community. HCH introduced the nation's first **Seniors Emergency Center**, a dedicated space created to reduce anxiety in patients while offering the finest care. Its **Medical Adult Day Center** offers a safe, supportive environment for adult daily care, respite to caregivers and supports older adults in aging in place.

HCH has built on these initiatives with a diverse and far-reaching range of services that provide care at every level. Seniors find healthy-aging programs, at-home care, support services for caregivers and end-of-life care.

Holy Cross Health Partners are primary care offices owned and operated by Holy Cross Health,

with locations at Asbury Methodist Village and Montgomery Village in Gaithersburg, and a location in Kensington. These practices include physicians with geriatric medicine training and expertise. They offer specialty consultation services including palliative care at these locations and the **House Calls** program (primary care delivered at home for those who can't make it to the office) and cardiology care at Asbury Methodist Village. For more information call 301-557-2110 for Asbury Methodist Village, 301-949-4242 for Kensington and 301-557-1540 for Montgomery Village.

Continued on page 34

Maryland Catholic Declaration for Healthcare Decision Making

Continual advances in medical technology bring many blessings but also pose complex ethical questions. While many of us avoid thinking about illness and death, they are a reality. The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) encourages everyone, especially older adults, to take time now, before a crisis, to prayerfully consider their health care and end-of-life wishes with the Catholic faith in mind, to talk with their family members, and to put your wishes in writing.

MCC has developed resources for individuals that can help in this process and bring comfort and peace. One of these resources is the Maryland Catholic Declaration for Health Care Decision Making – an **advance directive** through which you can appoint a health care agent (or a durable power of attorney) and express your wishes for spiritual support, medical care and treatment, pain-relieving medication and, should you be unable to take food

or drink orally, medically assisted nutrition and hydration (a living will).

This Declaration has been prepared in light of the pastoral letter by the bishops serving Maryland, *Comfort and Consolation*, and in light of Maryland law, the Maryland Health Care Decisions Act.

Maryland Catholic Declaration for Health Care Decision Making is described further and may be downloaded at mdcatholic.org/healthdirective

OPT

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Rockville • 301-217-9116



www.VictoryHousing.org

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On First Anniversary of St. Francis' Mass in Spanish, Community Taking Root in Numbers, Engagement

By Melissa Montealegre Egan

One year after launching a Mass in Spanish, the leaders of St. Francis of Assisi Parish's outreach to Spanish and bilingual speakers are beginning to see a genuine community take root, based, not only on growing attendance, but heartfelt engagement with the church and one another.

St. Francis Pastor Fr. John Dillon began requesting a liturgy targeted to the Spanish-speaking community several years ago after seeing that 40 percent of households in schools serving his parish primarily spoke Spanish. With the assignment of Fr. Grzegorz Okulewicz – a newly ordained Spanish-speaking priest from Poland – to St. Francis in June 2022, the liturgy began on October 2 of that year at the 1:00 pm Sunday Mass.

In retrospect, Fr. Okulewicz said starting the Mass in Spanish was the right outreach to the Spanish-speaking community now worshipping at St. Francis. The weekly average of people worshipping now stands at about 150, which has steadily ticked upward over the past year.

"To a great extent, our ways of advertising it – the sign in front of the church, the initiative of Deacon Will and Lourdes to prepare handbills to place in stores – were effective,



On August 13, 2023, worshippers at St. Francis of Assisi Parish's Mass in Spanish bring up the offertory gifts during a liturgy celebrated by Washington Auxiliary Archbishop Bishop Evelio Menjivar. The suburban parish in Derwood will celebrate its first anniversary of its Mass in Spanish at the 1:00 pm liturgies on October 1 and October 8.

in addition to word of mouth," he said.

Currently, the Mass in Spanish draws from St. Peter's Catholic Church in Olney, which had previously celebrated a monthly Mass in Spanish, and those who had worshiped in Gaithersburg and Rockville. But Fr. Okulewicz can tell that a core group is returning, based on an inexact metric.

"We ask those who are there for the first time to stand and be recognized – now there are fewer and fewer who are standing," Fr. Okulewicz said. "That's an indication of the stability of the congregation."

Deacon Will Garcia and his wife, Lourdes, are longstanding members of the parish and had already been leading some offerings in Spanish, such as a weekly Rosary and occasional Bible study groups, prior to the Mass in Spanish being celebrated. Over the past year, they have worked tirelessly to build community among the Spanish-speaking and bilingual members, coordinating coffee and desserts once a month, asking worshippers whether anyone in their family needed a sacrament, and helping plan special feast day commemorations, such as the procession on Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast on December 12.

Recently, the couple has noticed more people asking how they can give, not only

monetarily, but also with their time as catechists, lectors, eucharistic ministers or choir members. "Before, church was a place I came to – but now, St. Francis has become my second home," Deacon Garcia said. "I see others look at St. Francis, not just as a place, but as a home where they can contribute."

One area of both growth and need is the demand for sacraments. The parish has seen year-over-year growth in the numbers of students from largely Spanish-speaking families registering for Religious Education and the numbers of Spanish speakers going through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. In the case of the former, the students are receiving formation through St. Francis' Religious Education program, while in RCIA and marriage preparation, the parish is teaming up with sister parish programs.

Fr. Okulewicz said this need is the parish's next objective for its Spanish-speaking worshippers – to both feel at home but also volunteer and engage for the sake of growing as a Christian family.

"We want there to be a feeling of belonging – to feel welcomed by the community, belonging in the community, and feeling responsible for the well-being of the community....," he said.

OPT

Christian Life Program Re-Animates Churchgoers to Live a Life in the Holy Spirit

By Melissa Montealegre Egan

Twenty-seven years after first forming parishioners at St. Francis of Assisi Parish, the Christian Life Program has re-emerged as an integrated adult faith formation program at the suburban church, with goals to develop the person, his or her family, and the parish community.

Developed by Couples for Christ – a global Catholic movement intended to renew and strengthen Christian family life – the Christian Life Program serves as the initiation course leading participants to a life in the Holy Spirit and as a source for evangelization. It is the entry point for Couples for Christ and affiliated ministries.

Cris and Liza Flores, ministry coordinators for Couples for Christ at St. Francis, said through e-mail that the Christian Life Program is the Kerygma – the proclamation of the Gospel. "Our goal is to draw participants into a renewed commitment to the Lord," they wrote. "Through it, they experience the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives."

Introduced to the parish in 1996 by Couples for Christ missionaries, the program underwent a hiatus until 2015 under the pastorship of Fr. John Dillon. The Couples for Christ ministry began offering the program again in December



Raymond Sugcang, a member of Couples for Christ, speaks September 23 at the Christian Life Program on "Empowered by the Holy Spirit," in St. Francis of Assisi's Kuehner Room.

of that year, with married couples as the target audience; through 2018, approximately 36 parishioners took part. In 2017, the program served as the basis to evangelize adult women in the Handmaids of the Lord, a ministry within Couples for Christ; about 22 women took part in 2017 and 2018.

In its current program run, two six-week sessions of the Christian Life Program are happening – one in English and one in Spanish. Over the course of the program, speakers -- comprised of clergy members and lay leaders -- are covering three main topics:

The basic truths about Christianity, with an emphasis on hearing teachings with an adult perspective.

The authentic Christian life,

which teaches the personal response involved in receiving Jesus as our Lord.

Living a spirit-filled life, which provides the basics for continuing spiritual growth by committing our lives to Jesus.

As one of 23 people taking part in the English session, parishioner Elaine McCann-French has been a faithful church goer and ministry volunteer as a Joyful Greeter, Altar Guild member, prayer group participant, and Vacation Bible Camp helper over the past 37 years. She started attending the Christian Life

Program pre-pandemic and said she was glad to return this session.

"It's not that I'm learning lots of new things [that I hadn't learned before] – it's what's happening to me," McCann-French said.

"It's been like a re-stirring up of feeling for and further growth in closeness to Jesus."

Once the English session ends October 7 and the Spanish session concludes October 15, the Flores' stated that participants' reintroduction to life in the Holy Spirit can lead them to Couples for Christ and other ministries. "It means that when you finish the Christian Life Program, there is a vibrant Christian community waiting for you," they said.

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In 2022, students at Academy of the Holy Cross toured the rain garden at St. Francis of Assisi Parish. In 2016, then-teenager Michael Elder developed the rain garden as part of his Eagle Scout service project.

Eagle Scout Projects Remind Parishioners of Young Men's Achievements in Service to Church

By Melissa Montealegre Egan

If you stroll through the St. Francis of Assisi parish grounds, there's no sign marking that an Eagle Scout tread there. But, as long as three young men's service projects to achieve the Boy Scout's highest honor still survive in the parish's parking lots, along its walkways, and in the parish's grassy areas, then proof of the Scouts' achievements exists.

Since 2015, St. Francis of Assisi Parish has been the beneficiary of at least three Eagle Scout projects that have improved the parish's hard- and landscape and maintained various functional features on the grounds. The projects – develop-

ment of a rain garden, construction of reframing boxes housing trees in the parking lot, and the

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Dedication and Blessing of the St. John Neumann Building Addition with Cardinal Gregory

By Marisa Stoolmiller

On September 16, 2023, a momentous event took place at St. John Neumann Catholic Church. After months of construction, our new front doors were opened, and we celebrated the dedication and blessing of our building addition, which includes a new Adoration Chapel, larger narthex, new parish offices, a larger sacristy, an additional confessional, and more. Presiding over this joyous occasion was His Eminence, Wilton Cardinal Gregory. This celebration was a testament to faith, devotion, and the enduring legacy of St. John Neumann.

The Dedication, Blessing, and Mass marked the culmination of years of planning, fundraising, and unwavering commitment from the parishioners and leadership of St. John Neumann Catholic Church. The vision of expanding the church had been nurtured with love and care, mirroring the spiritual growth of the community. The project aimed not just to provide additional office and meeting space, but to create a space that would deepen the congregation's connection to their faith and create an inviting space for all.

In addition, two former pastors and priests, including Fr. Thomas LaHood and Fr. Kevin Regan, the presence of His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory, added an unparalleled dimension to the dedication, blessing and Mass. As the Cardinal Archbishop of Washington and the



The Cardinal Archbishop of Washington, His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory celebrated the church dedication with the Pastor of Saint John Neumann, Reverend Monsignor Robert Panke, Parochial Vicar, Father Martin Begley, former pastors, concelebrants, and other distinguished guests. *Photo by Paul Fetters*



A lovely statue of our Blessed Mother was added to the new church addition and dedication. *Photo by Jerry Kelly*



Cardinal Gregory is accompanied by other clergy and seminarian Brandon Chernosky as he blesses the new adoration chapel on September 16, 2023. *Photo by Paul Fetters*



Saint John Neumann Catholic Church, Gaithersburg, Maryland. *Photo by Jerry Kelly*

prominent figure in the Catholic Church in the United States, Cardinal Gregory's participation was an acknowledgment of the significance of this event. His words of wisdom, delivered with warmth and humility, resonated deeply with the congregation, reinforcing the importance of faith and community.

The service began with Cardinal Gregory, accompanied by the other priests and staff members, blessing the new narthex, offices and adoration chapel. After blessing

the new space, Mass continued in the church. During his homily, Cardinal Gregory emphasized the importance of the virtue of hospitality and welcoming others at church, saying, "In the redesign of your church home, you have attempted to extend wide the doors of welcome so that people of every background will find a warm reception there." He spoke about the power of faith to bring people together and the role that the expanded St. John Neumann Catholic Church would

play in welcoming people to the church.

Following the Mass, several hundred parishioners and guests gathered along with our current and former priests for an outdoor reception, sharing stories and enjoying each other's company. It was a time for old friends to reconnect, and new friendships to begin, strengthening the bonds that make St. John Neumann Catholic Church a true spiritual home for its members.

The dedication, blessing and Mass of the addition at St. John

Neumann Catholic Church will be remembered as a day of faith, unity, and joy. The presence of Cardinal Gregory, the beautiful new space, and the shared sense of purpose among the parishioners made this event a testament to the enduring strength of the Catholic Church. The dedication of the new addition was more than just a physical expansion; it was a spiritual journey that brought the community closer together and reaffirmed their commitment to their faith and one another.

OPT

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WINS

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the Dukes. With almost 90 runners from both the school and parish, they are fortunate to have a huge team of runners from kindergarten all the way through eighth grade. Runners and coaches started training in mid-August and that practice has paid off with solid performances in the first two meets of the season. Congratulations to recently elected eighth-grade Team Captains, Erin Patterson, Simon Nguyen, Lexie Bishop, Chloe Townsend, Nate House and Brendan Shaffer. They are a big help to the coaching staff during the practices and meets getting their younger teammates energized for sometimes intimidat-

ing races. Their skilled coaches use their practices to focus on working together as a team, to have fun, and become stronger runners.

St. Jane de Chantal's soccer program also eagerly awaited the completion of the new turf field just in time for the 2023 soccer season. With the field's state-of-the-art drainage, 160 players across 10 teams have practiced daily no matter the weather. This dedication by both players and coaches has led to early results with victories across all age groups during the opening weekend of the season. While the Pre-K and Kindergarten players are not quite old enough to compete in CYO games, parent-led clinics are teaching the youngest Dukes the important fundamentals of the game. De Chantal Dukes Soccer

also started the season with big statement wins. The Girls' Varsity soccer team took their first opponents by storm with a big victory in their season opener. They shot lights out while also perfecting their defense by not allowing a single shot on goal in the win. The Second Grade Co-ed Dukes team secured a win in their season opener, too. Coach Mike Smith drew up offensive plans to make his team become an offensive powerhouse. Eight goals later, they secured a win for the Dukes. Coaches and fans are excited to have such a vibrant soccer community and thankful for all the support the soccer program gets from the parish and school. All the Duke fans and teams hope to keep the "Ws" coming this season! Go Dukes!

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Cross Country eighth-grade runners lead the De Chantal team with energy and toughness on these rugged courses.

Father Stefan Yap Becomes a Member of the St. Martin's Church Community!

By Victoria Blanco, Eighth Grader

Let's welcome Father Stefan Yap to the St. Martin's Church Community! Fr. Stefan was originally born in New York City. His family is from the Philippines, but he grew up in New York and New Jersey. He previously worked at St. John Neumann Catholic Church, also in Gaithersburg, before coming to St. Martin's. He primarily speaks English and understands Tagalog.

Before becoming a priest, Fr. Stefan was studying to pursue a career in technology. He wanted to become an IT professional, but instead, he became a priest! He was inspired to follow the Catholic community when he heard the Words of Consecration one time while he



St. Martin's Parish welcomed its newest staff members, Fr. Stefan Yap and Sr. Maria Belen. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School

was attending Mass. The Words of Consecration really stood out to him and inspired him. Eventually, this led him to enter seminary in

2014. The more he spent time with priests and other members of the Catholic Church, he began to feel the life of priesthood calling him. In 2020, he was ordained and entered priesthood.

While serving at St. Martin's Church, he hopes to accomplish goals such as becoming fluent in Spanish, knowing everyone's name, and being able to recognize all members of the community. Moments of the priesthood that he fondly enjoys are distributing the sacraments to all, visiting the sick, and getting to know parish families. He always tries his best to meet as many people as he can and to speak to everyone.

Even though he spends most of his time serving in Masses and focusing on the religious com-

munity, he still has hobbies that he enjoys. He enjoys making and working on bonsai trees, working with technology, cooking, eating, playing video games, and playing sports such as pickleball and volleyball.

Fr. Stefan's advice on how to get closer to and build a strong relationship with God is to receive the sacraments as frequently as you can, such as going to confession often. He also recommends going to Mass and receiving the Eucharist often because these will help you stabilize your relationship with God and help you know Him better.

Make sure to pray for him on his mission at St. Martin of Tours Church!

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St. Martin of Tours Parish Welcomes Sister Maria Belen

By Reanna Mae Bejo, Eighth Grader

This summer, our parish welcomed Sr. Maria Belen to the St. Martin of Tours community. She hails from Puerto Rico, but was raised in Florida. She previously served in school communities within the states of Texas, Connecticut and Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the country of Haiti. Her identical twin sister, Sr. Providencia, was with us at St. Martin's for the two years prior to Sr. Belen's arrival. Sr. Belen originally wanted to become a nurse and help save

lives. However, seeing her sister in her novice habit touched her. It made her realize that instead of saving lives, she could save souls.

In 2008, Sr. Belen entered the convent. To this day, she has loved being a nun because she always considers herself to be the "Bride of Christ". She added, "You don't only help others, but you also get to help families and save souls. I always enjoy being around people." Her favorite hobbies include having meaningful conversations, reading about the lives of saints, and playing the guitar. As a nun, she enjoys meeting new faces and

building friendships. She speaks English and Spanish fluently, and a bit of Portuguese. Fun fact: she used to be a former actress and model!

When asked for some words of wisdom, Sr. Belen mentioned, "Listen to the people around you, as God could possibly use them to deliver His message." She strongly believes prayer and the sacraments help you grow spiritually and get closer to God. At St. Martin of Tours, she hopes to bring families closer to God and help the youth respond to God's call.

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Youth from St. Martin's and other parishes enjoy their pilgrimage to World Youth Day this summer in Lisbon, Portugal. Attendee, Aaron Aldana-Traverso, said it was "a beautiful indescribable experience for all the situations that happened in this trip, with adventures, unknown, and funny moments, but the most important part was my encounter with God, which really helped me connect with Him and to love Him more everyday." Photo courtesy of St. Martin's Parish.



BSA Troop 927 congratulates Julien Payen, Simon Cooksey, and Arnold (A) Umunna Jr. on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout! Photos courtesy of Troop 927.



St. Martin's students are happy to be back together again and ready for a new school year. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.



Cardinal Gregory Wilton visits with St. Martin's students after he celebrated mass with the school in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.

A Very Special Visit from His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory

By Rochi Cajigal

On September 15, our students were blessed with a very special visit from a very special person! We had the incredibly great honor to celebrate the start of Hispanic Heritage Month with His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory, who presided over a beautiful bilingual Mass that showcased our diverse student population. Over 50 students representing 21 Hispanic countries participated in the Mass as altar servers, readers, gift bearers, ushers, flag bearers, and choir members. We were also joined by school families and other St. Martin parishioners.

At the end of Mass, to thank him for celebrating with us, Cardinal Gregory was presented with an SMS sweatshirt with his name embroidered on it. His Eminence then came to the school to visit some of our classes, where he answered questions about Jesus, the Bible, his priesthood, and, of course, his birthday and his golf game!

Our guests, clergy, faculty, and

staff were also treated to a delicious feast organized and prepared by our wonderful parents. There were dishes and desserts from countries such as Venezuela, Paraguay, and El Salvador. It was undoubtedly a Hispanic-Heritage-Month kick-off that will always be remembered by our school and Church community alike here at St. Martin's. We are truly blessed and extremely grateful!

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Africa Day 2023 at Mother Seton Parish

By Shirley Uyakonwu

The Africa Day celebration at Mother Seton Parish is organized annually by members of Africa Union 55, the official African group in the parish. The event is a minor replication of the annual Harvest and Bazaar back in Africa. Various events and activities are held, and different gifts are presented to the church to assist with various projects. It has become an extended frontier for modern evangelization.

This journey started out as a way of coping with the nostalgia for the homeland and the way of worship— with songs, dances, and acclamations in the local languages. However, it has blossomed and become a permanent event



Above: The procession for the Africa Day Mass featured representatives from many African countries. The Mass is organized by members of Africa Union 55.



The Africa Day Mass featured a large congregation joining in on the beautiful celebration.



His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory, along with concelebrants at the Africa Day Mass celebration.

for almost 10 years! A recent survey published by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), and the Catholic Newspaper based in Washington DC shows that Africa is leading in church participation by Catholic faithful in the world. The highest Mass attendance in the World today stands at 97% and this is in Onitsha, Anambra state of Nigeria, followed

by 75% in Kenya, and 57% in the Philippines.

The Catholic Faith is of utmost importance to Africans, and their Spiritual Growth is the glue that holds them together in good times and in challenging times of their lives. Christ is the Center – “One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism” – as stated in Ephesians 4:5, which is the group’s maxim.

OPT

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ENZLER

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them. It began more than 30 years ago in the living room of Rick and Kathy Sullivan, where 10 of us gathered to talk about ways to give back. Dick Ridgway was the driving force behind the idea that we committed to: helping provide a Catholic education to young people who wanted one but couldn't afford it.

Dick himself had benefited from the generosity of Msgr. James Caulfield, the founding pastor of St. Jane de Chantal, who helped pay for his first two years of college at Mount St. Mary's. Dick had graduated from Gonzaga and went on to get his undergrad degree at the Mount and his law degree at Georgetown. He became a successful lawyer and was a longtime member of St. Elizabeth's and Holy Redeemer parishes.

At that information gathering, he asked: What about young people who want to go to a Catholic school but can't? We decided that night that we would do our best to help any child who wanted to go to Catholic school in the Washington archdiocese, and that financial need would be the primary factor.

We committed to giving some of our own money, and we thought we would also be able to raise some money. It didn't take long to realize that the hardest part was not raising money, but deciding which young people most deserved the support.

We began to work directly with schools and parishes to identify

schools that needed help, and they determined which students were most in need. We provide gifts of usually \$500 to \$1,000 for grade schools, and up to \$1,500 for high schools.

That doesn't come close to covering the full costs. Many families can afford to pay some tuition, and there are other sources to help. The parish may assist. The schools do their best to provide help. The archdiocese has a fund for this. But that last \$500 or \$1,000 makes a bigger difference than you might think between going to a Catholic school or not.

Pick almost any Catholic school here in Montgomery County, and I can almost guarantee that we have helped that school in the last 25 years. Since its inception, the Foundation has raised nearly \$7 million and assisted more than 9,000 students at over 50 Catholic schools in our archdiocese.

One of the best things about the foundation is that all donations go to scholarships and tuition assistance. It is run completely by volunteers, so there are no salaries to pay. Any administrative costs – brochures, occasional receptions, stationery, postage, etc. – are paid by board members. Every single cent we receive goes directly to a school and student in need. Not many organizations can say that.

I'm writing about The Shepherd Foundation today because we are planning our annual Mass, which we've celebrated on the Saturday before Thanksgiving for the last 20 years or so. We hold it at Holy Redeemer in Kensington, with usually six to eight priests and four or five principals in attendance. Students who have been

helped by the foundation speak about their experiences and why the help was critical.

People might make donations at the Mass, which are greatly appreciated. However, it's more a celebration and thanksgiving for the help we've been able to provide, as well as getting the word out about the foundation's efforts.

I invite you to 5:00 p.m. Mass on November 18 at Holy Redeemer. It will be a joyful celebration followed by a brief reception. I suspect that many of us who read *Our Parish Times* were blessed to attend Catholic school through the gift of our parents and others. For many, though, it's not possible without extra help. This is a celebration of those committed to Catholic education and to helping the foundation make sure it's possible for anyone who wants it.

We feel good about the difference we've made in the lives of thousands of young people who otherwise might not have received a quality Catholic education. There are many inspiring stories of those who went on to great high schools, colleges, and careers.

I often think about the famous quote from Arthur Fletcher, who was head of the United Negro College Fund: “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.” A simple gift can make sure our young people's minds are engaged, challenged, and lifted up while also learning important Catholic values. May we all do what we can to make this possible for all who wish to receive it.

For more information on The Shepherd Foundation, please visit the website at www.theshepherd-foundation.org.

TEACHERS

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practices designed to create safe, joyful, and engaging classrooms and school communities for both students and teachers.”

This flexible approach centers on four core principles:

• Positive Relationships:

The Responsive Classroom approach emphasizes the importance of building positive relationships between teachers and students, students and students, and adults in the school community.

• **Structure and Routines:** The Responsive Classroom approach provides students with clear expectations and routines, which helps them to feel safe and secure.

• **Social and Emotional Learning:** The Responsive Classroom approach teaches students social and emotional skills such as self-regulation, problem-solving, and empathy.

• **Engaging Instruction:** The Responsive Classroom approach uses active and engaging teaching strategies that keep students motivated and engaged.

Throughout the workshop, faculty and staff explored how these core principles align with our vision for teaching, learning, and student achievement at The Woods. Additionally, they evaluated the potential impact of foundational Responsive Classroom teaching practices and strategies on their current classroom and the school environment. And, most importantly, teachers are implementing these Responsive Classroom techniques as they embark



French Teacher Madame MacDonald with her Lower School French students at The Woods Academy.

upon “The First Six Weeks of School.”

The beginning of each school year provides teachers the opportunity to lay the foundation for a productive and cooperative year of learning. This does not just happen. It takes much planning, dedication, and love from teachers to construct the many, small, essential building blocks that lead to success. It is highly likely that the teachers we loved the best are the ones who took the time at the beginning of each school year to:

Create a climate and tone of warmth and safety.

Teach the schedule and routines of the school day and the expectations for behavior in each of them.

Introduce students to the physical environment and the materials of the classroom and the school, and teach students how to use and care for them.

Establish expectations about ways they will learn together in the year ahead.

Honing in on these details during the beginning weeks of school creates autonomous students who are ready to learn and achieve. That is the best way a teacher can show love for their students, setting them up for success in the year ahead.

OPT



The Memorial Garden is sprinkled with holy water as part of the dedication ceremony.

In Memory of the Youngest Souls

The dedication of the Our Lady of the Visitation Memorial Garden was Saturday, August 19. Held around the Memorial Garden, the service included Sacred Mass and a solemn blessing.

The Memorial Garden is a special place on the parish grounds. There, families who were not able to funeralize or memorialize their babies, have the opportunity for healing. The plaques installed in the Garden allow parents to honor their children's brief lives on earth and provide a peaceful place to pray. With this physical memorial, families may experience a sense of closure. Families affirm the dignity of their babies and the sanctity of their lives. It is also a place for the parish to publicly proclaim the sanctity of life of all humans from the moment of conception. OLVP is dedicated to the Catholic belief that babies in the womb are human persons who are created, formed, and loved by God (CCC 2274).

The Garden is open to the broader community as a resource for all suffering families. The Catechism of

the Catholic Church states that the Church entrusts unbaptized children, including miscarried babies, to the "great mercy of God" that "allow[s] us to hope that there is a way of salvation for children who have died without baptism" (CCC 1261). The "Blessing of Parents After a Miscarriage or Stillbirth" is provided by the Church "to assist the parents in their grief and console them with the blessing of God".

Construction for the Memorial Garden began in the fall of 2022. The OLVP for Life Committee has overseen the planning and design of the Garden. The Garden honors babies lost during miscarriage, abortion, stillbirth and those lost after a brief life who were not funeralized. The first phase of the Memorial Garden included forty-four plaques which were installed in August.

Additional plaque orders are being taken until the end of October for the next installation. For information, see the parish website <https://www.olvp.org/olvp-for-life>.

OPT

Faith Formation for Life at OLVP

According to the United States Conference of Bishops "The Church's catechetical mission aims to help the faithful of all ages to grow in both human and Christian maturity, enriching the whole of life with the leaven of the Gospel." Our Lady of the Visitation is offering a variety of ways for adults to deepen their commitment to their faith.

Men's Monthly Speakers

In September, the Upper Room Men's Group began the *Symbolon: The Catholic Faith Explained*. This six-week study program is a systematic presentation of the Catholic Faith. It presents a "big picture" while using the Nicene Creed as a guide. In October, a monthly speaker series will begin. Presented by a rotation of Catholic leaders, the seven virtues will be covered on the evening of the second Tuesday each month.

Rescue Project

Open to all adults and high school teens, The Rescue Project invites attendees to experience the Gospels in a new, unique, and compelling way over an eight-week

journey. Our Lady of the Visitation began presenting this series, developed by nationally known speaker Fr. John Riccardo, on October 2. It continues weekly on Mondays through November 20 from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm in the parish Founder's Hall. The Rescue Project seeks to share why Jesus came, what he did for us on the cross, and how much he loves us. Kathleen Garges is facilitating the video presentations followed by friendly conversations in a group format.

ENDOW Women's Study

Ladies of Visitation Saturday Women's Group is presenting "On the Dignity of Women: *Mulieris Dignitatem*" which is a study program offered by the international apostolate Endow (Educating on the Nature and Dignity of Women). All women are invited to dive into the theological and philosophical underpinnings of Pope St. John Paul II's understanding of woman and her vocation. The study is ongoing from September through December on the second and third Saturdays of the month at 9:30am.

OPT

OLVP Youth Center and Adoration Chapel Campaign Approved

Our Lady's Next Step Campaign takes a giant leap forward with the approval of the building plans by the Archdiocese of Washington. The \$2M campaign, which includes renovation of the existing parish barn, will result in a 5,000 square foot facility for the growing youth faith formation program as well as a Perpetual Adoration Chapel.

The concept for the campaign was approved by the parish Pastoral Council in September 2022. A fundraising pledge program began and to date over 50% of the campaign goal has been pledged. An updated architectural plan was provided to the parish in the summer of 2023 and can be viewed on the parish website (www.olvp.org/our-ladys-next-step-campaign).

The Youth FL

"Recent statistics reveal that only 27 percent of Catholic youth say that religion is very important to them. Giving OLVP youth their own space to participate in parish life more fully through education, recreation and service will dramatically increase their love for the Faith", states Fr. Greg Shaffer. Changing youth engagement with their parish and



Artist's rendering of the Youth Center and Adoration Chapel

their faith has been a hallmark of his leadership at the OLVP. The building plan contains large classrooms, a lounge, and a library that will allow the parish youth to have dedicated space to learn as well as have fellowship.

The Adoration Chapel

Historically, Perpetual Adoration chapels have brought vibrancy to parishes. These parishes have experienced healing in marriages and families, as well as an increase to vocations. The planned 340-foot chapel will seat 12 to 20 people and with secure access. The Catechism quotes Pope John Paul II, emphasizing that, "The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in this sacrament of love. Let us not

refuse the time to go to meet him in adoration, in contemplation full of faith, and open to making amends for the serious offenses and crimes of the world. Let our adoration never cease." (CCC, 1380). As Father Greg shared in a recent homily, the project is important to the youth, families, and our parish to give all in the community the opportunity to hear God in silence, like the experience of Elijah (1 Kings 19:11-13).

With the Archdiocesan approval of the plan, the campaign goes from the preliminary stage to in process. The formal fundraising program can proceed as well as land studies and county permitting. After three quarters of the funding is received, the building phase can commence.

OPT

Cardinal Gregory Shares His Blessing

September 24 was a joyous celebration for the parish as OLVP welcomed Cardinal Wilton Gregory. The Archbishop of Washington concelebrated sacred Mass with pastor Fr. Greg Shaffer and Fr. Jean-Marie Vincent and was assisted by Deacon Ted Dmuchowski and Rev. Charles Cortinovis. Parishioners were blessed to hear his Eminence's thoughtful homily about laborers and God's love. The liturgy was supported by the liturgical ministers as well as the choir, led by Director of Music Dr. Jyoti Hench. Following mass, Cardinal Gregory blessed the newly installed outdoor stations of the cross, the Memorial Garden, and the Grotto. The granite stations were a gift from the Archdiocese to the parish.

The festivities continued with the annual parish Fall Festival. Tropical storm Ophelia could not dampen the fun. Facilities manager Tony Glander and his team transformed all available inside space to house the games, pumpkin and face painting, and ministry displays. Attendees enjoyed subs, cotton candy and delicious dessert options. BINGO was called by Deacon Ted in Founder's Hall followed by gospel music in the church performed by Glorify.



Top left: Altar servers Lucy McNulty, Caroline Serenyi and Maggie McNulty share a smile with Cardinal Wilton Gregory.

Top right: The Cardinal earns a high five.

Above left: The Fall Festival provided a great opportunity for families to enjoy time together.

Above right: Kids of all ages enjoyed face painting and other fun activities at the Fall Festival.

OPT

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Altar Servers and Eucharistic Ministers



Ushers J.P. and Anthony giving out Weekly Bulletins



Suzanne Siguenza, Lector

Volunteering at Christ the King Parish

By Liz Weiss, Parishioner

As I sat in the Church pew this Sunday, I thought about the many volunteers it takes to help Father Steve at each of the weekend Masses. Upon entering the church, a volunteer greets people and mans the church store in the vestibule. Looking forward to the front of the church, the altar servers are assisting Father. The choir is providing music and lead-



Father Steve blesses children in Religious Education



English language choir

Christ the King

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Fr. Stephen J. Carter,
Pastor

Paul Lamoreaux,
OPT Editor

ing the congregation in singing. Other volunteers play instruments like the flute, guitar, and piano. The lectors recite the readings and make announcements. The ushers are greeters and also pass the Offertory collection baskets. More volunteers bring up the gifts at the Offertory. Then at Communion, Eucharistic

ministrators help Father Steve distribute the Body and Blood of Christ. At the end of Mass, the children in the English Religious Education program received a special blessing from Father as they begin the school year.

A number of volunteers teach the Religious Education classes. In

addition to the English liturgy and Religious Education program, the parish has just as many volunteers helping with the Spanish language liturgy and Religious Education program. There are other volunteers I haven't even mentioned. And parishioners volunteer their time to come to Mass to praise and

thank God each week. Thank you to all the wonderful people who volunteer at Christ the King Parish. We sang the song "Gathered as One" this week. The opening line is "Many faces, the young and the old, gathered as one in our God." How appropriate!

OPT

CROSS WALK

Con't from page 22

A light breakfast followed the Mass and then the pilgrims with their prayers and intentions in their hearts were on their way. A number of men in the group donned fluorescent green safety patrol belts and were tasked to assist pilgrims along the way, as needed. Further assistance was generously provided by Rich and Janice McPherson who drove Avalon and Brookewood vans respectively to shuttle any weary pilgrims to the next Church stop and provide bottled water to all.

Pilgrims were encouraged to take a turn carrying the cross as a way to pray for their intentions. For all of the pilgrims, their time carrying the cross was the highlight of the walk. "Carrying the cross and feeling its weight bearing down on my shoulder made me much more aware of the suffering of certain people in my life, in a way that I'd never experienced before," said Michelle Falcinelli, a parishioner at St. Andrew Apostle in Kemp Mill and a math teacher at St. Anselm's Abbey School in DC. At each Church stop pilgrims

OPT

had an opportunity to pray and hear a brief reflection, and enjoy snacks and water provided by parishioners. At Holy Cross Church pilgrims had an opportunity to venerate a relic of the true Cross and at OLOL pilgrims venerated a relic of the Crown of Thorns.

Prayers along the route were both private and spoken, as many prayed the Rosary out loud in small groups. St. Mary's parishioner Rosela Smith said she enjoyed "praying the Rosary while walking, meeting parishioners from other Churches and sharing our faith." The two-hour portion of the route along Beach Drive was walked in complete silence.

A majority of the pilgrims completed the walk, arriving safely at St. Ann's Church at 4:45pm where they were warmly greeted by Pastor, Msgr. James Watkins before they headed downstairs for a donated dinner together.

Guadalupe Molina, Spanish teacher at St. Mary's School, said she is "grateful to all who made the Cross Walk such an enriching experience!" All agreed, a day of incredible blessings despite some sore feet and muscles!

WORLD YOUTH DAY

Con't from page 23

Ms. Gonzalez attended this year's WYD along with her family, including her brother Marcos Gonzalez, who last year taught Spanish at SJRCS.

When asked about his favorite memory from WYD, Charles said it was going on a cruise and seeing the mountains. He also shared that WYD

showed him how to live his faith as a Catholic without fear of showing his faith to others, adding "it is fun and exciting to see youth from all around the world and talk to them."

Well-traveled Ms. Gonzalez noted that her best memory was visiting Fatima and visiting the tombs of Jacinta, Francisco, and Lucia, the three Portuguese children who received the apparitions and messages of the Blessed Mother from May to October in 1917. Ms. Gonzalez shared,

"Spending time with the places of the saints in Spain and Portugal made me feel closer to God. This helped me see that God is my Father, the same way he took care of the saints, he takes care of me." She expressed her gratitude to the Neocatechumenal Way for allowing her to experience WYD as a "vocational pilgrimage, living each day accompanied by a Liturgy, living it as a pilgrim, instead of living it as a tourist."

OPT

HOSPITAL

Con't from page 28

Support and Education for a Healthier Life

Holy Cross Health helps seniors keep their minds active and their bodies fit through an array of educational classes for older adults. And, if you are coping with illness, HCH support groups can give you the tools you need to manage your disease, as well as share experiences and practical advice with people suffering from the same health problem.

Holy Cross classes and support groups for seniors run the gamut from leisure activities for the elderly and programs promoting wellness for seniors — to workshops to improve your driving skills or to stimulate your interest in the arts. More than 20 classes are available at the hospital's Silver

Spring location — or at convenient locations throughout the community.

HCH's **Senior Fit Exercise Program** is a free strengthening, flexibility, and endurance program for adults ages 55 and older offered in more than 24 community-based centers.

You can try line dancing, seated yoga or water aerobics; and learn how to de-clutter your home — or to de-clutter your mind by improving your memory. And you can better understand how to take control of your health through HCH's comprehensive Chronic Disease Self-Management course.

View the complete listing of Holy Cross Health's classes for seniors and register online at: www.holycrosshealth.org/find-a-service-or-specialty/senior-services/ or call 301-754-8800.

Source: Holy Cross Hospital
(www.holycrosshealth.org)

OPT

LITERATURE

Con't from page 15

(TOB) curriculum which draws on award-winning children's literature to look at what it means to be human, to live as a gift to others, and to have heaven as our ultimate destiny. Some of the beautifully illustrated picture books used are: *Blueberries for Sal* (McCloskey); *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* (Step toe); and *Greek Mythology D'Aulaires*.

The middle school TOB curriculum helps students explore scripture and excerpts of Saint John Paul II's teachings. Middle School Religion teacher, Mary Harper, begins with the essential teaching that each person's authentic identity comes from God. This promotes a sense of gratitude and community among sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Together, they grow in trusting God the Creator and in respecting one another.

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World Youth Day: An Experience of a Lifetime

By Elisha Gabriel, Saint Peter's Youth Ministry, Sherwood High School Class of '24

World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal was an incredibly transformative experience. The talks delivered were remarkably impactful and relatable, resonating deeply with youth from around the world. Being able to witness Pope Francis in person, multiple times was an immense privilege that filled me with gratitude and awe.

The trip itself was a humbling journey, from the miles of walking, to the sight of countless others gathered in Portugal for this global event. Amidst it all, one of the most memorable moments was attending a talk by Chris Stefanick. Sitting in a park, his words bridged the gap between cultures and backgrounds, truly connecting with the hearts of young people worldwide.

The Masses throughout the week were breathtakingly beautiful, weav-



Pope Francis greets crowds of pilgrims at World Youth Day

ing together various languages and traditions, uniting us all in faith. The visit to Fatima was a highlight, profoundly strengthening my own faith as I observed the unwavering devotion of the three young shepherds. Their example served as a powerful encouragement for me to deepen my own faith journey.

World Youth Day 2023 was an experience of a lifetime, leaving an indelible mark on my heart. The talks, the encounters, the masses, and the moments of reflection all combined to create a profound spiritual awakening. The trip to Lisbon, Portugal not only connected me with fellow youth around the globe but also ignited a renewed passion for faith and a humbling sense of purpose.

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Seventh graders experienced a day of history at Gettysburg

Panthers in the Wild

By Matthew Byrdy, Jordan Georges, and Samantha Scango, Saint Peter's Class of 2024

On September 15, Saint Peter's middle school students went on three unique field trips that included Chesapeake Bay, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and the Sandy Spring Adventure Park. Each grade had a distinctive experience, and students wrote about their favorite things from the trips in their literature classes.

The sixth-grade class took a field trip to the Chesapeake Bay. Sofia Schaeffer said, "I totally didn't expect the adventure I got. We took out nets and picked up fish with our bare hands! It was so exciting, and I would seriously like to go again!"

Seventh-grader Abby Auchmoody said, "Field trips are wonderful experiences for hands-on learning. This year we went to Gettysburg which is full of history, and I was extremely excited



Eighth graders enjoyed the annual Challenge Trip at Sandy Spring Adventure Park

to learn more about the biggest battle in the Civil War. My favorite part was the cyclorama. It was a circular painting that helped me envision myself as if I were there. I had a wonderful time and believe others did as well."

The eighth grade class went to the Sandy Spring Adventure Park, for the yearly "Challenge Trip." This adventure helped to

build a sense of community within the class. The outing challenges not only physical skills, but leadership skills as well. When Matthew Byrdy and Samantha Scango were asked what they thought of this trip they said, "It was a great learning experience and helped me to grow closer with my classmates."

OPT



Sixteen people from Saint Peter's Parish traveled to Lisbon, Portugal for World Youth Day

Get to Know Saint Peter's New Staff Members

Mrs. Shirley Espin, Spanish Teacher

About me: I have been working in the educational field for over 18 years and I have worked as a Bilingual Coordinator and certified Interpreter. I love interacting with children, families, and other educators.

This year, I'm looking forward to the students enjoying Spanish class and learning about different cultures and traditions.

Ms. Nicol Espinoza, Third Grade Paraeducator

About me: I was born in Lima, Peru. I previously worked at MCPS, but my faith took me on a journey until I found Saint Peter's. My first few weeks at Saint Peter's have been an adventure. It has been fun to meet so many people and I have learned a lot in the process.

This year, I'm looking forward to a prosperous year for all at Saint Peter's. I pray to God for guidance to achieve all our goals one day at a time.



Ms. Nicol Espinoza and Mrs. Shirley Espin (right to left)

Ms. Erin Farrell, School Counselor

About me: I attended Saint Peter's school before continuing my education at the Academy of the Holy Cross and the University of Dayton. I worked at the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children in Alexandria, Va and spent the last two years at Saint Patrick's School



Ms. Pat O'Connell and Ms. Erin Farrell (right to left)

in Rockville. I am so grateful to this community for welcoming me back.

This year, I'm looking forward to getting to know the students better and supporting their social-emotional well-being.

Ms. Caitlin McNickle, Fifth Grade Teacher

About me: I have eight years of teaching experience. I earned



Ms. Caitlin McNickle

my bachelor's degree in education with a minor in special education at Loyola University Maryland. My first few weeks at Saint Peter's have been busy, with many new learning opportunities.

This year, I'm looking forward to being a part of the school community and settling into my position. I am also excited to see all of the progress my students will make this year.

Ms. Pat O'Connell, Second Grade Teacher

About me: I have taught in ADW schools for 20+ years. I studied Spanish and Latin American Affairs in college and graduate school, and have a Masters in Teaching from Johns Hopkins University. The Saint Peter's community has been very welcoming, and I am excited to be here.

This year, I am looking forward to getting to know my students and preparing them to receive First Penance and First Communion.

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Students, teachers, and staff celebrated the blessing of the new field.

Field of Dreams

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St. Elizabeth School kicked off the new school year with a ribbon cutting ceremony and a special blessing for our new back field! We were honored to have Superintendent Kelly Branaman from the Archdiocese join us for the celebration. A big thanks to Msgr. Parent, Mr. Jamie Franck, Mr. Steve Doherty, Mr. Joe Birch, and Mr. Nilo Abril for their support, guidance, dedication, and hard work to make this new field a reality.

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The whole St. Elizabeth's community enjoyed the annual Back-to-School picnic on the new field.

A Community of Saints!

St. Elizabeth is a school steeped in community and tradition. During the month of September, we had several opportunities to gather as a community and celebrate the beginning of a new year. The St. Elizabeth Golf Classic is a tradition that continues to thrive as many friends, family, and alumni of St. E's met on the links to reconnect and forge new friendships. Our new back field was the perfect spot for the St. E's Back-to-School Picnic! Old and new families enjoyed a beautiful evening celebrating the start of another great year!

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Several esteemed golfers turned out for the St. Elizabeth Golf Classic.

St. Michael the Archangel

A Successful Michaelmas Service Project

By Judith Hayes

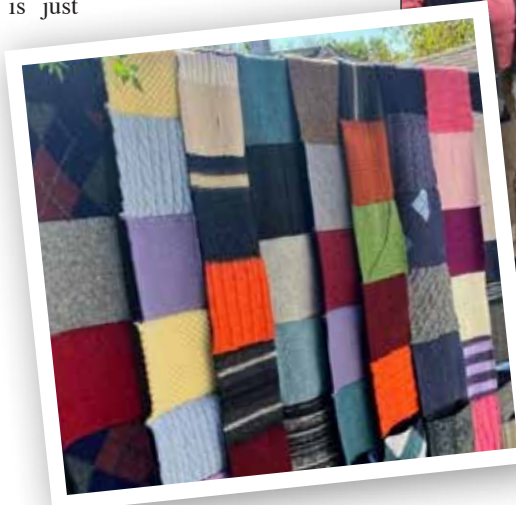
"For I was naked and you clothed me...." Matt. 25: 36.

In the spirit of service to which we are called, eleven parishioners of St. Michael the Archangel gathered on September 16 in the basement of the Parish Center to make scarves to provide warmth for the homeless this winter. This is just



Above: St. Michael's volunteers with the scarves they created for the homeless.

Left: The collection of scarves made by the volunteers.



one of five service projects of our Michaelmas Feast Day which will be celebrated on September 30.

The scarf project began with a large box of 6" x 6" woolen squares cut from recycled sweaters. With needle and thread each person stitched together eleven squares of diverse colors to make a long scarf. Pockets were added at each end to keep the hands warm.

It was a joyous gathering. Participants met parishioners they had not known previously, conversation flowed, refreshments were

generously provided by several of the attendees and the results of the sewing project were impressive. Collectively the group created eleven colorful winter scarves which will be donated to Shepherd's Table for our homeless neighbors right here in Silver Spring.

The event was scheduled from 10:00 am until noon but many stayed on to see the completion of their work. Everyone involved felt a tremendous sense of satisfaction for what the group had accomplished.

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VOCATIONS

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they are currently considering by God's good grace. We understand that we cannot create a vocation to the priesthood, but that our prayers are thus able to assist in unlocking the vocation that Our Blessed Lord Jesus has prepared for those of our congregation.

A seventh young man on our Vocation Wall was ordained to the priesthood this past June. Again, the parish rejoices in this great gift to the Church. We will celebrate the

priestly ordination of two young men in the spring of 2024. Already, we are making plans for this grand occasion! Thanks be to God!

Recently, we have also welcomed a number of Sisters from various Religious Orders to speak at Sunday Mass inviting young women to consider the call to serve the Church as Religious Sisters. We are confident that our generous Lord Jesus is also calling young women to serve His Church! We are hoping to provide a Vocation Wall for future women religious.

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St. Francis of Assisi



On September 17, Religious Education and Confirmation catechists Donna Ruffin, Tammy Doerrman, Susan Anderson, Arleen Hall, and Brent Hanson stand for a blessing during the 11:15 am Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Parish on Catechetical Sunday. The theme of Catechetical Sunday was "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened" (Matthew 11:28).

Ulma Family Beatification

By Bozenna Buda, ED

This year, we have another memorable event to commemorate. On September 10, 2023, the beatification of the Ulma Family- mother, father, six children and one almost-born baby – took place in Poland. They

were killed for hiding Jews in their home in 1944. According to the Vatican, this is the first time an entire family is being beatified together, including the child carried in the mother’s womb at the time of her death.

As the Institute of National

Remembrance noted, “The Ulma family serves as a symbol of those [Catholic] Poles who died at the hands of the Germans for helping Jews during the German occupation of Poland.” The Ulmas were posthumously honored by Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem with the title of “Righteous Among the Nations.” A museum named after the Ulma family, dedicated to all Poles who saved Jews during the Holocaust, was opened in Markowa, Poland.

The lives of the Ulma family are an inspiration to all. As Pope St. John Paul II often pointed out, the family unit can be viewed as a “domestic church.” Even those who lead seemingly ordinary lives can exemplify the teachings of the Gospel. They can offer warmth and support to the most vulnerable in society, as did the Ulma family.

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(Sources: <https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/10032,Beatification-of-the-Ulma-family.html> and <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2023-08/ulma-family-remarkable-beatification-martyrdom-jewish.html>)



The Ulma family, on the way to sainthood. Photo courtesy of IPN



Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych, S.Chr., baptized little Abigail Tosia in the presence of family and friends on September 3, 2023, at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish, Silver Spring, Md. We wish God’s blessings for her and her family! Szczęść Boże!



Padre Pio Relic at OLQP- On Sunday, Sept. 24, OLQP parishioners were able to venerate the relic of St. Padre Pio, in honor of his feast day. His Reliquary was displayed in front of the altar. At the end of Mass, Fr. Frydrych blessed the congregation with the St. Pio relic.



The new officers of the St. Maximilian Kolbe Council 16634 Knights of Columbus were installed on August 6, 2023, at the Parish of Our Lady Queen of Poland, Silver Spring, Md. OLQP Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych, S.Chr., (center) is the Council’s Chaplain. Also pictured are District Deputy for Maryland Gus Gusman, District Warden Franklin Morton, Grand Knight Stefan Witzak, Deputy Grand Knight Jacek Marczyński, Guard John Armstrong, Trustee David Birely, Trustee Richard Okreglak, Warden Bob Dowlut, and Recorder Andy Michaels.



OLQP Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych offered Holy Mass on September 24, 2023, to commemorate the 84th anniversary of World War II and the September 17, 1939, attack on Poland. The Mass intention was requested by the Polish American Congress Washington Metro Area Division (PACWMAD). Among those in attendance were representatives from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, St. Maximilian Kolbe Council 16634 Knights of Columbus, Polish Scouting Organization-ZHP, Polish Legion of American Veterans, and PACWMAD. Seminarian Max Korzan assisted Fr. Frydrych at the altar.



The Knights of Columbus St. Maximilian Kolbe Council 16634 and parishioners showed their support for Fr. Bogumil Dabrowski (in habit) and his Franciscan Brothers’ missionary work at the coffee hour after Holy Mass on August 27.

Our Lady

Queen of Poland

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Above left: Father Kevin, celebrated mass with Deacon Dave and Altar Servers.



Above right: The Ehart Family enjoyed the beautiful buffet and fellowship.



Above: Brenda Murtha, Liz Smith, Jessica Cahoon, and Casey Gilbertz enjoy catching up on the news.



Left: Ray Gustin, Uno Carlsson, Mary Carlsson, Evelyn Gustin, and Chris Miller relax until they have room for dessert.



Above: Deacon Dave and his grandchildren are patiently waiting for their food.

Left: Barbara and Roy Russell enjoying the day with Debbie Gresalfi.

St. Mary's has Begun this New Season of Fall with Appreciation and Renewal

Our Faith Formation instruction has resumed. We are excited to see all our students safely on the parish grounds. Confirmation orientation for parents and candidates was held and new expectations of prayer and leadership were shared. We are all excited to help them on the final steps of this journey. Our youth continue to reach out to be of service to others in need. Once again, they will participate in the Cup of Joe program, assembling 300 food packets for the homeless of the Archdiocese.

An important outreach is the parish commitment to our twinning parish, St. Joseph's in Carcass, Haiti. We have continued to send food and funds throughout the pandemic, but the recent earthquake and political unrest has made it more difficult. The faith community of St. Joseph's are grateful for all we have done for them, but they are still in desper-

ate need of everything. The Haiti committee will be hosting the Fall Festival for Haiti on Saturday, October 7, 2023, from 4:30-7:30 pm. The fun will be held on the parish grounds. Plating Grace Food Truck, along with a pizza truck, and ice cream truck will be selling food. There will be live entertainment and face painting for the children and games.

Fr. Kevin sponsored a Parish Appreciation and Beef Brisket Roast for the congregation. The event began with a beautiful mass held in the Church this year due to severe weather and heavy rain. The choir and musicians were in full attendance during the mass. Father Kevin blessed the Catechists of the parish as the new year of Faith Formation begins. Participating in this annual picnic was an exciting experience for the Faith Community. Father shared how the faith of the people and their good works reach far and

wide. Many in the parish continue their outreach to the needy, sick, and homebound, during these difficult times. Parish Ministries continue to strengthen as more volunteers participate in mass and parish organizations.

Our Lady of Fatima Sodality will be hosting a special presentation about Carlo Acutis, a Catholic Italian teenager, who died in 2006 and was beatified October 10, 2020 in Assisi, Italy. Carlo Acutis, a gamer and computer programmer who loved soccer and the Eucharist, worked on an exhibit recording the miracles of the Eucharist which occurred over the centuries.

St. Mary's Church and Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, 18230 Barnesville Road, Barnesville, MD 20838 is hosting this exhibit in their Pavilion on November 4, 1:00-4:00 pm and on November 5, 2:00-4:00 pm.

OPT



The Haiti Committee continues to work in meeting the needs of our twinning parish of St. Joseph's in Carcass.



Father Kevin joins in celebrating some of the Catechists who are sharing The Word throughout the year.

We invite you to join us for this International Exhibition on Eucharistic Miracles designed and created by Blessed Carlo Acutis.

St. Mary's Church and Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima 18230 Barnesville Rd, Barnesville, MD 20838 is hosting this exhibit in our Pavilion on Nov. 4 from 1-4 p.m. & Nov. 5 from 2-4 p.m.

"To always be close to Jesus, that's my life plan"

-Blessed Carlo Acutis

St. Mary's Parish
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Barnesville, MD 20838

Rev. Kevin O'Reilly,
Pastor
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Bishop Roy Campbell conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on 23 young men and women from St. Paul Church. At the joyful event, three chose St. Cecilia as their patron saint, and three chose St. Sebastian. Photo by Tara Katherine Photography by Tara K, LLC

Invitation to Pray with Prisoners

By John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe

The parish stalwarts who have been praying after Mass for the people of Ukraine and others in need have now begun praying for eight pro-lifers who were recently convicted of two crimes – blocking access to an abortion clinic and conspiring to do so. This is not just trespassing, as prosecutors opted to make a federal case of it. The eight convicts will be sentenced in October, and the maximum sentence is 11 years. One man in the original group plea-bargained and got a reduced sentence – ten months.

The pro-lifers in prison do not fit into any neat category. The leadership of this “conspiracy” is the Progressive Anti-Abortion Uprising, feminists, including atheists, who support the right to life and other civil rights; they “stood in solidarity” with the unborn.

Other rescuers were traditional Catholics who were praying quietly, activists who were blocking, and Evangelicals who were witnessing. What united this unconventional group was opposition to an evil – specifically, late term abortions at the Washington Surgi-Clinic in October 2020. The practitioner there is Cesare Santangelo. Lauren Handy, who led the rescue, is identified by the *Washington Post* as the “anti-abortion activist who kept fetuses,” a reference to the bodies of children killed in the second or third trimester of pregnancy which she had obtained from a truck driver who was removing them from Santangelo’s place. When Handy called the police to examine the large bodies which surely looked like evidence of a crime to her, they arrested her for possessing them.

In some ways, it can feel backwards to pray for prisoners of conscience. They are praying for us –

the Catholic ones are anyway – and God listens to them. And perhaps God eavesdrops on the atheist’s gentle thoughts too.

The works of mercy that the Lord listed in his sermon about the last judgment (as described in Matthew’s Gospel) include visiting those in prison. The Greek verb for this visiting is *episkeptomai*, which may refer to a literal visit, or more generally to standing in solidarity with prisoners. So praying for people whom we love who are in prison is not just a second best effort to fulfill the Lord’s command; it’s exactly the right thing to do.

After weekday Masses, stay to pray with other parishioners! Pray for Ukraine, to be sure, but also pray *with* the prisoners of conscience who pray for the unborn, their parents, their enemies, all victims of violence, and a complacent nation.

OPT

EAGLE SCOUT

Con’t from page 29

refinishing of three teak benches – are the handiwork of teens who belonged to Mother of God School Troop 318, said Director of Social Concerns Tony Bosnick, who has served as the liaison for the Scout’s service projects since 2015.

“They help beautify the parish grounds and help make the parish more environmentally compliant,” he said.

According to an Eagle Scout rank requirements document found online, candidates must “plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community,” among other criteria, to achieve the Eagle

Scout rank. Bosnick said the Boy Scouts approached the parish about doing their service projects there, because school officials knew him through his own three sons having achieved the rank of Eagle Scout through the Mother of God School troop.

Bosnick said he helped steer the young men to service projects that reinforce Catholic social teaching – in this case, care for God’s creation – because they will see the value of their work over time.

The staying power of the Scouts’ work has endured. In the case of the rain garden completed in 2016 by Michael Elder, the project successfully helps stem some rainwater flowing on the parish grounds and supports vibrant vegetation and plants nearly year-round. The reframing boxes constructed from

railroad ties by Zachary Potter in 2018 house recently planted native trees that add shade to the parish’s parking lots and help break up the newly-paved parking lot. And benches refinishing by Eagle Scout Dodi Agboifo in 2021 remain restful places for parishioners to sit in front and on the side of the church, where the seating is located.

A prospective fourth project to stabilize the steps to the parish’s storage trailer, replace rotted wood and repaint parts of the trailer, and do general cleanup around the structure is currently being reviewed.

Bosnick knows first-hand that the lessons learned by Eagle Scouts from Mother of God Troop 318 will be long lasting. “They see themselves achieving something,” he said.

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The Third Tranche of Priests for St. Paul’s

By John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe

Going into October, St. Paul parish is still exploring the beauty and strength of our archdiocese. Msgr. Filardi is on leave, and the parish looks forward to his return. But in the meantime, the parish has received some of the best preaching available anywhere. We are now up to ten amazing servants coming to help out. The three new priests include Fr. Jim Oberle, Msgr. Charles Mangan, and Fr. John Trigilio.

Fr. Oberle is from the Washington area. His community, the Sulpicians, sent him to Atlanta, where he served for decades. He led pilgrimages to shrines in Europe and was on the faculty of the University of Dallas for several years. He retired in 2019 and returned to his roots in Washington.

Msgr. Mangan is from South Dakota, but has old connections in Maryland. He was trained at Mt. St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg. He was ordained in 1989 and studied Canon Law and Mariology in Rome before working for the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. He then went back to the Midwest for three decades, to serve in Sioux Falls. Two years ago, he joined the faculty in Emmitsburg, to shape the next generation of priests. Since then, he has written for the *Baltimore Catholic Review* and the *Arlington Catholic Herald*. Next great challenge: St. Paul’s.

Fr. Trigilio is another faculty member at Mt. St. Mary’s Seminary. When he said Mass in Damascus, he finished Mass and then intro-

duced himself – which was not his plan, but it did show his priorities.

The first hint that he’s a character is his name. He’s got some alphabet soup attached – two doctorates and a puzzler. That’s Rev. John Trigilio, Jr., PhD, ThD, KGCO. Junior and a PhD are clear enough. ThD is another doctorate, this one in theology. But KGCO? That might refer to his status as a Knight of Grace of the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of Saint George, which you don’t see every day. This Constantinian Order “undertakes spiritual, humanitarian, hospitaller and charitable projects and initiatives” in England, Ireland, and elsewhere.

He is also co-author of books including *Catholic Mass For Dummies*, *John Paul II For Dummies*, *Women in the Bible For Dummies*, *Saints For Dummies*, and *Catholicism For Dummies*. And he’s co-producer of “Web of Faith 2.0,” which is a weekly show on EWTN.

He’s going to fit right in.

The parish is grateful for help from ten generous priests, but we look forward to the return – safe and sound – of our own great pastor, Msgr. Filardi.

OPT

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