



# OUR Parish Times

Special Edition: Catholic Schools Week  
Patricia Sullivan Benefit Dinner:  
See ad back page

JANUARY 2017

Living the Faith Together

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## Education and Life



Chuck Short

By Chuck Short

**B**est wishes for a new year filled with the blessings of good health, prosperity, abundant love in family and friends and the comfort of deepened faith.

Joyfully we start the year by celebrating the ordination of our own Msgr. Mark Brennan, pastor of St Martin's in Gaithersburg, as Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore. While no one was more surprised to get "the call" from Pope Francis than Msgr. Brennan, those who know him were quite surprised as well.

Msgr. Brennan is widely known by his parishioners and many in Montgomery County as a simple and humble priest driven by a passion for service to his parish, justice for all and compassion for the poor. The only spotlight he has sought was to shine a light on the increasing number of poor people in our community and the need to address their housing, food and employment needs. Msgr. Brennan's blushed Irish face was often seen in Rockville at county government meetings at which he was urging that more be done on behalf of the poor. This is not the first time that Pope Francis has dug deeply into the ranks of the priests of the Archdiocese

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It was an unforgettable day for St. Martin's School faculty and staff to witness their former pastor's ordination to become Baltimore's auxiliary bishop. From left, Beth O'Hara, Netta Morelli, Kristen Masciotti, Trina LaPier, former principal Sr. Sharon Mihm, Helene Redmond, Linda Joseph, Annamaria Zimmerman, Amy Tolan, Bishop Mark Brennan, Anne Gemunder, Lilian Ruiz, Maria-Rose Cain, Brooksley Jones, MaryJo O'Keefe, and Katie Cain. Photo by Carlos Monzon

## Pope Francis Names Msgr. Brennan Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore

By Anne Gemunder

**P**ope Francis named Monsignor Mark Brennan, pastor of St. Martin of Tours in Gaithersburg, as a new

Auxiliary Bishop for Baltimore. The announcement was made by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, on December 5. Monsignor

said he was "completely surprised," when he received the call. When asked if he would accept the appointment, Monsignor

*Continued on page 20*

## Holy Cross Students Win Verizon App Challenge

*Best In State for a Second Year!*

**S**tudents from The Academy of the Holy Cross have won the Verizon Innovative Learning app challenge Best In State (Maryland) award for the second year in a row! There were more than 1,800 submissions to the contest this year. On Tuesday, January 17, the team received word that they have been selected Best in Region and will now be considered for the Best in Nation award.

The team of Maureen Dailey '17, Caroline Floam '18, Karen Gordon '17, Devan O'Neil '18, Carly Sinay '17, and Samantha Sinay '17 - all from Montgomery County parishes - created PantryPal, a concept that helps people donate needed items to local food banks. The app would provide lists created by the food banks. A GPS will show app users the locations of

*Continued on page 6*



The Academy of the Holy Cross PantryPal team (L-R): Karen Gordon (St. Andrew Apostle), Samantha Sinay (St. Elizabeth), Maureen Dailey (St. Bernadette), Carly Sinay (St. Elizabeth), Devan O'Neil (Our Lady of Lourdes), Caroline Floam (Little Flower)

## Dr. Margot Culotta-Norton to be Honored Jan. 28

**C**onnelly School of the Holy Child in Potomac will be honoring Dr. Margot Culotta-Norton '71 with the 2017 Distinguished Alumna of the Year Award, at its Alumnae Brunch on January 28. The Award is given annually to a Holy Child alumna for outstanding service to the community, celebrating fortitude, a commitment to improving the quality of life of others, and for exemplifying the ideals and character of Connelly School of the Holy Child.



Margot Culotta-Norton

For more than 38 years, Margot has had a profound and humanizing effect on the dental profession by extolling through action two heartfelt ideals: service and community. She was one of the founding members of the Greater Washington Academy of Women Dentists and was the first woman President of the USA Section of the 89-year old International College of Dentists, a worldwide dental honor organization which recognizes and promotes excellence in leadership with an emphasis on service, oral health needs and education throughout the world.

Guided by the motto, "Men and Women for Others" instilled in her at Holy Child and Georgetown University, Margot has made community service a highlight of her career.

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# Dead Man Walking: Religious Leaders Dialogue on the Death Penalty

Join Catholic Mobilizing Network, Washington National Cathedral, and Washington National Opera for a powerful evening of music and reflection from prominent faith leaders on **Monday, February 6, 2017 from 7:00 - 8:30pm at the Washington National Cathedral.**

Featuring Sr. Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking*, and EJ Dionne Jr., *Washington Post* Political Columnist, as moderators, this event brings together six national religious leaders to discuss their perspectives on the death penalty in the only western democ-

racy to use it.

The program will include arias from Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally's opera *Dead Man Walking*, which will run at the Kennedy Center Opera House from February 25-March 11.

**Free and open to the public with a RSVP**, this event will include panelist response to audience questions.

**For more information and to register, please visit: [cathedral.org/event/dead-man-walking](http://cathedral.org/event/dead-man-walking)**

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The Lord's Table Volunteers (left to right) Jordon Gaboton, Jayden Gaboton, Telly Ervin, T. J. Ward, and Liam McGann are among those who have served at St. Martin of Tours.



## Avalon Students Serve at The Lord's Table

Even in affluent Montgomery County, MD, there is a homeless, unemployed, and disadvantaged population. Each day, men, women and children in reduced circumstances find their way to the kitchen at St. Martin of Tours parish in Gaithersburg to partake of The Lord's Table.

The Avalon School, located just a mile from St. Martin's, first heard about The Lord's Table program when the school moved into the neighborhood in 2008. Avalon president Richard McPherson talked with Msgr. Mark Brennan (now auxiliary bishop, Baltimore) and program director Mary Canapary. Was there a role for Avalon's Upper School students in the program?

Each afternoon, Monday through Friday, a host of volunteers from diverse non-profit organizations throughout the area arrives at St. Martin's to prepare and serve a dinner. Cooks are numerous but after preparing a three-course dinner for the participants, extra servers are always welcome. Thus began Avalon's role, which started with a team of 4-6 Upper School students serving at The Lord's Table just once a month. The boys soon mastered serving techniques and found that many of the diners often

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## CBN-MC February Monthly Breakfast

The Board of Directors of the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County invites you to its next monthly 2nd Friday Networking Breakfast Meeting being held on Friday, February 10, 2017 at 7:30am.

This month's speaker is **Dr. Norvell Vandervall (Van) Coots**, President and CEO of Holy Cross Health and the President and CEO of the Maryland Region of Trinity Health.

We meet on the second Friday of every month at our new location- Lahinch Tavern and Grill in the Cabin John Shopping Center on Tuckerman Lane and Seven Locks Road. Parking is conveniently located outside the restaurant.

# UCR Plays & Prays

Typically, photos posted from Upcounty Community Resources, Inc. events are that of dancing, eating, learning and partying. But having fun is not the extent of our adult activities. Not only does UCR meet the physical, therapeutic and social needs of our members with developmental differences, there's also a spiritual aspect to our mission.

UCR is not a religious organization but it did grow out of several Catholic churches in the Upper Montgomery County region. Our group has since grown to include more faith groups and varied church members but our roots are firmly planted in St. Francis of Assisi and St. Patrick's foundation.

Every year, St. Francis of Assisi uses the Epiphany Mass to honor



On Sunday, January 8, UCR participants gathered at St. Francis of Assisi Parish to celebrate the Gift of All God's Children

and recognize the gifts of All God's Children. This year, on a chilly January day, several dozen members from all denominations took part in the special mass highlighting our members. From lectures, to ushers, to altar servers, our members had important roles in the mass which also featured UCR Board Chairman Deacon Dan Finn.

Upcoming events include: Wizard's Basketball game on Sunday February 26; St. Patrick's Day Dance on Saturday March 18 Dance at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church; and Bingo on Saturday March 25th at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church. Watch for many more exciting events in this space or on [ucresources.org](http://ucresources.org)!

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## The Maryland General Assembly is now in session. You can get involved

By Anthony Bosnick, Justice and Advocacy Council of Montgomery County



Anthony Bosnick

The 437th session of the Maryland General Assembly has convened! It runs for 90 days from January 11 through April 10. Our Catholic understanding of faithful citizenship calls us to become involved in the legislative process and to let our elected representatives know our thoughts regarding issues before the House of Delegates and the State Senate.

Much important legislation will be considered that will affect the quality of life in Maryland for years to come. If the 2017 session is anything like the 2016 session—and it likely will be—we can expect that by March 6, the last day that legislation can be introduced under normal rules, the legislators will be inundated with bills to consider. In 2016, a total of 2,817 bills were introduced into both chambers. Of those, 834 passed, with 102 vetoed by the governor.

While the focus of the Justice and Advocacy Council is Montgomery County, the J&A Council is also interested in what happens in Annapolis. Many of the issues considered there impact residents of Montgomery County. Each year some legislation has a great impact on the life of the Church and the Catholic understanding of the dignity of life, promoting justice, and building the common good.

Possible issues before the legislature in 2017. The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is the voice of the Maryland Catholic bishops in Annapolis and thus of the

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### OUR Parish Times

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### Honoring the Dignity of Life Seminar

An initiative of the SFA Health Ministry and Respect Life Ministry

Saturday, February 11, 2017\*

9:30 am to 12 Noon

Knights of Columbus Father Cuddy Hall  
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#### PROGRAM

Come to this enlightening seminar to:

- Understand Church teachings regarding care during times of serious illness and at the end of life.
- Learn to make healthcare choices honoring the dignity of life in all its stages.
- Learn to recognize elder abuse, its warning signs, causes and tips for prevention.

Complementary continental breakfast & take home literature provided.

#### PRESENTERS

**Father J. Daniel Mindling**, OFM Cap., Consultant to the USCC Bishops Committee for Pro-Life Activities and general editor of *Comfort and Consolation, Care of the Sick and Dying*.  
**Maria Shumar**, Victim Specialist Consultant, Trainer for Elder Abuse Prevention Programs and Board Member of ElderSAFE.

REGISTRATION 301-412-1909

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/honoring-the-dignity-of-life-seminar-tickets-31112011865>

\* For notice of inclement weather cancellation, call 301-412-1909 on February 11 Snow Date: February 25



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**Rev. William E. Foley**  
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 301-924-2284

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# St. Patrick School News

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL HIGH SCHOOL



## 2017 Summer Programs



### ATHLETICS

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|--------------|----------------|
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| Basketball   | Soccer (co-ed) |
| Field Hockey | Softball       |
| Football     | Volleyball     |
| Lacrosse     |                |



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|--------------|-------------|
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### FALCON SUMMER ARTS

- Children's Choir & Art
- Digital Video Production
- Jazz Band
- Musical Theatre Training Program



### Spreading Christmas Cheer

Fifth grade students at St. Patrick's School spent a day in early December with the residents of Grace House Assisted Living in Silver Spring. Residents enjoyed singing Christmas carols with the students as well as a few rousing games of Bingo. This has been a memorable Christmas tradition for many years for St. Patrick's fifth graders. **OPT**



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### Father Choi—Professor too!

Seventh grade students at St. Patrick's Catholic School were treated to guest teacher Fr. Martino Choi, who serves as the parish's Parochial Vicar. Following a multi-week reading and study of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis as a religious allegory, Fr. Choi discussed the multitude of religious symbols found in the book. His insightful presentation revealed the abundant Christian themes in this piece of children's literature. According to seventh-grade student Sarah Joseph, "Father Choi's visit was a highlight of this novel study." **OPT**

**Patricia Sullivan Dinner April 1**  
*See ad back page*

# A Child's Prayer for Christmas



The St. Jane de Chantal School's continued its beautiful tradition of celebrating the true meaning of Christmas. The pre-kindergarten through 4th grade classes of St. Jane de Chantal School gathered at the church to perform their annual Christmas Play: A Child's Prayer for Christmas. The play was a wonderful addition to the Christmas season, bringing the Nativity story to life through songs and readings. There were shepherds with their

sheep, stars spreading their light, angels, and students singing clearly the good news of Jesus' birth.

OPT



More St. Jane de Chantal News on Page 28

# Social Justice at St. Jane de Chantal

By Paul Eder and Joe Gallelli

Four centuries ago, the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary was co-founded by St. Jane Frances de Chantal, who believed deeply in social justice and advocacy. Today, her namesake parish in Bethesda carries on that tradition with a robust social justice and advocacy program. The St. Jane de Chantal Parish Council's Social Justice Committee is responsible for the encouragement, coordination, communication, and oversight of the various charitable efforts of the parish.

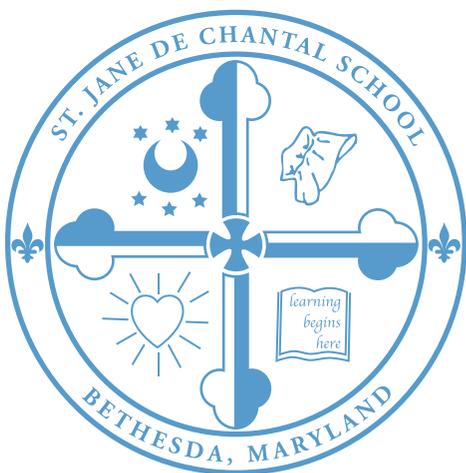
St. Jane parish members are active in supporting a variety of community-wide service and outreach programs, including: Bethesda Help, Bethesda Cares, Shepherd's Table, Pro-Life Group, Gabriel Project Montgomery Hospice, Shady Grove Pregnancy Center, Rosaria Communities, Catholic Charities of Montgomery County, Project Rachel, Birthright, Interfaith Works, BCC Meals on Wheels, Archdiocese of Washington Justice and Advocacy Councils, and So Others Might Eat. In addition, parishioners support internal parish activities such as Ladies of Charity, Msgr. Christopher Fund, and St. Martin's Cloak. The leadership of the Social Justice Committee presents regularly on social concern activities to the Parish Council,



Joe Gallelli displaying the work of the Social Justice Committee for the parishioners of St. Jane de Chantal Church.

**St. Jane de Chantal Parish**  
 9601 Old Georgetown Road  
 Bethesda, MD  
**Fr. Samuel C. Giese**  
 Pastor  
 301-530-1550  
**St. Jane de Chantal School**  
**Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton**  
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**Susana and Mario Cerritelli,**  
 OPT Editors

Continued on page 31



## St. Jane Frances de Chantal School

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## Catholic Schools Week at Our Lady of Mercy: Verso L'alto!

During Catholic Schools Week, the parents, staff and students of Our Lady of Mercy will be focusing on the three elements of the overall theme: faith, knowledge, and service. This year, Mercy is excited to announce that the school's Student Council will be co-hosting the Catholic Schools Week program and actively participating in the programs and events.

As an extension of the week's theme, special activities will reinforce and reflect the life of Mercy Patron Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. Pier Giorgio, a courageous, fun-loving, devout Catholic, is completely relatable to young people who considered it a privilege to serve the poor and suffering. His charity did not simply involve giving something to others, but giving completely of himself. On the back of a photo that shows him climbing a mountain, he wrote the words "Verso l'alto" which means "upward." It is a phrase that reflects his way of life, and has become the motto of the

Mercy community: always look upward, to be the best we can be

Mercy students will kick-off the

Catholic Schools Week program

by participating in the 10:45

a.m. and 5:00 p.m. masses

on Sunday, January

29. The school Open

House will be held on

Tuesday the 31st, as

extended community

members are invited

to tour the class-

rooms and meet the

teachers and staff. On

Wednesday, February

1st, Mercy parents will

be celebrated during the

8:30 a.m. mass, followed by

a school-wide community ser-

vice project on February 2 to support

the Catholic Charities Cup of Joe program.

Each day, Mercy's student news crew will do

a live broadcast to the classrooms, highlight-

ing individuals who live their faith. Closing

out the week will be a PTO sponsored break-

fast to recognize the hard work and dedica-

tion of the teachers and staff. It promises to

be a fun and meaningful week of activities

for the entire Mercy community!

OPT

## Celebrating Computer Science Week

In a nine-day span, Mercy students from Pre-K 4 through eighth grade logged over 350 hours of computer coding! This impressive accomplishment was part of The Hour of Code initiative, a global movement designed to demystify code and show that anybody can learn the basics. This was Mercy's third year with Hour of Code, which is part of Global Computer Science Week, Dec 5-11.

The Hour of Code started as a one-hour introduction to computer science, designed to inspire all students to learn the basics, and to broaden participation in the field of computer science. It has since become a world-wide effort to celebrate computer science.

Led by our Technology Specialist, Kitty Shadman, Mercy students learned to code (program) games, puzzles, robots, and more. They participated in coding activities during their computer lab time, during recess, after school, and independently in their classrooms using their Chromebooks.

Mercy believes every student should have the opportunity to learn computer science. It helps nurture problem-solving skills, logic and creativity. By starting early, students will have a foundation for success in any 21st-century career path. Not only is this good for the students, but it is also a way for teachers to challenge themselves! Mercy teachers took advantage of the opportunity to learn alongside the students, proving they are lifetime learners.

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### Our Lady of Mercy Parish

9200 Kentsdale Drive  
Potomac, MD

### Fr. William Byrne, Pastor

301-365-1415

### Our Lady of Mercy School

Ms. Deborah Thomas, Principal

301-365-4477

### Gerry Burgess, OPT Editor

301-330-5676

## CHALLENGE

Con't from page 1

food banks. A barcode scanner would help users select needed items in grocery stores. The team writes that the app will "further support our global responsibility to combat the societal issue of hunger in an efficient and user-friendly way."

All six of the girls on the winning team, in addition to the other 42 girls who submitted entries (eight teams total), were enrolled in the Intro to Computer Programming classes in

the first semester taught by Lauren DeZinno. The Best In State award includes a \$5,000 award and Verizon Ellipsis 10 tablets and cases for the winning team members. There will be eight Best in Region teams selected for the Best in Nation award.

The team is also competing nationally to be elected Fan Favorite, in which people across the country vote for their favorite app concept. The team with the most votes will receive an additional \$15,000 for their school/group, in-person app development training from MIT experts, and an

all-expenses-paid trip to the TSA conference in Orlando, Florida, in June 2017. Voting began on Monday, January 16 and runs until Tuesday, February 14 at 11:00 pm EST. Last year, Holy Cross made it to the top 10 in the Fan Favorite.

Holy Cross is hoping to get as much support to win Fan Favorite and is thankful for all support. To vote, text the code PANTRYPAL to 22333 using a mobile device through Tuesday, February 14 (standard texting rates apply).

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## St. Jude Regional Catholic School: Come, Catch Our Spirit!

**S**t. Jude Regional Catholic School (SJRCs) is more than a Catholic day school for grades pre-K (3- and 4-year olds) through eighth in Rockville—at SJRCs the spirit of community and our Catholic faith are infused in everything we do.

At St. Jude,

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

We ARE...academic excellence. At every grade level, we deliver a curriculum designed to prepare students for the rigors of high school. In fact, a large majority of our 4th- through 8th-grade students attain honors of achievement each marking period. Additionally, nearly every single 8th grader who applies is accepted to a Catholic high school, and a majority of our graduates attend one.



We ARE...compassionate toward others. We turn our students' hands and hearts toward good works—from collecting much-needed goods for St. Ann's Infant and Children's

*Continued on page 31*



## St. Jude Regional Catholic School: A Student's Reflection

*By Rosemary Sui, Eighth-Grade Student at St. Jude Regional Catholic School*

**E**veryone has different stories. It is what makes us unique. This is my story.

I was born in a country called Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. Coming to the United States with my family from Burma was a huge transition. The language and culture here are very different. I am a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi Church, but before I came here my grandmother used to belong to the Shrine of St. Jude. That is how we heard of St. Jude School and I immediately loved the idea of going to a Catholic school. A couple months later God made it happen.

When I first saw St. Jude, I



Rosemary Sui

really liked the community, but at the same time I was very nervous. I thought that I may not fit in, but

on the first day of fourth grade, all of my classmates were very friendly and welcoming. I immediately made many friends and was doing well with all the school work. Currently, I am in the eighth grade and this is my fifth year being a student here. Over the years, the teachers have prepared me well and I have developed many special relationships with everyone.

I have definitely learned a lot and have been challenged to the best of my abilities. The teachers are amazing at educating us and they are always willing to help the students. I love all the classes that I have, from the academic to special classes. I love Spanish,

*Continued on page 31*

### Open House at St. Jude Regional Catholic School, Feb. 1

**A**s part of the annual national Catholic Schools' Week events, St. Jude Regional Catholic School will open its doors to the community on Wednesday, Feb. 1, where prospective students, their families, and the community can learn about the school and its mission to provide high-quality, values-based education. Doors will be open from 9-11:30 a.m. and 6-8 p.m. Admissions information will be available at both times; however, teachers will be available to speak to prospective families in the evening.

St. Jude Regional Catholic School serves students from 3 years old through 8th grade of all religious, racial, ethnic, and income backgrounds. Its location at 4820 Walbridge Street in Rockville is perfect for commuters as it is convenient to Veirs Mill Road, Connecticut Avenue, Georgia Avenue, and Rockville Pike. For information on the curriculum, admissions policies and registration, contact the school office at 301-946-7888 or visit [www.stjuderockville.org](http://www.stjuderockville.org).



#### Shrine of St. Jude Parish

12701 Veirs Mill Road  
Rockville, MD

**Rev. Paul Lee, STD,  
Pastor**

301-946-8200

**St. Jude Regional  
Catholic School**

**Mr. Glenn Benjamin, Principal**

301-946-7888

**Maureen Martin,  
OPT Editor**

[MaureenCMartin@verizon.net](mailto:MaureenCMartin@verizon.net)

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## St. Jude Catholic School Celebrating 61 Years 1956–2017

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February 1, 2017 • 9:00 – 11:30am & 6:00 – 8:00pm



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## The Buzz from The Hive Advent: A Season of Preparation and Community

By: Gavin Weddington, Grade 7 and Bryson Hill, Grade 7, St. Bernadette School Student Council Commissioners of Publicity

Our school had an eventful Advent season this year! Throughout the season, we prepared for the coming of Christ in many ways. Our school chapel is open to the students to come during their free time daily. We had a book to write our personal intentions for prayer during chapel.

We also had several concerts and performances that highlighted our faith and celebrated the season.

Our Winter Band concert of fan favorites and Christmas classics is always a big hit and well attended. The band has been working hard and it shows through their talented performance. The eighth graders, as well as the school percussion, girls' and boys' ensembles, participated in Lessons and Carols that reenacted specific sections of the Bible while teaching lessons and joining together with the audience to sing hymns. The kindergarten through fifth grade students performed in



St. Bernadette Grade 8: Lessons and Carols

the Christmas pageant in the school hall. Each year it is based on a new theme. This year's theme was from Tomie dePaola's book, *Clown of God*.

This is always a standing room only event with parents as well as grandparents in attendance. Our school community looks forward to these events all year. We are proud and pleased to have commemorated the season in a respectful and joyful manner. We hope all other schools had a wonderful Christmas season as well!

OPT

## Saint Bernadette Parish Sharing Tree: A Generous Success!

The St. Bernadette Parish community came out in high numbers with their thoughtful generosity again this year to support the parish's annual effort of our Sharing Tree. This worthy mission allows many families and individuals in distress, within and outside our parish, to share in our Christmas celebration. This year brought more requests than ever. Our spectacular parish once again responded in commitment and strength fulfilling them all. The donations spilled all around the tree and into the surrounding pews.

Through this impressive outreach, The St. Bernadette Parish Sharing Tree received and delivered donations to the following: 200 children and their families at the McCarrick Family Center with hundreds of toys, gifts and food donations, assisted the Missionaries of Charity at Gift of Peace in their work caring for those who suffer from chronic illnesses by providing over \$2,750 in gift card donations, much needed bedding, cleaning supplies and clothing, helped Carroll House Homeless Shelter in Silver Spring who offers services and housing to over 70 marginalized men in



2016 St. Bernadette Parish Sharing Tree

providing numerous umbrellas, pajamas, undergarments, shirts, pillows, sweatpants, sweatshirts, bedding and other necessities, brought joy to over 125 children with toys and gifts through Rainbow Family Christian Center, sent over \$1,370 to So Others Might Eat to help feed the hungry and gave hundreds of diapers, baby wipes, baby clothing, women's clothing, blankets, and other supplies to Sanctuaries for Life to provide support for new

and expecting mothers. Finally, here at home, we offered over \$1,100 in financial aid to our own parishioners in need.

We offer a very special thank you to the fantastic volunteers who helped to sort, organize, and deliver the donations to the different organizations. Daina Scheider, the St. Bernadette Parish Social Concerns committee chair led the charge with her amazing efficiency and dedication.

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\*Except April 18

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SCHOOL

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# Responsive Classroom: A Positive Approach that Delivers Results

By Kate Doyle Rodgers, Director of Marketing, Enrollment and Alumni

At St. Bernadette School, we are continuously considering and reviewing the pathway and methods of our instructional delivery to ensure that we are utilizing best practices to meet all learning needs and differences of our students. With this in mind, we have added a new approach to our classroom environment this year called *Responsive Classroom*. While several of our teachers began their training in *Responsive Classroom* many years ago, this is our first year for implemented school-wide usage. *Responsive Classroom* was developed in 1981 by a group of educators with a common vision. A non-profit organization, The Northeast Foundation for Children, was formed to promote the mission of their work.

*Responsive Classroom* is a K-8 approach to teaching designed to create a safe, challenging and joyful learning climate for all children. This approach, and the teach-



Grade Five Students Chloe Kuzner and Maeva Acosta playing "Double This-Double That" during Morning Meeting

ers who use it, understand that all needs of children: academic, social, emotional and physical are important to the learning process. Margaret Rodriguez, grade 5 teacher who has spearheaded the *Responsive Classroom* implemen-

tation effort at SBS, shares, "*Responsive Classroom* is the missing piece with most instruction as it helps focus our attention on creating a relevant, meaningful, and developmentally responsive academic environment where all students feel safe and valued. As a teacher, this approach allows me to create a framework where I can teach social skills, respond to behavior, and address the emotional needs of my students throughout my day. To be successful academically and socially, children need to learn how to cooperate, be assertive and foster responsibility while demonstrating empathy and self-control. *Responsive Classroom* gives us a pathway to teach these vital skills."

The *Responsive Classroom* approach fosters the opportunity for students to do their best as the approach carries the keen understanding that social-emotional curriculum is as important as academic curriculum. Within this approach, along with predictable grade level

*Continued on page 37*



## SBS Gala February 4, 2017: Please Come!

Please join us for the ninth annual Saint Bernadette School Gala, Havana Nights! The event is open to all and the more the merrier! Please join us to support a great cause. Tickets sales are available for purchase both at the school and online through the school website: [www.saintbernadetteschool.org](http://www.saintbernadetteschool.org)

**When:** Saturday, February 4, 2017 at 7:30 PM

**Where:** The Silver Spring Civic Center in downtown Silver Spring

**Why:** The Gala is St. B's largest fundraiser. Money raised from the event goes directly towards keeping tuition rates down. It is a fun, community-building evening!

**What:** The evening features a Live and Silent Auction, dinner, drinks, and dancing. It is an event not to be missed!

Questions or to offer a donation or service, please contact Director of Development, Hilary Bednarz, at [hbednarz@saintbernadetteschool.org](mailto:hbednarz@saintbernadetteschool.org). Thank you!

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More St. Bernadette News on Page 37



## St. Bernadette School

80 University Boulevard, East  
Silver Spring, MD 20901

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[www.saintbernadetteschool.org](http://www.saintbernadetteschool.org)



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## Holy Cross Celebrates the Joy of Our Faith

**H**oly Cross Catholic Church has seen a revival in parish life since it welcomed Fr. Robert Buchmeier as its new pastor. Physical improvements to the parish are ongoing while a greater community spirit can be witnessed in the celebration of the sacraments, formation, and various school activities. The commitment and legacy of its founding members remain strong as the changing neighborhood ushers in new families into the parish.

“Sunday is a day which is at the very heart of the Christian life.”

Holy Cross makes these words of St. John Paul come to life every Sunday! Centered in the Eucharist, the parish has endeavored to increase family participation through various hospitality initiatives and the establishment of a children’s choir. The children’s choir sings at the 9am Mass every Sunday under the direction of the new parish music director, Linda Ng. The message of the gospel is extended to the School of Religion that nurtures the faith formation of over 100 students with the help of devoted volunteer catechists.

The School of Religion is in session every Sunday at 10:15 a.m., right after parishioners share fellowship over coffee and doughnuts after the 9 a.m. Mass. The Children’s Liturgy of the Word Community meets twice a month where young children not receiving communion are invited to explore the readings in an age-appropriate manner. Moreover, the first Sunday of the month in Holy Cross is always punctuated by Service Sunday! Service Sunday brings together the parish when food, toiletries and clothing are collected, sorted, and delivered to shelters in the area. The winter schedule of Sunday Masses in Holy Cross are celebrated at 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and noon. Vigil Mass is on Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

Each day, the spirituality of Holy Cross is anchored by daily Mass at 6:45 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. followed by the rosary. The Adoration Chapel is open from 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Visit our website at [www.hcrosschurch.org](http://www.hcrosschurch.org) for more information, and to find ways you can share your charisms with the parish of Holy Cross and to partake of the joy of our faith!

**OPT**



Pastor, Fr. Robert Buchmeier holds a candle to help remind the children to follow the light, Jesus Christ!



Students pose in front of the school’s emblem in the renovated front entryway at Holy Cross School.

## A Beautiful Renovation for Holy Cross

**T**his summer, a renovation began of Holy Cross School’s administrative offices and front lobby. The finished project boasts a stunning wood-paneled entryway that includes a relief of the Holy Cross emblem; a redesigned office suite with two accessible bathrooms and a sick room for students; and, most importantly, a welcome window that allows for more secure monitoring of entry to the school.

The renovation, designed by

Davis Buckley with oversight provided by school parent Tom Striegel, is the culmination of a series of improvements approved by pastor Father Robert Buchmeier and the Facilities Committee of the School Advisory Board. Last year, energy efficient windows and blinds were installed in all the classrooms. The Pre-Kindergarten classroom was enlarged this past summer to accommodate enrollment, and carpeting was placed in the main foyer

*Continued on page 11*

*I am a thinker, an athlete, an artist.*

### SUMMER AT HOLY CROSS

**Co-Ed Summer Enrichment** *Grades 7-8*  
**High School Placement Test Prep (HSPT) Course**  
 June 19 - 23

*Morning Session:*  
 8:30 am - 12 pm  
*Afternoon Session:*  
 1 pm - 4:30 pm

**Girls Robotics Camp**  
*Grades 6-8*  
 Session 1: July 10 - 14  
 Session 2: July 17 - 21  
 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

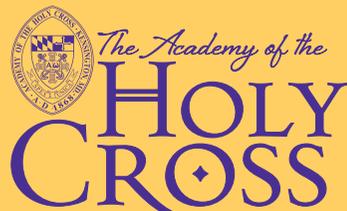
**Girls Summer Sports Camps** *Grades 4-10*  
 Basketball, Field Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball  
 Session 1: June 19 - 23 • 9 am - 3 pm  
 Session 2: June 26 - 30 • 9 am - 3 pm

**Girls Soccer Camp with Coach Mastro** *Grades 7-12*  
 August 7 - 11 • 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Co-Ed Summer Stock Performing Arts** *Grades 6-11*  
 June 19 - 30 • 9 am - 3 pm  
*Classes in:* Musical Theatre Dance, Musical Theatre Singing, Improvisation, Filmmaking, Acting

*Final Performance:* **Shrek The Musical JR.\*** Friday, June 30 at 7 pm  
 Based on the DreamWorks Animation Motion Picture and the Book by William Steig Book and Lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire • Music by Jeanine Tesori • Originally produced on Broadway by DreamWorks Theatricals and Neal Street Productions • Original Production Directed by Jason Moore and Rob Ashford • “I’m a Believer” by Neil Diamond

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



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# Holy Cross Celebrates 2017 National Catholic Schools Week

On Sunday, January 29, Holy Cross will celebrate the start of the 2017 National Catholic Schools Week. The theme for this year's celebration is "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service." Throughout this special week, that is set aside each year to recognize our Catholic faith as lived out through the education of the next generation, Holy Cross will be recognizing the following:

■ **Sunday, January 29**  
**In Our Parish**

A special mass at 9:00 am will be devoted to the start of National Catholic Schools Week. An Open House at Holy Cross is also planned from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Our students benefit all year long from the religious guidance, prayers, and support that Holy Cross provides. This event starts the week by inviting prospective parents to an Open House featuring Holy Cross' outstanding academic programs, religious education, and service opportunities.

■ **Monday, January 30**  
**In Our Community**

A central aspect of Catholic education at Holy Cross is learning the importance of service to others. As part of Catholic Charities "Cup of Joe" service project, volunteers will assemble healthy "breakfast-to-go" bags that will be distributed to area food shelters throughout the Archdiocese of Washington. This community service project is a fun, fast-paced event, and students gain an appreciation for how they can continue to serve others their entire lives. At the end of this school day, students, parents, and teachers will be treated to a Winter Concert in Lewis Hall performed by Holy Cross' Concert Band.

■ **Tuesday, January 31**  
**Celebrating Excellence**

Holy Cross parents will start their day off

right with an activity loved by all, "Coffee in the Classroom." Parents will then join their child/children during class to view all the excellent work they've been doing since the start of the 3rd quarter. Immediately following the classroom visits by the parents, everyone will gather as a school family in Lewis Hall with Principal Lisa Maio Kane for our 2nd Quarter Honor Awards Ceremony. Later that afternoon, Holy Cross will hold its Scripps National Spelling Bee.

■ **Wednesday, February 1**  
**Celebrating Vocations**

Holy Cross will host its annual Career Day, which prepares its students to use their God-given talents to the fullest later in life. These presentations offer an opportunity for students to explore the many life paths that would enable them to use their talents well in the service of God and others by answering the call to a religious vocation, by nurturing a family through sacramental marriage, or simply by pursuing a career that makes the world a better place.

■ **Thursday, February 2**  
**Celebrating Our Students**

Holy Cross loves to celebrate its students during National Catholic Schools Week by planning enjoyable and meaningful activities to recognize their academic accomplishments. This school-wide "Student Appreciation Day" celebration is designed to say thank you to our students for being part of the Holy Cross family, for working so hard in the classroom, and to help them engage outside the classroom with their teachers who are committed to their success.

■ **Friday, February 3**  
**Celebrating Our Teachers**

At Holy Cross, teachers give us so much of themselves. They give our students a

boost of confidence when they really need one, and some extra help when they're having trouble with their school lessons. Our teachers provide a welcoming presence in the classroom. Although we know we can't ever

thank them enough, Holy Cross will honor its teachers and its principal to support them in their important work with a "Teachers Appreciation Day."

OPT

## Holy Cross School ...

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### OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, January 29, 2017

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

4900 Strathmore Avenue • Garrett Park, MD 20896

[www.hcross.org](http://www.hcross.org) • 301-949-1699

Pastor: Rev. Robert Buchmeier • Principal: Lisa M. Kane



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

## RENOVATION

Con't from page 10

and main hallway of the school building.

The "Cool and Cozy Green Campaign," coordinated by the Parish Finance Council chaired by parishioner Keith Allaire, raised initial funding for the improvements. Principal Lisa Kane is pleased and grateful. "I have always wanted to enhance the entryway of our school, with a goal of improving how we monitor entry into the school building. Father Buchmeier's leadership, with the support our Advisory Board, the efforts of the Parish Finance Council, and the generous contributions made to the initial fundraising effort, have made it a reality. The recent improvements to the facilities are wonderful—a fitting reflection of our wonderful school and parish community."

OPT

**Holy Cross Parish**

4900 Strathmore Avenue, Garrett Park, MD

Fr. Robert Buchmeier, Pastor  
301-942-1020

Holy Cross School  
Lisa Maio Kane, Principal  
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Lurana Hogan, Parish Editor  
l.hogan@hcross.org

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# The United Nations: A Personal Journey

By Larry Couch

When I was a young man, my dream was to work for the United Nations. The white and blue flag with the world map surrounded by olive branches captured my imagination. As is often the case with youth, my life took many different twists and turns and I never achieved my dream.

Over time, my views of the UN

change. In responding to the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the United Nations inadvertently introduced cholera to that poverty-stricken country. More than 7,000 Haitians have died of cholera and hundreds of thousands have been sickened. Sadly the UN initially responded with denial and then with cover up. Only now is the UN accepting responsibility.

*Continued on page 36*

Holy Redeemer parishioner & school parent.

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## A Win-Win Situation

By Michelle Ardillo

What do you get when two schools go head to head in a competition to see who can collect the most canned goods? A win-win situation!

The stakes were high: the principal of the losing school had to wear the sweatshirt of the winning school for a week! The main winner, however, was the Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive, which out of this friendly competition netted over 9,000 cans for area food banks.



Holy Redeemer students with Principal Colleen Ryan at Blessed Sacrament for GGCDF.



Holy Redeemer Principal Colleen Ryan with Blessed Sacrament Principal Chris Kelly

The gauntlet was thrown down by Rick Gannon, Executive Director of the Greg Gannon Canned Food Drive, started in the late 1980s by the late Greg Gannon, who died of brain cancer in 2006. Colleen Ryan, principal of Holy Redeemer Catholic School, accepted the challenge to compete against her former school, Blessed Sacrament, and its principal Chris Kelly. Boxes were distributed to each classroom and students began filling them. The counting of the cans in HR's auditorium was exciting as everyone was hoping to have Mr. Kelly wearing Cardinal Red for a week. In the end, the Cardinals

were victorious having collected 5,442 cans, and a small group of students traveled with Mrs. Ryan to Blessed Sacrament to collect the trophy and present Mr. Kelly with his uniform for the week!

Holy Redeemer's participation in the GGCDF can be attributed partly to Mrs. Ryan having taught at BS, but also to HR parent and parishioner Mr. Jorge Garayta, who is the nephew of the late Greg Gannon.

For more information about the GGCDF or to participate in next year's drive, go to [www.greggannoncfd.org](http://www.greggannoncfd.org) or email them at.

OPT

## HR Drama Club Takes on Ancient China

By Michelle Ardillo

The HR Drama Club is will soon begin work on the very popular Disney show *Mulan, Jr.* for its spring musical. Auditions were held the week of January 16th, with rehearsals beginning on February 7.

With a large cast and crew of nearly fifty 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, faculty members Michelle Ardillo, Danielle Trotta, and Peter Smith have their work cut out for them. Mrs. Ardillo and Ms. Trotta are returning for their tenth



year of directing and producing the spring musical, and for the first time, they will be working alongside Mr. Smith, as musical director, who joined the HR faculty as music teacher in August. A dedicated group of faculty members and parents will also help with the production, including former par-

ent Monique Bonner who returns as choreographer. HR grandparent Cathleen Farr will serve as costumer and assist with props.

*Mulan Jr.* will be performed for the school on Friday, April 7, 2017, at an afternoon assembly, and again that night at 7:00 pm for friends and family. Closing night will be Saturday, April 8, 2017, also at 7:00 pm. Tickets for the evening performances will be available at the door of the Herb Young Auditorium. Please come out and support the HR Drama Club!

OPT

## New Enrollment/Marketing Committee Bolsters Attracts New Families

For the past two years, the Archdiocese of Washington's Catholic Schools Office has been working closely with all

school on boosting enrollment. Last year they hired Partners in Mission to provide training to all school pastors, principals, and admissions teams in marketing, public relations, enrollment and retention. The training took place in three different sessions. The sessions were very well done and school teams walked away with practical tools and strategies in which they could immediately put into action.

At our last session, this past September focused on creating Enrollment Committees in the school. This committee are to be comprised of teachers and parents



We're up and ready for our January 29th Open House!

*Continued on page 36*

### Holy Redeemer Parish

9705 Summit Avenue  
Kensington, MD

**Rev. Mark Hughes**  
Pastor

301-942-2333

### Holy Redeemer School

**Mrs. Colleen Ryan,**  
Principal

301-942-3701

The Cast of St. Bart's Christmas Pageant Smiles at Curtain Call



## A "Frozen" Christmas Pageant Warms the St. Bartholomew Church

How could the blockbuster story of Disney's *Frozen* be tailored into a Christmas pageant that retells the story of the birth of Christ? That's what family and friends were wondering as they filed into the St. Bartholomew Church for a "Frozen" themed Christmas Pageant. The delightful answer was revealed over the next hour, in a performance that included everything from a silly singing snowman to sacred songs performed by eighth-grader Gabrielle Joe, portraying the Blessed Mother.

Under the guidance of music teacher

Daniel Villar, the pageant started with the popular Disney story, including favorite songs such as "Do You Want to Build a Snowman?" by Caroline Freese as Anna and "Let it Go" by Claudia Hull as Queen Elsa. Elsa's acceptance of her unusual ice powers was used as a metaphor for Mary's acceptance of her special designation by God to serve as the mother of Jesus. A Christmas pageant is presented annually by students at St. Bartholomew and it is always a highlight of the holiday season.

OPT



St. Bart's 5th graders proudly display their handmade blankets

## St. Bart's Fifth Graders Share the Warmth of the Season

It was Christmas crafting with a cause! St. Bartholomew fifth graders spent a busy pre-holiday morning making fleece blankets for ailing youngsters at the Children's Inn at NIH. "The main point of making the blankets was for the students to feel that they know the feeling of giving, especially to children who are so sick that they are not able to be in their

own homes during Christmas," said fifth-grade homeroom teacher Elise Healy. "How blessed our students are to be healthy and fortunate." On top of learning life lessons, the students picked up practical skills. Positive energy filled the air as they cut, measured and knotted their way to success in making the heavy-weight, no-sew blankets.

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6900 River Road  
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Rev. Mark Knestout  
Pastor  
301-229-7933

**St. Bartholomew School**

Stephen Lamont, Principal  
301-229-5586

Frank Maguire, OPT Editor  
202-512-8226

More St. Bartholomew News on Page 37



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*Can't make it Feb. 2?*

**We will have another open house on Feb. 16**

**We're also happy to give you a tour and answer questions on any regular school day!**

**Be sure to come learn more soon because the financial aid application deadline is Feb. 20th!**

*Hablamos Español*

**www.SaintFrancisInternational.org**

**301-434-2344**

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

*1 miles south of Beltway Exit 28 / New Hampshire Ave.*

## cath·o·lic – *adjective* – including a wide variety of things; all-embracing

**A**t Saint Francis International School, to truly be Catholic means to embrace being catholic. In the Creed we proclaim the four marks of the Church as “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.” The meaning of catholic (with a small “c”) is meant to remind us that the Church is world-wide and inclusive of every culture; the Catholic Church is by the Creed’s definition: diverse.

Saint Francis International School is blessed to have an extremely diverse community where the majority of students come from families where at least one of the parents was born outside the US. This year students or their parents were born in at least 52 countries besides the United States. Many students’ families come from El Salvador and Ethiopia, but also Vietnam, Germany, India, Jamaica, Liberia, Poland, Argentina, and Nigeria to name just a few.

This diversity creates an environment that is welcoming and understanding. To ensure

*Continued on page 20*



**SFIS students pray for those who have died in St. Camillus Church for El Dia de los Muertos.**



**Pre-K students wear traditional South Asian outfits for a Diwali fashion show.**

## It's Not Unusual to be New at Saint Francis

**S**aint Francis International School has a strong tradition of welcoming new students and helping them blend into the school family quickly. Just 6 ½ years ago *everyone* at SFIS was new as the students of St. Camillus School and St. Mark the Evangelist School came together in 2010 to start Saint Francis. This history has helped to create a welcoming culture at the school. Over the years, large groups of new students also joined SFIS when St. Michael the Archangel and St. Catherine Labouré Catholic Schools closed as well as when Concordia and Ascension Lutheran Schools closed.

But, *every year* SFIS has many children join the community in Pre-K and Kindergarten. Saint Francis has two classrooms of 3-year-olds that welcome up to 40 students each year and there are



**New middle school students at SFIS help a Franciscan Postulant make the feast of St. Nicholas special.**

always new students in SFIS’ four Pre-K 4 classes and two Kindergarten rooms.

This year was a particularly amazing year, especially because of the promise of the Maryland BOOST Scholarship. A total of 130 new students came to SFIS this year with new students in *every* grade!

The decision by the Maryland General Assembly to enact the BOOST Scholarship last spring put the new pastor at St. Camillus Church, Franciscan Chris Posch, on a mission to personally invite many new families – especially families who attend the Catholic Community of Langley Park – to consider trying Catholic school.

*Continued on page 39*

**St. Francis International School**  
www.saintfrancisinternational.org

**Tobias A. Harkleroad, Principal**

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

**St. Mark Campus**  
7501 Adelphi Road  
Hyattsville, MD 20783

# Celebrating Jesus' Birth at Our Lady of Lourdes

By Maureen Skelly

On Tuesday, December 20, Lourdes students, teachers, faculty, and families came together for our annual Christmas Pageant in the church. All students, from our three-year-olds in the Little Group, to our leaders in the eighth grade, had a role in the pageant. Under the direction of Mrs. Cooley, our Music and Religion teacher, and Ms. Moore, our Director of Technology, the classes practiced for weeks leading up to the pageant: singing, learning motions and movement, and finding the best way to get on and off the risers in the church. We were lucky to have one of our eighth graders, Katie Myers, accompany us on the piano for our practices, and Mr. Greg Gannon, musician and graduate of Lourdes, accompany us on the night of the pageant. The Kindergarten, First, and Second Grades sang *Joy to the World*. The Third and Fourth Grades sang *O Holy Night*. The Fifth



Second graders and kindergarteners singing at the Christmas Pageant

*Continued on page 27*

## OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC SCHOOL A 2016 National Blue Ribbon School OPEN HOUSE

January 31, 2017 • 9-11:30 AM & 1-2:30 PM



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

- Catholic faith-based education and curriculum since 1941
- Pre-school 3's through 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- Resource center and support programs
- Latin enrichment classes for Middle School students
- After school homework lab
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At Lourdes, the door to a Catholic education is always open. Come in and see the difference traditional Catholic values, a strong, inclusive community, and a group of exceptional teachers and staff can make in your child's life.



7500 Pearl Street, Bethesda, MD 20814  
(301) 654-5376 • bethesda-lourdes.org



## Where Would We Be?

Where would Catholic Schools be without volunteers? As long as there have been Catholic Schools, there have been people who donate their time and talents to making Catholic Schools thrive. From the dad who comes in to serve hot lunch, to the mom who washes the preschool toys in her kitchen sink – our volunteers make it possible for us to offer so many wonderful “extras” to our children. CYO coaches give hours of time and energy to our sports teams; parent coordinators organize events like Open House, Pizza Bingo, fundraisers and Catholic Schools Week; and Home and School Association officers create

those strong ties between the school administration and parents. Parents in Catholic Schools share their expertise and contribute to the viability of their schools by serving on Strategic Planning Committees, Budgeting and Finance Committees and just consulting with school administrators who need expert advice.

Eleven years ago Mary Cahill contacted the principal of our school asking about the requirements we had for volunteering. She completed her Virtus training and had her fingerprints done. Soon after, she called to let us know that she had retired after 35 years working in the Federal Government, and she was ready to volunteer in our school. For ten years, Mrs. Cahill came to Lourdes twice a week to work with teachers and children. She shared her gentle spirit with the in every classroom and she became a beloved friend to the teachers and staff of the school. Last year, Mrs. Cahill retired from her volunteer position with us, but we will never forget the impact she had on our school community.

At Our Lady of Lourdes School we recognize that we could not survive without the investment of time and talent that our volunteers make in our school, and we want everyone to know that we appreciate them!



Principal Patricia McGann and Mary Cahill

OPT

## Parishioners Converge Yet Again as the Voice of the Unborn in the 44th March for Life Rally

By Angelyn Tugado-Marzan

Come rain, sun, or snow on January 27, 2017, parishioners armed with rosaries and a passion for the culture of life will again trek the arduous hill to the United States Supreme Court during the “largest pro-life rally in the world” – the annual March for Life Rally, which started a year after the Court legalized abortion across the United States in its landmark January 22, 1973, decision on the Roe v. Wade case.

Since then, on or near the anniversary

of the decision which reportedly “divided much of America into pro-choice and pro-life

*Continued on page 27*

### Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

7500 Pearl Street  
Bethesda, MD

Msgr. Edward Filardi, Pastor  
301-654-1287

Patricia Kilroy McGann, Principal  
301-654-5376



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## Café St. Joe Continues to Pack 'em in

Since its fall kickoff, there has been a line out the door on the Sundays Café St. Joe is open for business. "I love Café St. Joe. I'm a barista!" exclaims café worker Gina Baldini as she helps caffeine deprived parishioners with their orders. Café St. Joe is an inclusive parish café, housed at Saint Andrew Apostle Parish and staffed by the youth and young adults of nearby Saint Joseph's House. The café is open one Sunday a month after 10:00 and 11:30am Masses, selling coffee, hot chocolate and baked goods for donation. The

specialty "Café St. Joe blend" coffee is supplied by Furnace Hills Coffee, a fair-and direct trade coffee roaster who employs adults with disabilities.

With volunteers donating the baked goods, organizing kids table activities, and supporting the St. Joseph's House workers, Café St. Joe provides a fun (and delicious) opportunity for job skills training, community building, and mutual service. Mark your calendars for upcoming dates: February 26, March 19, April 23 and May 21, 2017.

*Continued on page 39*



The Café St. Joe crew prepares to greet their customers.



Members of the Children's Choir with Choir Director Theresa Trigiani, Father Mario, Father Dan and Father Bill after singing during Mass at the Shrine December 10, 2016.

## Children's Choir Honors Mary

On Saturday, December 10, the Saint Andrew Apostle School Children's Choir sang at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception for the Archdiocese of Washington sponsored event, **Walk with Mary**. The seventy-six member choir joined the Children's Choir of Saint Jude's to help lead the music for the Holy Mass. His Eminence Cardinal Donald Wuerl was the principal celebrant and the Most Reverend Mario Dorsonville, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, was the homilist. Bishop Dorsonville invited the choir to participate in this

celebration honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The choir, directed by Theresa Trigiani, practiced every Tuesday in the months leading up to the Mass, adding extra rehearsals in December. The music, primarily in Spanish was a welcome challenge. With hard work and prayer, all came together beautifully. Three of our parish priests, Father Daniel Leary, pastor, Father Mario Majano and Father William Wadsworth concelebrated the Mass.

The children were incredibly excited and honored to participate and were in awe of the moment.

"It was a beautiful experience," said Noelia Villafane, an eighth grade student at Saint Andrew's. "I really enjoyed the reenactment of Juan Diego bringing the roses to Cardinal Wuerl. I felt really blessed and grateful to be bilingual, to sing to God and Our Lady not only in one language, but in two."

The Children's Choir is grateful to the parents, priests, and school and parish community for their continuous support and prayers. They were truly humbled, honored and blessed by this experience.

OPT

The Faculty and Students of Elizabeth Seton High School

*Celebrate*  
National Catholic Schools Week 2017

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(301) 864-4532 [www.setonhs.org](http://www.setonhs.org)

## Parish Notes and School News

Two new courses are among the many opportunities for spiritual development offered at Saint Andrew's.

**Oremus – A Guide to Catholic Prayer** is a Catholic prayer study program which will guide you in learning the essentials of a fruitful prayer life. This eight week course will be held on Mondays at 7:00 pm beginning January 23.

**The Letter to the Ephesians**, an eight week scripture study course begins Thursday, January 28 at 7:10pm.

For additional information or to register for either course, contact the Rectory or Ken White ([kwnwhite@verizon.net](mailto:kwnwhite@verizon.net)).

To celebrate **Catholic Schools Week**, the school invites you to visit during Open House anytime between 8:30 and 11:00 am Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, January 31, February 1, 2.

**Santa's Elves Spread Christmas Cheer** – Members of the Youth Group and Saint Andrew Apostle Seniors joined in an intergenerational project to pack and deliver Christmas Stockings to residents of several local health care facilities.

Guitar music provided a perfect background for Christmas Carols as the elves delivered their goodies to residents of Arcola Health and Rehabilitation Center, Manor Care Wheaton, Caring Companions Group Home and Inwood House. Not pictured is Elf-in-Chief, Father Bill Wadsworth, who helped pack stockings and arrived in time for the singing.



**St. Andrew Apostle Parish**  
11600 Kemp Mill Road  
Silver Spring, MD  
**Rev. Daniel P. Leary,**  
Pastor

301-649-3700 ext. 311  
**St. Andrew Apostle School**  
**Susan M. Sheehan,**  
Principal  
301-649-3555



### St. Martin's School Christmas Concert

St. Martin's eighth graders reenact the story of the nativity during the annual Christmas concert. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School



St. Martin's Parish welcomes new pastor, Rev. Richard Gancayco. Here he's shown visiting with Bishop-elect Mark Brennan and Principal Anthony Sahadi before Christmas. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School



A fourth grader works on a math problem during school. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School

## St. Martin's Celebrates Catholic Schools Week

By Anthony Sabadi, Principal

St. Martin of Tours is a model American Catholic Grade School. We are an example of what Catholic means. St. Martin is universal.

On the last Sunday in January, Catholic Schools Week is celebrated in the United States. During this week, St. Martin will honor our identity. We are proud to be a Catholic School.

I believe American Catholic Education has four unique characteristics: Catholic identity, discipline, academic excellence, and diversity. St. Martin is strong in all four.

We honor our Catholic identity several ways. First, we pray as a school. Furthermore, our teachers and students see Jesus in everyone; and value the gifts and uniqueness of all. Every day, we follow Jesus and strive to become better.

Our second characteristic is discipline. St. Martin believes that discipline is the foundation of teaching and learning. Discipline teaches us to be patient, unselfish, respectful, and well rounded. For example, in school, we are conscientious of how our actions affect others. In the spirit of the Jesuits, we are students

for others.

Academic excellence is a third characteristic. Every day, before and after school, you will see teachers tutoring students. Even midday, teachers share their lunch period with students. Their kind acts are not for student punishment. Rather, students witness the unselfishness and determination of our teachers while receiving additional instruction. Mrs. Marie Rose Cain, our Math and Science Teacher, summed up academic excellence best: "Every student starts with an A, and I continue teaching and repeating until all students understand."

American Catholic Education's fourth and unique characteristic is diversity. St. Martin is a glowing example of this. We are so proud that we have a student body that speaks forty-five languages and truly is the face of Jesus and God's creation. I am so blessed to be the principal of a Catholic School where children of all races and nationalities learn and play together in a spirit of respect and cooperation.

On behalf of the teachers and students of St. Martin's, I wish everyone a happy Catholic Schools Week.

OPT

## Celebrating Our CBN Volunteers and Business Partner of the Year

By Anne Gemunder

St. Martin's School congratulates our 2016 Catholic Business Network nominations for Volunteers of the Year, Eric and Wilma Javelosa, and Business Partner of the Year, Randy Herron of Herron Printing and Graphics. These three individuals have generously supported St. Martin's in innumerable ways throughout the years.

Eric and Wilma Javelosa have been remarkably generous with their time and talent in countless ways since 2010 when they joined the school. Rarely an event goes on without them involved in either the planning or execution. At our International Dinner, Breakfast with Santa, and School Auction, Eric and Wilma are often making and serving delicious food for hundreds in our community. Wilma has been a Girl Scout leader since 2012. Eric is currently on our School Advisory Board and has provided that leadership since 2014. He is always willing to lend a hand for things such as tearing out old cabinets and painting classrooms. Additionally, their two children have followed their parents' example in leadership and service, as they both serve on our school's student council. When asked about the value of their volunteerism, Eric responds, "We feel strongly that our presence and involvement will instill to our children and other kids our commitment to support them in their academic and spiritual growth. We do this in support of the school's mission, beliefs, and vision." At St. Martin's, the Javelosas' efforts have made a world of difference in what we have accomplished. We are thankful to Eric and Wilma for their many years of service and dedication.

Randy Herron has been a parishioner for over twenty years. He volunteered as a cat-

echist in our religious education program for many years. Along with his company, he has supported St. Martin's by awarding grants that have allowed us to further our development and marketing efforts. Herron Printing designs and prints our biannual school newsletter, allowing us to stay connected with our alumni and supporters. Additionally, Randy has sponsored our yearly auction by being a major advertiser in our program. When asked about the impact of his contributions, he replies, "I support Catholic education because it offers a nurturing, faith-filled environment where children can develop their God-given talents. It also encourages students to become contributing and respectable citizens through their commitment to service." We gratefully recognize Randy Herron of Herron Printing and Graphics for his generous and enduring commitment to St. Martin's School.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our honorees and to all our St. Martin's supporters and friends who so generously donate their time, talent, and treasure every day. You are the lifeblood of our wonderful school community.

OPT

**St. Martin of Tours Parish**  
201 South Frederick Ave., Gaithersburg, MD  
**Rev. Msgr. Mark E. Brennan, Pastor**  
301-990-3203  
**St. Martin School**  
**Anthony Sahadi, Principal**  
301-990-2441  
**Catherine Cooksey, Parish Editor**  
240-477-8706 • www.smsmd.org



**St. Martin of Tours Catholic School**  
Pre-Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Open House & Tour**  
**January 31**  
**9:00 – 1:00 pm**



**See Why Our Students Shine**

For additional dates contact us at  
301-990-2441 • smsmd.org

115 South Frederick Avenue • Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

<p><b>St. Mary's Parish</b> 520 Veirs Mill Road Rockville, MD <b>Msgr. Robert Amey, Pastor</b> 301-424-5550</p>	<p><b>St. Mary's School</b> <b>Mrs. Debby Eisel, Principal</b> 301-762-4179 <b>Maureen Stiles, Parish Editor</b> 301-990-4329</p>
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With Aftercare  
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St. Mary's School  
**OPEN HOUSE**  
January 29, 2017  
10:00AM to 1:00PM

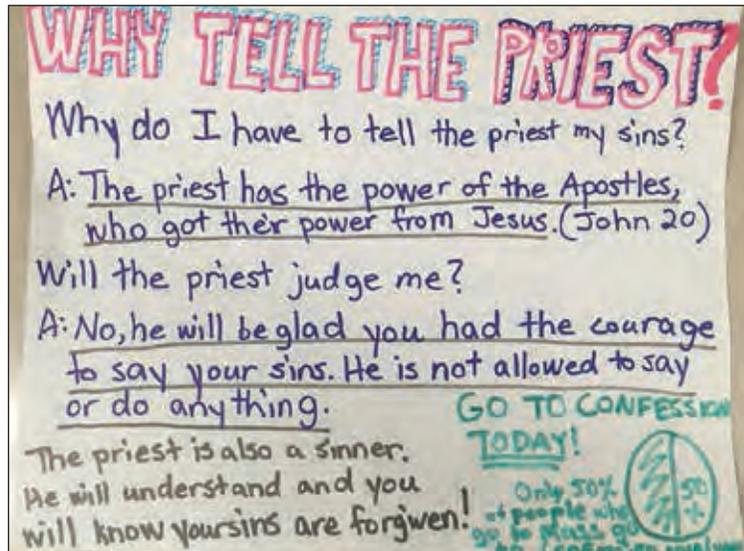


600 Viers Mill Road  
Rockville, Maryland 20852  
[www.stmaryschoolrockville.org](http://www.stmaryschoolrockville.org)  
301-762-4179

**Parish Penance Service**

On December 19, St. Mary's held a parish-wide Penance service with not only our resident priests but also priests from other parishes. In preparation for this event, the eighth grade was tasked with explaining why Penance is a vital part of living our faith and giving solutions to common obstacles to going to confession.

Parish Penance Service On December 19, St. Mary's held a parish-wide Penance service with not only our resident priests but also priests from other parishes. In preparation for this event, the eighth grade was tasked with explaining why Penance is a vital part of living our faith and giving solutions to common obstacles to going to confession.



After a full day of setting up Santa's workshop through the City of Rockville, the eighth-grade students had the pride of a job well done. Their work and organization allowed parents to come in and quickly pick out Christmas gifts for their children. Children who would not otherwise have gifts. What a wonderful lesson about the reason for the Season!



Once again, the participants in the Children's Christmas Pageant at the 4pm and 6pm Masses did a wonderful job of portraying the birth of our Savior!



It is official! The 2017 St. Mary's Drama Production will be Disney's Beauty and the Beast. Rehearsals are already underway for what promises to be another banner thespian effort by the entire cast and crew. Mark your calendar for the weekend of April 7th!!

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We asked some of our youngest parishioners what their New Year's Faith Resolution would be ...

The Watson kids, Joey and Ava, are trying to go to confession more often. Little brother Patrick wants to be better behaved in Church.

Erin Kaluzienksi wants to pray the Rosary for special intentions more often

Quinn Rowe wants to make it to Church every Sunday no matter what!!

Matthew Brogan wants to live more like a Disciple and show others Christ's love

We think these are all worthwhile goals for all Catholics!

**St. Mary's Open House**

Sunday January 29

10-1pm

Come kick off Catholic Education Week with us!

# Enhancement and Improvement to Sensory Garden

Colin Bruckwick, 17, a St. John the Evangelist school graduate and member of Boy Scout Troop 466 planned and led the improvement and beautification to the Therapeutic Riding and Recreational Center sensory garden located in Glenwood, Md. for his Eagle Scout Project. On August 20, 2016, over thirty volunteers ages nine and up turned out in the heat and humidity to transform Cary's Circle into an enhanced multi-sensory experience for the riders.

Colin planned and developed the project in the spring and summer along with Dr. Helen Tuel and therapist Karis Crone. The main goal



Colin Bruckwick works to improve the grounds at the Glenwood, Md., Therapeutic Riding and Recreational Center while completing his Eagle Scout project.



Finished fountain at the Therapeutic Riding and Recreational Center.



L to R: Quinlan and Brigid Mulholland assist Emma and Frank Bruckwick with some heavy lifting as volunteers for the Therapeutic Riding and Recreational Center Eagle Scout project.

was to bring the greater sensory experiences of sound, sight, smell and touch to the riders. The fountain was refurbished with a new taller waterfall and the sight and sound of this feature is one of the centerpoints of the garden. Signs and mailboxes were painted and restored, paths were mulched and a great deal of overgrown brush was removed. A new brass Ship's Bell was hung in Regina Jackson's tree so the riders can ring it as they ride past. Various aromatic bushes including roses and lilac were planted along the riding circle, and corn hole boards were installed along the riding path for the kids to take aim and toss the bags for points.

DuBois Murphy, Dave Furman and Bob Porter all provided their invaluable local knowledge, tools and assistance that day to make sure the cutting, digging, hauling and local stone all made their way to the proper places. Donuts, coffee and pizza at lunchtime were enjoyed by all in the beautifully restored barn which also provided timely respite from the heat. Nearly 150 hours of work transformed this area over the span of nine hours so it can once again be greatly appreciated by the patients, riders and their families.

For more information on the Therapeutic Riding and Recreational Center, go to: [www.trrcmd.org](http://www.trrcmd.org). For more information on Boy Scout

Troop 466, please contact Scout Master Tom B. Rogers ([trogers67@verizon.net](mailto:trogers67@verizon.net)).

OPT

### St. John the Evangelist Parish

10103 Georgia Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD  
301-681-7663

Rev. Joseph Calis  
Pastor

St. John the Evangelist School  
Mrs. Margaret Durney,  
Principal

301-681-7656

Monica M. Bradford, OPT Editor  
[bradford2@comcast.net](mailto:bradford2@comcast.net)

## Religious Education Christmas Pageant

The eighth-grade CCD class with the help of many high-school mentors led the Christmas Pageant for the Religious Ed program right before Christmas. The pageant included the group singing carols with piano accompaniment. In addition, some poems were read and a lovely solo was performed. And Santa's arrival brought a fun ending to the simple but very meaningful event!

OPT



Tenth grader, Addie Capion accompanies the singers on the piano.



Eleventh grader, Christopher Okorie, in the role of Santa waves to the students.



The Eighth-grade CCD class performs with high school mentors.



## St. John the Evangelist School OPEN HOUSE

SUNDAY  
February 12  
10:30 AM – 1:30 PM



Grades Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup>  
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(301) 681 7656



The Holy Family and pilgrims visit classrooms for Las Posadas.

## CATHOLIC

Con't from page 14

that all students feel safe and loved, the SFIS community takes as many opportunities to celebrate the family cultures of students as possible.

For instance, during November, around the time of the Hindu festival of Diwali – which is celebrated throughout the South Asian countries of India and Bangladesh as well as in countries with many South Asian immigrants like Trinidad and Tobago – SFIS held a special assembly that highlighted those cultures. Students recited poetry in the Bangla language, others danced traditional India routines, and some others demonstrated traditional drumming techniques. The faculty

and all of the three-year-old Pre-K students joined in the assembly by participating in South Asian fashion show.

In December, SFIS celebrated traditional European Christmas traditions early in the month when St. Nicholas visited the school and left gold chocolate coins in the students' shoes and later in the month students celebrated the Mexican and Latino customs of Las Posadas. For Las Posadas a group of "pilgrims" joined two students portraying Mary and Joseph and went to the six Pre-K classrooms seeking shelter. As is the custom, the Holy Family was unable to find shelter in the Pre-K "inns" so they went to the school's multi-purpose room where the rest of the school was gathered with Bishop Dorsonville.

After knocking on several doors, Mary, Joseph, and the pilgrims were finally welcomed and the gathered K through 8 students sang many traditional Christmas songs to them in Spanish and in English, a middle school student gave a great presentation on the meaning and history of Las Posadas, and Bishop Dorsonville blessed the baby supplies that the school community collected for Centro Tepeyac Pregnancy Center during Advent.

The SFIS community is looking to celebrate more cultures for the Lunar New Year and for Black History Month. Having so many different cultures side-by-side at Saint Francis International School means there are always opportunity to celebrate unity in diversity.

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## BRENNAN

Con't from page 1

said "I have always tried to do what the church has asked me, so I accepted." Parishioners at that Monday's 9 am Mass were delighted upon hearing the unexpected good news. They agreed Monsignor was the right choice considering what a wonderful shepherd he has been to so many at St. Martin's.

During the following weeks, the St Martin's community acknowledged the honor and expressed their appreciation for his many years of priestly service and support. The school children congratulated him with a surprise song, speech, banner, and gifts. Parishioners, representing our diverse community, held a farewell reception with food, songs, and good wishes. City of Gaithersburg Mayor Jud Ashman recently presented Msgr. Brennan with a Certificate of Recognition and thanked him for "serving so passionately for the past 13 years."

Monsignor Brennan has been pastor of St. Martin's since 2003. He has seen the parish grow in both number and diversity in his many years. It is now one of the largest and most diverse in the archdiocese. The eleven Masses each weekend include five in English, five in Spanish for many parishioners who come from many different countries in South and Central America, and one in French for parishioners from West Africa.

At a press conference, Archbishop William E. Lori, of the Baltimore Archdiocese, said Msgr. Brennan's "pastoral leadership and experience working with Spanish-speaking Catholics suits him well for the duties of auxiliary bishop, which include helping to oversee our efforts to grow and care for the spiritual needs of Spanish-speaking Catholics throughout the Archdiocese of Baltimore."

In a statement, Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington said the Archdiocese of Baltimore will be "gaining a fine pastoral leader," and that the appointment is "a tribute to his faithful and fruitful priestly ministry." The episcopal ordination for the bishop-elect was held January 19, 2017 at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen.

OPT

## Mary of Nazareth Students Who Serve: Jackie Gilmore

Last Spring, eighth-grade student Jackie Gilmore developed a service project to make gift baskets for neurology patients at Children's National Hospital. Jackie's brother,



Eighth-grade students deliver care baskets to patients at Children's National Hospital. Pictured left to right: Emma LeVaca, Jackie Gilmore, Hayley Abromavage, Julie Seminara, Lindsay Barrow, Jacqueline Albero.

Jackson, spent 2.5 months as a patient at Children's National during the Fall of 2014. In looking for ways to help other children, Jackie felt that providing personalized toys, books and activities for patients would be a great way to make children smile and bring hope to their parents.

Jackie's spirit of service spread to her friends, who also helped collect items and assemble baskets for the children. Baskets were delivered at the hospital to the Child Life Department for direct distribution to patients. Jackie looks forward to organizing another service project to benefit patients and their families at Children's National in the near future.

OPT



Mary of Nazareth Catholic School holds its first International Family Night in celebration of cultural diversity and heritage.

## International Family Night Celebrates School Diversity

The Mary of Nazareth Catholic School community enjoyed a night of fellowship on Saturday, January 21, as families traveled around the world together without leaving the school's campus. Mary of Nazareth families celebrated the school's first ever International Family Night in recognition of the international diversity and cultural heritage within our community.

Passports were provided for attendees to explore twenty different countries on display, including Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Greece, Guam, India, Ireland, Japan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Pakistan, Peru, South Korea, Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, and the United States of America. Individual Mary of Nazareth families prepared traditional food and drink from their respective countries of origin to share in a bazaar type market. General information about each country was provided including a

map, current population, country flag, monetary unit, and government.

OPT

## Middle School Religion Teacher Receives Award

Ms. Marion Strishock, Middle School Religion teacher, was among the group of individuals selected in 2017 to receive the "Manifesting the Kingdom" Award, presented by Cardinal Donald Wuerl. The award honors individuals from parishes and Catholic organizations within the Archdiocese of Washington for their exceptional service to the Church. Recipients of the award were joined by Cardinal Wuerl as he celebrated Mass, which was followed by a reception. Ms. Strishock, in her 15th year of teaching at Mary of Nazareth, demonstrates the presence of Jesus in her life to students on a daily basis. In addition to her dedicated work in the classroom, Ms. Strishock guides students through their faith formation through numerous service projects and trips during the school year.

OPT



Middle School Religion teacher, Ms. Marion Strishock, pictured with Cardinal Wuerl while receiving the Manifesting the Kingdom Award in early January 2017.

## Students Participate in Holiday Service Projects

Mary of Nazareth students and families worked together this Christmas season to bring joy to their neighbors in need. As in previous years,

Mary of Nazareth's Social Concerns Committee partnered with A Wider Circle, with numerous homerooms "adopting" local families in need. Committee Chair and

Kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Megan McGregor, explains, "A Wider Circle receives Christmas wish lists from families in need, which are then forwarded to participating Mary of Nazareth homerooms. "Adopted" families are assigned to homerooms based on the size of the family and class. McGregor adds, "Homeroom parents organized a sign-up genius list of items that each family needed and wanted. Homeroom students and families signed up to donate these items and bring them into class."

Many of the participating homerooms decided to dedicate class time to wrapping gifts together. Other classes made Christmas cards to accompany their gifts. In a special way, this service opportunity allowed students to learn the importance of connecting with their neighbors on a personal level. As the school year continues, students are challenged to participate in service projects that directly benefit others in their local communities.

OPT



Kindergarten students wrap gifts for their adopted family at A Wider Circle.



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Danza Guadalupana de Maryland dancers

## Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

By Juliana Ordoñez

Our traditional feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe this past December was amazing. Kids and adults participated for the same purpose, to honor Our Lady. The celebration started with a Mass in Spanish celebrated by Fr. Santiago Martin followed by Mariachis, a procession and a celebration at the Parish Center. The feast included Mexican food, dancers and a children's perfor-

mance. The dancers from *Danza Guadalupana de Maryland*; all members of one family, danced dressed up in their native costumes. This group had its origin seven years ago in gratitude after the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe for the healing of a family member. *The Miracle of the Tepeyac* was performed. The story of how Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego. Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, Pray for Us.

OPT

## Manifesting the Kingdom of God award

By Fr. Lee Fangmeyer

Cardinal Wuerl honored parishioners with the Manifesting the Kingdom Award at the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.



Mr. Carman Gannotti receives award from Cardinal Wuerl

This is to recognize those whose service and commitment have enhanced the Kingdom of God in the Archdiocese. I am happy to share with you that Mr. Carman Gannotti, our former Business Manager at Mother Seton Parish, received this award. I am deeply indebted to him and ask you to join me in our gratitude for the great job he did for us.

The Mass was beautiful and with wonderful music. Attendance by all the bishops and many of the priests of the diocese, including Fr. Lee, contributed to the grandeur of the event. The Cardinal was as gracious as always, and with a well-developed homily that tied the Manifesting the Kingdom award to the significance of the feast of the Epiphany. I was humbled and, at times, teary-eyed. I was glad my daughter was with me. Truly, a lovely celebration. "Carman Gannotti."

OPT

## Holy Season of Advent, "Prepare Ye the Way of The Lord"

By Dorrette Paulin

The holy season of Advent at Mother Seton Parish dawned with a well-attended three-day parish mission on the "Abundant Love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" led by Father Glenn Sudano, of the Community of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.

Spiritually uplifted by the mission and ready to start on the physical Advent preparation, the current class of Confirmandis and several members of the various parish organizations, parents and other parishioners arrived en masse in early December to clean the church. The children scraped gum from the floor, wiped down and polished the pews and washed the baseboards, while the Men's Group tackled the vacuuming the seats and mopping between the pews as the rest of the workers



Seton Seniors lunch

fanned out throughout the space to tackle dusty corners, remove cobwebs, scrub and sweep.

With the cleaning completed and still enriched and uplifted by the Parish Mission, 45 members of the Seton Seniors kicked off the Christmas season with a lunch

at the Dutch's Daughter with the traditional gift exchange and caroling.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the Advent activities, it was time for the Sodalists to set up the Giving Trees with the wish

Continued on page 27

## The Posadas at Mother Seton Parish

By Mary Carmen Soler

For the third consecutive year, the Posadas were celebrated at Mother Seton. The image of the Holy Family in its pilgrimage to Bethlehem traverses through nine different houses accompanied by the faithful. Singing, they ask for lodging (Posada) and once you receive them, the Christmas Novena is prayed and carols are sung. Nine families in the Hispanic community of Mother Seton have received the Holy Family into their homes. Thanks to all the families who received the Holy Family and offered them lodging and all the faithful who joined in their journey.

OPT



Parishioners celebrating the Posadas

## Feast of the Epiphany at Mother Seton

By Fr. Santiago Martin

On January 6, the feast of the Epiphany was celebrated in an extraordinary way at Mother Seton, as children and adults awaited the arrival of the three Magi.

Epiphany, throughout the history of the Church has been an impor-

tant feast; however, in recent years it has taken a back seat among other feasts we celebrate during the Christmas season. It is on the Epiphany, which comes from the Greek word "to reveal," that we celebrate the visitation of the 3 Kings to Baby Jesus, and thus through them, Jesus' physical manifestation to the gentiles.

These three Kings were not Christian Kings that came to adore the Child. What was it that compelled them to leave every comfort they knew and embark on such a long treacherous journey? Pope Francis, in his homily explains "their hearts were open to the horizon and they could see what the heavens were showing them, for they were guided by an inner restlessness" which convinced them that there was another truth, something that could make them truly happy. For this reason, they were not only willing to leave their palaces and begin on this journey but they were overwhelmed with happiness in anticipation to see where this mysterious star would lead them. After months of searching for this newborn King, they found him not in a palace or in a place of power, but in a manger surrounded by shepherds and animals. They



Arrival of Magi with Camels

Continued on page 27

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# SRS Honors Msgr. Gatto on His 90th Birthday

By Nina Cardillo

Early in the Advent season, on Dec. 5, as we were still preparing for the birth of Jesus, St. Raphael School happily shared in honoring Msgr. Vincent Gatto, retired priest in-residence, on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Msgr. Gatto was greeted in the church by cheerful SRS students singing “Happy Birthday” and presenting him with handmade cards. Msgr. Gatto summarized to them the

Catholic University and seminary studies, and finally ordination to the priesthood when he was 28.

Now at 90 and a priest for 61 years, Msgr. Gatto thanked the students for the birthday wishes and God for the sisters who taught him in grade school. He expressed his happiness to be with us at St. Raphael for the last 11 years and acknowledged his own surprise to be celebrating 90 years of life. Before giving the students a blessing, Msgr. Gatto reaffirmed the privilege of being at a Catholic school and learning about Jesus, the teachings of the Catholic Church, and God’s love for each of us, and reminded everyone that we should love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves. We are thankful for Msgr. Gatto, who shares his zeal in serving

the Lord with our school and parish community!

OPT

## St. Raphael Sodality



November 2016: St. Raphael Sodality collected 52 blankets, throws, comforter sets, and twin sheet sets for the 50 residents of the Betty Ann Krahnke Center. Each resident received one of our blankets and they were so thankful for our generosity.



December 2016: Rosemarie Buckley spearheaded another successful St. Raphael Sodality book drive for the students at St. Augustine Catholic School in Washington, DC.



Even the online world was celebrating Msgr. Gatto's milestone birthday!

90 years of his life by telling about his Catholic schooling, Army service in the Philippines at 18 years of age,

the Lord with our school and parish community!

OPT



St. Raphael School students fill meal orders for special guests—residents from two area shelters—at the annual Mother Teresa Luncheon. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia/St. Raphael School

# Loving Hearts at the Mother Teresa Luncheon

St. Raphael’s annual Mother Teresa Luncheon greeted over 60 guests from two Washington, D.C., centers run by Missionaries of Charity. Along with SRS fourth-graders, our visitors attended Mass and were served a Christmas luncheon of baked ham and turkey by seventh- and eighth-

grade students. Singing along with piano accompaniment, everyone enjoyed the celebration as well as a special Christmas musical performance by St. Raphael Nursery School 4-Plus students. We treasure the heartfelt smiles our guests gave us as they parted with gratitude and gifts.

OPT

## Helping Fill McKenna’s Wagon

More than 80 helpers showed up on our school-wide service day Dec. 21 to prepare sandwiches for McKenna’s Wagon, the daily food truck operated by Martha’s Table that serves the Washington, D.C., area. Parents as well as students filled the gym and eagerly got to work with food and supplies provided by our Home & School Association. We helped feed the hungry by donating 437 sandwiches.

OPT

# Sounding Joy at the SRS and SRNS Christmas Pageants

With each song and individual smile, God’s love for us through the gift of His one and only Son was characterized in the St. Raphael School and Nursery School Christmas celebrations. Our youngest performers, the preschoolers of SRNS, delighted audiences as they told, and sang, the story of the birth of Baby Jesus. As Music and Religion Teacher Mary Ellen Vassallo said, it has been the same show for almost 30 years, and, yet, each show is always different.

For SRS, the musical numbers all reflected the spirit of Christmas, including the anticipation and mystery of the coming of our Savior in “Mary, Did You Know,” sung by middle-school boys and girls, the miracle and wonder of His birth in “What Child is This?” performed by fifth grade, “The Little Drummer Boy” by first grade, the joy and splendor of the season in “Must Be Santa” by second grade, and “Winter Wonderland” by third grade.



The little ones of St. Raphael Nursery School tell the story of the birth of Baby Jesus. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia/St. Raphael School

A variety of cultural songs also celebrated the depth of God’s love, including an African-American spiritual song, “Children, Go Where I Send Thee,” presented by fourth grade, a Colombian carol, “Vamos, Vamos Pastorcitos,” by middle-school girls, and a Latin American favorite, “Feliz Navidad,” made popular again by middle-school boys. Holding fast to tradition, the

SRS Christmas pageant would not have been complete without the performance of a living nativity by kindergarten and everyone together wishing “Happy Birthday, Baby Jesus!” This year’s Christmas pageant was filled with joy. The event was live-streamed on Facebook so it could be enjoyed by grandparents and others miles away.

OPT

# Good Tidings of the New Year

**Jan. 29-Feb. 3: Catholic Schools Week** is the annual celebration of “Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service” and honors all who make it possible. New and gently used winter coats and packages of new socks will be collected during the week prior for the Archdiocese of Washington’s Coats of Many Colors Drive. Your donations are greatly appreciated!

**Jan. 26: Career Day** welcomes a panel of parents to present to our students what they do for a living and to jumpstart thoughts about

future careers.

**Jan. 27: March for Life** eighth-grade students unite with local and visiting pro-life supporters for the Youth Rally and Mass for Life at the Washington, D.C., Verizon Center.

**Feb. 27-March 3: Read Across America** joins the nation to promote reading and to reinforce the importance of this lifelong skill.

For more information about these events and more, visit our school website at [www.straphaelschoolmd.org](http://www.straphaelschoolmd.org).

OPT

## Bright Spirits at Raphael House

It was jingle all the way to Raphael House for Ms. Quinn’s fifth-graders, who came a-carrying to the neighboring assisted-living facility. Meeting smile after smile, the students were welcomed by gracious residents who delighted in the sounds of Christmas including “Jingle Bells,” “Santa Clause is Coming to Town,” and “What Child is This?” Everyone’s spirit was bright, and after the festive break from their studies, the children returned to the classroom laughing all the way.

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**More St. Raphael News on Page 39**

# A Message to the President on Aging Policy

**A**ging was not discussed in the presidential campaign leading up to the 2016 election. But the rapid and substantial aging of the American populace requires action. The Winter 2016–17 issue of **Generations**, the journal of the American Society on Aging, includes fifteen articles that lay out actionable policy plans for the new Administration regarding the economic impact of aging, protecting retirement income, ensuring affordable health-care, and finding realistic ways to pay for long-term care.



income system by: maintaining Social Security; making 401(k)s fully automatic; covering the 50 percent of current private-sector workers who have no retirement plan; encouraging people to use their homes as equity for retirement income; and encouraging longer working lives. Munnell proves the feasibility of this plan, stressing that the United States has the ability and financial infrastructure to meet the challenge.



■ In “The Economic, Fiscal, and Financial Implications of an Aging Society,” G. William Hoagland demonstrates how the new President’s ability to achieve campaign promises will be circumscribed by demographics. The aging of the nation will shrink the labor force, and Social Security,

Medicare, and Medicaid will account for 73.8 percent of the growth in federal spending over the next decade, making it difficult for policy makers to garner or maintain public support for investment programs that could increase productivity.

■ Alicia Munnell, in her article “Restoring Public Confidence in Retirement Income,” pens a five-point plan on how to restore public confidence and predictability in our retirement

■ The rising cost of healthcare is one of the greatest economic, fiscal, and moral challenges facing the United States for coming generations. John Rother, in his article, “Top of the Administration’s Agenda: Stem the Rising Cost of Healthcare,” provides a step-by-step approach to lower existing and future healthcare costs. Even if we continued on the current path of reform, our health system still requires major additional reforms to change its cost trajectory by 1) more efficiently and effectively caring for the chronically ill, including at the end of life; 2) addressing high specialty drug costs and the out-of-control prescription drug market through R&D process transparency, competition, and paying for value; and 3) curbing demand for healthcare by changing people’s unhealthy behaviors like smoking, drinking, overeating, and opioid abuse. Reforms focused on high-cost, high-need patients,

measures to keep prescription drugs affordable, and successful public health prevention initiatives could be the single most important set of actions this incoming Administration could take to benefit all Americans.

\$125,000 annually. A comprehensive plan to integrate healthcare, behavioral health, and long-term care would reduce medical expenses and fiscal pressures on Medicaid and Medicare. This article offers the best hope for an affordable solution.

■ G. Lawrence (Larry) Atkins, Anne Tumlinson, and Walter Dawson, in their article, “Financing for Long-Term Services and Supports,” tackle the biggest topic now in aging: how to pay for long-term care. Americans remain at risk for devastating long-term-care costs not covered by Medicare or private health insurance. Family caregivers struggle to provide the majority of care, endangering their own retirement. Medicaid remains the payer of last resort, and private long-term-care insurance meets the needs of only a few. In-home care costs about \$50,000 per year and nursing facilities can run up to

■ Ai-jen Poo and Carol Whitlatch detail the current state of caregiving in their article, “Caregiving in America: Supporting Families, Strengthening the Workforce,” which offers recommendations for federal policy to prepare for America’s changing caregiving needs through training, paying living wages to home-care workers, fostering state-level innovation, research, and a legal path forward for the immigrant caregiving workforce.

For full access to the Winter 2016–17 issue of **Generations**, visit: <http://www.asaging.org/blog/message-president-aging-policy>



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**Maryland's Resource Guide for Aging Drivers**

The Maryland Older Driver Safety Forum has developed a guide. The guide summarizes information from a variety of validated sources into a concise, easy-to-follow format that focuses on the primary issues and messages important to aging drivers. The hard copy booklet is a handy spiral-bound 8-1/2 x 5-1/2 size, with several checklists and charts for personal use and plenty of resources for local follow-up.

The target audience for this information is 50 years of age and older, and this might also be used as a handy reference guide for families, caregivers, and professionals that work with aging drivers. PDF can be downloaded here: [www.mva.maryland.gov/olderdriversafety](http://www.mva.maryland.gov/olderdriversafety).

**My Car Does What?**

New vehicle technologies can keep drivers safe on the road like never before. But drivers need to understand and know how to use them. Check out [www.mycar-doeswhat.org](http://www.mycar-doeswhat.org) to learn how to use back-up cameras, lane departure warnings, adaptive cruise control,

brake assist, and much more. You'll be glad you did!

**Job Search Training for Seniors**

Are you over age 50 and frustrated by your job search? JCA's Career Gateway Program can help you hone your resume, polish your networking and interviewing skills, use Internet job search resources more effectively, and turn your age and experience to your advantage. Each session of the Career Gateway features 30 hours of small-group classroom instruction over five days, comprehensive take-home materials, practical exercises, and a long-term mentor – all for only \$75!

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Session #3: January 23, 25, 27, 30 and February 1, 2017

Session #4: February 27, March 1, 3, 6, and 9, 2017

Session #5: April 24, 26, 28, May 1 and 3, 2017.

For more information, call Jodie Rasch at 301-255-4215 or email her at [Jodie.Rasch@AccessJCA.org](mailto:Jodie.Rasch@AccessJCA.org).

**January Topics:** Michael Bruen talks to Secretary Rona

Kramer about what the Maryland Department of Aging is bringing to seniors around the state of Maryland, checks in with Uma Ahluwalia, Director of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and Gabriel Albornoz, Director of Montgomery County Department of Recreation about new programs responding to last year's Senior Summit, and Helen Abrahams brings her daughter and granddaughter into the studio to talk about intergenerational bonding.

**Program airs at the following times:** Sunday - (6:00pm) | Mon - (10:00am) | Tues - (1:00am, 12:30pm, 6:00pm) | Thurs - (2:30am, 6:00pm) | Fri - (10:30am) | Sat - (2:00am).

**Where to Watch:** Comcast and RCN channel 6; Verizon channel 30; or On-Demand at the County's website by visiting: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/ccm/seniorstoday.html>

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**SOAR Spring Trips!**

Registration begins Tuesday, February 14, from 8:30am-2pm



The Montgomery County Department of Recreation has released its Spring 2017 Senior Outdoor Adventures in Recreation (SOAR) travel program for active adults age 55 and over. Unless noted, all transportation is provided on restroom-equipped motor coaches.

You may register for a SOAR trip in any of four ways. The fastest and easiest way is to use the internet and go to [ACTIVEMONTGOMERY.ORG](http://ACTIVEMONTGOMERY.ORG). You may also mail your trip application, fax it to 240-777-6818, or register in person at 4010 Randolph Road.

If you have questions about the registration process, please call 240-777-6840. If you have questions or require more information about a specific trip, call the SOAR Coordinator at 240-777-4926.

**Spring SOAR trips include:**

**Cherry Blossom Cruise and Lunch**

April 6  
\$87

**Guided Tour of York, Pa, 1st USA Capital**

April 11  
\$75

**Guided Tours of Mormon Temple (ext) and National Museum of Health and Medicine**

April 19, 20  
\$45

**Guided Tours of Three Historic Baltimore Co. Mansions**

April 26, 27  
\$60

**Safari at Lake Tobias Wildlife Park in Halifax, Pa.**

May 4  
\$55

**Escape Route of John Wilkes Booth w/ Ed Bearrs**

May 10, 11  
\$79

**Baltimore Then and Now – Guided Riding Tours**

May 17, 18  
\$45

**Maryland Eastern Shore Harriet Tubman Riding Tours**

May 24, 25  
\$70

**Sailing Trip on Chesapeake Bay**

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Continued on page 26

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## Communicating with Older Adults

# Awareness of Biases Is Key to Better Health Care Decisions

The Gerontological Society of America has expanded its Communicating with Older Adults publication series with the release of “Recognizing Hidden Traps in Health Care Decision Making.”

This guide offers solutions to overcoming two specific obstacles that could impede optimal health outcomes: common heuristics, described as mental shortcuts or “rules of thumb,” and cognitive biases, which are predictable systematic errors in reasoning.

“The heuristics and biases outlined in the report are very common — we all use them,” said Jake Harwood, PhD, chair of the advisory board that oversaw the new publication’s development. “Sometimes they are functional, but a lot of the time they lead to poor decision making. What’s great about the report is that it raises awareness of these shortcuts, and awareness is a great way of improving decision making.”

Select heuristics and biases are illustrated in hypothetical cases

involving the use of nonprescription analgesics and the need for recommended immunizations. Each case includes communication tips for overcoming the heuristic or bias. The objective is to encourage more productive decision-making conversations with older adults.

One example provided is that of the anchoring effect, where people may use an initial piece of information (the anchor) to influence subsequent judgments. If a physician has previously instructed a patient to take a certain dosage of a medica-

tion, the patient may feel it is safe to use the same dosage to treat any future condition. However, when using nonprescription analgesics, it is important to follow the directions for use on the medication label; exceeding the recommended dosage can lead to serious adverse effects, particularly among older adults.

Harwood added that when people notice that they are using a bias, they can correct for it, and make a better decision.

“Everyone involved in health care decision making — including patients, providers, and caregivers — benefits from being aware of these shortcuts. I’m not aware of any other publication that describes these issues in such an accessible manner for the health care context,” Harwood said.

“Recognizing Hidden Traps in Health Care Decision Making” was developed by GSA with support from McNeil Consumer Healthcare. It can be accessed for free at [www.geron.org/cwoa](http://www.geron.org/cwoa).

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## SOAR

Con't from page 25

### White Water Rafting Trip on the Shenandoah River

June 7  
\$85

### Walking Tour of Ladew Topiary Gardens, Harford Co.

June 15  
\$65

### Major League Baseball

Orioles vs. Yankees (4:30)  
May 30  
\$59

Orioles vs. Cleveland Indians  
(4:30)  
June 22  
\$59

Nationals vs. Chicago Cubs (1:30)  
June 29  
\$59

Nationals vs. Milwaukee Brewers  
(4:30)  
July 25  
\$59

### Day Trippers

The Department of Recreation also offers a less strenuous travel program, the Day Trippers program for all ages. Trips leave and return from the Olney Manor Recreational Park. Spring 2017 Day Trippers programs include:

### Philadelphia International Flower Show

March 16  
\$89

### Docent led tour of JFK Center for the Performing Arts and the US Botanical Garden

March 24  
\$63

“Chicago” at the JFK Center for the Performing Arts  
April 8  
\$159

### “Jonah” at Sight & Sound Theatre, Lancaster, Pa.

April 21  
\$139

Continued on page 27

## CELEBRATING

Con't from page 15

and Sixth Grades sang *Angels We Have Heard on High*. The Little Group and Pre-K sang *Away in a Manger* together, with the help of the seventh and eighth graders who stood and sat with them on the risers. The Seventh and Eighth Grades sang *O Come All Ye Faithful*, and eighth grader, Juliana Capizzi, sang *A Hallelujah Christmas*.

Our eighth graders helped to focus our attention on the theme of Jesus' birth, by playing instruments, singing solos, and introducing the program and our songs. We thank Isabel Velasquez, Ian Eskenazi, Emily Aumiller, James Gnecco, Lily Giblin, Zavier Long,

Colby Roth, Jeremiah Bruce, Juliana Capizzi, Michael Walsh, Zavier Grobbel, Olivia Cristillo, Augustin Orrego, and Sofia Donohue for helping to lead their younger school friends. The culmination of the evening was a beautiful rendition of *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*, sung by all students in grades K-8. We are so grateful to Mrs. Cooley and Ms. Moore for directing the show, and to Mr. Gannon for his accompaniment. We celebrated with cookies and juice in the gym after the pageant, and teachers and students enjoyed a slightly delayed opening to school on Wednesday morning.

Everyone agreed that this beautiful program brought us all to an appreciation of the true meaning of Christmas.

OPT

## AVALON

Con't from page 2

enjoyed a little conversation, while respecting those more reserved.

The school's participation soon increased. Now under the direction of faculty member Tom Stroot, he and a crew of volunteers work in the program four times each month, including holidays and often fill-in on days when servers are scarce. Teachers, and occasionally a student from Brookewood School, Avalon's sister school in Kensington, step-up to participate when student help is scarce due to

sports practice or other after-school commitments. To date, Avalon students have served more than 2,000 meals at The Lord's Table since 2009.

The Avalon School has a diverse Upper School population of more than 100 boys, but Stroot notes that everyone can learn a lesson from working and talking with the disadvantaged. Every individual, regardless of his economic or social status, has dignity and deserves respect, he observes. "Each boy understands that, to quote Mother St. Theresa, 'We are not serving food; we are serving people.'"

OPT

## SOAR

Con't from page 26

**Front Porch Tea Room High Tea & Lunch, Tour of Haines Shoe House, Brown's Orchard & Farm Market**

April 28  
\$79

**Annual Ocean City "Springfest"**

May 5  
\$64

**84th Annual Dovers Day Festival, Dovers, Del.**

May 7  
\$54

**Chanticleer Gardens & Estate Tour (Pa.)**

May 19  
\$79

**Vintage Virginia Wine Festival,**

**Centreville, Va.**

June 3  
\$79

**100 Years of American Musical History, Penns. Opry**

June 8  
\$79

**Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Toby's Dinner Theatre, Columbia, Md.**

June 17  
\$79

**Shepherdstown (West Va.) Street Fest**

June 24  
\$53

**"Celebrate Lancaster" downtown Lancaster, Pa.**

June 30  
\$64

OPT

## EPIPHANY

Con't from page 22

fell on their knees in worship, presented the infant with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and they discovered the glory of God.

We taught the children songs and a short catechesis about who they are and why we welcomed them. At the Kings' arrival, there were shrieks of excitement when the children saw the Kings brought their own camels! The children were also encouraged to write a letter, which they would entrust to the 3 Kings

on their way to Bethlehem. They did not just ask for material gifts but for much bigger things such as: health of a family member, being a better sibling, a better relationship with their parents, or help in school. The Kings remained with us in the Parish Center as they recounted their story, the children asked them questions, and enjoyed dinner.

We thank the Neocatechumenal Way for organizing this event. Also, we thank the Spanish Charismatic Prayer Group and the Legion of Mary for providing food and beverages.

OPT

## RALLY

Con't from page 15

camps," pro-lifers from all over the US converge at the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to peacefully march up Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court Building seeking the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* while denouncing the killing of more than 55 million unborn Americans since 1973." The ruling was made 11 years after the Court outlawed prayer in public schools in its decision on the *Engel v. Vitale* case in 1962.

Msr. Edward J. Filardi (former priest secretary of Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, who adamantly defends "life from the moment of conception to the moment that God calls us home") will again lead his beloved flock at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish (OLOL) in Bethesda, Maryland to the nation's capital to join other marchers passionate in being the voice of the unborn. Rally participants have since swelled from 20,000 in 1974 to 650,000 in 2013.

Greg Curtin finds "this holy trek to the public square" important as (thanks to the nuns at his alma mater, OLOL Catholic School in Bethesda, Maryland) he believes "we are all made in the image and likeness of God. To destroy what God has made out of love for us is wrong! Children are a blessing from God so they should not be killed!" Curtin decried to this writer. Demure teenaged OLOL altar server Anjelica Misyel Tugado Marzan meanwhile finds inspiration in "seeing thousands of people gather on a cold January day to warmly support God's greatest gift: life." OLOL's Youth Group member Maximilian "Max" Walsh however denounces "organizations like Planned Parenthood, who are illegally selling aborted baby parts... laughing about it, while still being funded by the United States government." As of press time, House Speaker Paul Ryan revealed a move to defund Planned Parenthood, reportedly the largest abortion pro-

vider in the United States.

Dr. Patrick "Pat" F. Fagan, Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI) Director at the Family Research Council in D.C., cited the Court's decision on the 1972 *Eisenstadt v. Baird* case (allowing unmarried people to possess contraception on the same basis as married couples) as "quickly building the garbage bin for dumping sexual debris in *Roe v. Wade*," which gave a green light to the killing of unborn children, the overwhelming majority of whom were conceived by those unmarried singles with new access to contraceptives." "The Court played God by redefining the purpose of sexuality...seeing rights to contraceptives in the "shadow" of the Constitution but could not see what a blind man could: the right of every child to married parents," lamented Dr. Fagan, a devout churchgoer at OLOL who has spoken on "America's social problems" on The Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), among other venues.

Sister Miriam Paul (Hanna) Klaus of the Medical Mission Sisters and an obstetrician/gynecologist who spoke at the 85th Annual Educational Conference of the Catholic Medical Association in D.C. launched in 1980 the Teen STAR ("Sexuality Teaching in the context of Adult Responsibility") program that values sexual abstinence "to stem the tide of teen pregnancy and abortion." The soft-spoken nun who conducts classes on the Billings Ovulation Method of Natural Family Planning at the OLOL Catholic School library will hold a Teen Star exhibit January 26 and 27th at the Renaissance DC Hotel at 999 9th Street, NW in support of the rally that testifies "to the beauty of life and the dignity of each human person."

Germana Mitchell first joined the march as a parishioner of St. John the Evangelist in Silver Spring when "Fr. Robert Mordino, who has since passed, had a vibrant Teen Club at the time." Doug and Charette Hosford, who attend Mass at St. Raphael Catholic Church

(Rockville, Maryland) with fellow members of the Catholic charismatic community, Bukas Loob sa Diyos (BLD), look forward to their being Liturgy readers January 27, 2017 at St. Matthew's Cathedral in D.C. during the Adult and Family Rally & Mass for Life sponsored by the Washington Archdiocese and the Association of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities.

Believing "the fetus is a person from the moment of conception," Dr. Mary DeFilippes, who attends Mass at St. Andrew the Apostle (Wheaton, Maryland) and OLOL, is uplifted by the "holy cause of the rally." Like her brothers, Paul and John Wolpert, this pharmacologist who worked for 44 years at the National Cancer Institute believes "we're closer to getting *Roe v. Wade* overturned with new 45th US President Donald Trump." Carl and Jeanette Abella (St. Michael's Church, Silver Spring, Maryland), Helen Viray (St. Mary's Church, Rockville, Maryland), Cora Tesnado and Lourdes Ebenstein, (Christ the King Church, Silver Spring) and Anika Aquino (St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Rockville), all admire the marchers who unflinchingly stand up for the unborn, a cause bigger than themselves.

Prayerful Cely Bunayog, Flora and Lita Arancon, Tony Ayala and his artist wife Kristrinah Ayala all share the hope of OLOL Pastor Monsignor Filardi: to see the end of the annual March for Life rallies soon as the controversial Court decision on *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, so all unborn babies will "see the light of day, to grow and blossom, joyfully doing the will of God."

OPT

*Angelyn Tugado-Marzan, a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism graduate from the 405-year-old Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas, has covered events in the National Mall, at the adjacent US Congress, the State Department, the White House, the World Bank, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) where Cardinal Theodore McCarrick serves as Counselor.*

## ADVENT

Con't from page 22

lists for the local charitable organizations and the Retired Sisters in Emmitsburg. As in prior years, the Sodalists accompanied by the parish children delivered the gifts to the Sisters and the children (The Emmitsburg Performers) narrated a poetic version of the Nativity interspersed with carols.

The Girl Scouts from Mary of Nazareth, delighted the Sisters with three carols including a spirited rendition of *Starry Night*, *Noisy Night*. The Scouts also joined the Emmitsburg Performers in the caroling as Carly Sweeney, Briana Valenzuela and Carter Fusto narrated. Alex Vargas soloed *The Holly and the Ivy* and the choir joined him in the chorus. Every year the Sisters look forward to Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer whose nose shines like a lightbulb, and who glows like



Visiting the Sisters at Emmitsburg

a flashlight and they were not disappointed. In keeping with the spirit of the program, the Sisters surprised everyone this year by singing a

"thank you" song to the tune of *Silver Bells*. The program ended with *Let There Be Peace on Earth* and light refreshments.

OPT

## ASSEMBLY

Con't from page 3

Catholic faithful. MCC staff follow the guidance of the bishops serving Maryland regarding the legislation they support and oppose. The bishops' decision is based on Catholic moral and social teaching that seeks to promote and protect human dignity and the common good.

While legislators have until March 6 to submit legislation, MCC staff indicate that it is likely that Physician Assisted Suicide will again be proposed. The forces promoting the culture of death (a phrase used by St. Pope John Paul II) in Maryland are strong and those promoting a culture of life (Catholics are central among them) need to be eternally vigilant in opposing death and promoting life. (For more information, see: <http://www.mdccathcon.org/pas>).

MCC also indicates that at this point the believe the will be supporting paid sick leave and the expansion of BOOST scholarships. Many lower paid workers do not have the benefit of paid sick leave which is necessary for their health and the health of consumers in Maryland. (See: <http://www.paidicksickdaysmd.org/>). Put simply, BOOST gives low-income families the opportunity to choose the school which best meets the needs of their children. (See: <http://www.educationmaryland.org/BOOST>).

**Join the Catholic Advocacy Network (CAN) and get involved.** The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that "As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life" (para 1915). The bishops of the U.S. echo this in their document *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* (para. 13).

An easy and effective way to get involved promoting issues of importance to the Church is to sign up for the Catholic Advocacy Network at [www.mdccatholic.org/CAN](http://www.mdccatholic.org/CAN). CAN will help you to stay up-to-date on the issues and to easily contact your State Delegates and Senator. You will receive email alerts on legislation; quick, easy-to-use, pre-drafted

messages to send to your elected officials (as-is or modified to suit your style); updated information on the issues; and news stories from around the country.

If you are ambitious, the link above will help you organize a registration drive at your parish as well as help you sign up individually. Beth are really needed.

You can also attend Catholics in Annapolis (formerly called Lobby Night) on Wednesday, February 15 from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. Pre-registration is required which you can do through the above link. This is a great opportunity to talk with your elected State representatives and MCC also provides a reception where you can meet your representatives and fellow-minded Catholics from across the State.

**Best wishes and a fond farewell to Bishop Mark Brennan.** The Justice and advocacy Council is grateful to Fr. Mark Brennan for his forty years of dedicated service and ministry in the Church of Washington. He has served in various positions, most recently as pastor of St. Martin's parish in Gaithersburg, where as the "Irish Padre" he has made St. Martin's a welcoming home to many Hispanic Catholics in the Gaithersburg area.

The J&A Council almost yearly has asked Fr. Brennan to join us when we testified before the Montgomery County Council about issues related to the needs of people on the margin in Montgomery County. Fr. Brennan spoke with honesty and sincerity, which we felt touched the hearts and minds of the council members on these issues. We are grateful for his faithful voice over the years. Fr. Brennan is a kind and humble priest who now goes to serve the Church of Baltimore as a new Auxiliary Bishop there. May God continue to bless him and his ministry. **OPT**

*Anthony Bosnick is a long-time member of the Justice and Advocacy Council of Montgomery County. He is social ministry director at St. Francis of Assisi parish in Derwood.*

## SHORT

Con't from page 1

of Washington to find a bishop. In 2015, Francis surprised many when he selected another humble priest known for his passionate work among immigrants at the Spanish Catholic Center as Auxiliary Bishop of Washington. Fr. Mario Dorsonville served the parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes in Bethesda for many years. In hind sight, we shouldn't be surprised by these appointments. Both men have demonstrated through many years of compassionate service, the principles of preference for the poor, hunger for justice, and welcoming spirit for all people. Francis's actions are consistent with his words and his preferences. He has blessed us with two wonderful Bishops.

Since 1974, US Bishops have proclaimed the last week in January as Catholic Schools Week. During this week most Catholic elemen-

tary schools will have activities to celebrate the important role of Catholic schools in the history and development of the Church in the US, a role which has strengthened parishes, inspired vocations, supplied committed lay leaders and of course, effectively educated millions of children in academics and in faith. Times have changed but the mission has not. Catholic schools remain centers of faith, knowledge and service.

What has changed is their affordability. We all know the "why"; as the number of nuns declined, more lay teachers requiring a just wage were required; school facilities, most built in the 1960s and 70s, needed costly capital improvements; and academic expectations by parents have grown in all educational settings. The result has forced higher tuitions. Still well below the \$15,000 annual per pupil cost in the public schools, the tuitions are unaffordable to many. The annual Cardinal's Appeal, about to begin

## Secret Santa Shopping for St. Jane de Chantal Students

In December, the gym at St. Jane de Chantal School was transformed into a magical, winter, wonderland full of Christmas gifts for student shopping - a time-honored and cherished event! Dressed in PJs, with their Christmas shopping lists in hand, each grade at the school perused the beautiful items as they shopped for their parents, siblings, friends, and loved ones. Santa was on hand to read a story and give out candy canes, as parent volunteers served as personal shoppers, wrappers, and cashiers. The school day was filled with Christmas excitement thanks to work of Mrs. Stiebel and Mrs. Phillips, organizers of this year's event. **OPT**



Dressed in pajamas, the kindergarten KA class of St. Jane de Chantal School pose with their teacher, Mrs. Skibo, and Santa at the Santa Secret Shop.

## Happenings In Our Blue Ribbon School

*School reports provided by Mrs. Catherine Skibo*

**Shoebboxes for S.O.M.E.**

Each year the families of St. Jane de Chantal School generously fill shoeboxes with items for the homeless. The shoeboxes contain items such as toiletries, clothing, gift cards for food, ponchos, warm socks, hats, and gloves, and many other necessary items to survive a cold winter outdoors. Over 500 shoeboxes were donated and delivered to So Others Might Eat (S.O.M.E.) in Washington, DC. The shoeboxes were distributed by S.O.M.E. to homeless men, women and children in the district. This was a tangible way for the children of St. Jane de Chantal to can give back to the community at Christmas time.

**Greg Gannon Food Drive**

The 8th graders at St. Jane de Chantal School distributed 3,000 bags to homes in the area neighborhoods surrounding St. Jane de

Chantal Parish with instructions about filling them with food for the Greg Gannon Food Drive. Students returned to those homes a few days later to pick up the filled bags, and back at the school they sorted the food to donate to local food banks. In addition to the neighbor contributions, each class collected cereal, pasta, cookies, crackers, rice, etc. to donate to this worthy cause.

**Christmas Band Concert**

On a Friday in December, the beginner and advanced bands of St. Jane de Chantal School had their first concert of the year. Mrs. Tifford, the school's band director, led the two groups in Christmas favorites, such as Jolly Old St. Nicholas, Rocking Jingle Bells, and a Holly Jolly Christmas, to name a few. The beginner band is made up of fourth graders who are new to playing an instrument. Next year they will be able to join the advanced band, which is impressive in their size and sound. It was an excellent way to spend the evening and get into the holiday spirit! **OPT**

**National DAR History Essay Contest**

For over twenty years, the junior high students of St. Jane de Chantal School have entered the National Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) history essay contest. Back in November, Mrs. Maxwell, Mrs. Cron, and Mrs. Theim submitted 7th and 8th grade essays and this year Mr. Dugan also entered essays from the 5th and 6th graders. The assignment this year was to focus on one of the parks in the National Park System and explain its history and importance. The winners from St. Jane de Chantal School at the local chapter level were Jack Rhea (8th grade), Nora Pottker (7th grade), Joanna Pagedas (6th grade), and Riley Gozycki (5th grade). The students will be recognized at a DAR meeting in February, and their essays have now advanced for inclusion in the DAR competition for Maryland State.

in our parishes this month, raises money for tuition assistance. Many parishes assist families with tuition costs. The Catholic Business Network provides thousands of dollars annually for equipment and supplies and the State of Maryland provides modest funds for some technology and textbooks. These are positive efforts. Yet the cost of a quality education keeps rising requiring difficult choices for schools, parishes and families.

Dedicated and capable parish school boards, principals and staff from the Archdiocese Office of Education have explored and implemented many approaches to contain costs, raise revenues and enhance educational programs. I'm convinced that one of the most challenging jobs must be that of Catholic school principal. Not only must she administer a school, faculty and physical plant and respond to parental expectations, but also find ways to "make payroll" and keep the building running. Faculties

and staffs in our schools, all with highest levels of certification, forgo higher pay and benefits in the public schools as part of their commitment to Catholic education. We should all be grateful to each of them for their work, their love of our children and faith, and commitment to maintaining Catholic schools. **However, simply stated, our schools need more resources and tuition increases are not the answer. An essential component to their success in the future will be the sustained, substantial support of the broader Catholic community in their essential mission.**

Also occurring in the final week of January is the Annual Mass for Life. This event coincides with the annual March for Life in Washington on January 27<sup>th</sup>. The Youth Mass, thanks to a 2004 agreement between former Washington Archbishop McCarrick and the late Abe Polin, owner of the Wizards and Verizon Center, thousands of singing, smiling and

committed youths from around the nation fill the Verizon Center to celebrate life and pray for an end to abortion. Hundreds of priests and seminarians participate in the Mass. This unique event is powerful testimony to Catholic respect for life from conception to natural death. It's as close as we Catholics get to "Gospel Rock"! If you have the opportunity to go, don't miss it.

Good luck with your new year's resolutions (and Lenten ones soon to be made). One that I like these days is a daily reading of the Gospels. While for centuries it has been a recommended, I feel the current environment in politics, entertainment and technology leaves me wanting more truth, yet having fewer places to reliably find it. I believe that within the four gospels, less than 200 pages, I'll find enough to sustain me. Hope you will too.

God Bless!  
Chuck Short

## The Three Wise Men Visit St. Michael's

During the annual celebration of the Epiphany, the children of St. Michael the Archangel Parish looked on as the Three Wise Men arrived on their camels. And the little ones were almost as excited to receive them as the adults in attendance.

The January program began by providing the children with an opportunity to write letters to Jesus asking for a special grace. They were encouraged to ask for something that only Jesus could give them instead asking for the



Children receiving a catechesis about the feast of the Epiphany and why the Three Wise Men were following the star leading them to Jesus



Three Wise Men on camels arrive to St. Michael the Archangel for the feast of the Epiphany

type of "gift" that can be found in a store. The celebration continued with the children singing Christmas songs as they waited for the arrival of the Three Wise Men. When the Wise Men finally arrived, the children sprang up to greet them. To their surprise, the Three Wise Men arrived by camel and came bearing gifts.

The children received a catechesis about the feast of the Epiphany and why the Three Wise

*Continued on page 39*

## Renew the Presence of Christ in Your Marriage

In celebration of World Marriage Day, St. Michael the Archangel Parish will host a Marriage Enrichment Retreat on February 11, 2017. The Spirit of Love is a Marriage Enrichment Retreat designed and presented by Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center and Center for Family Development. This day-long program offers married couples the opportunity to reflect on their love, learn practical tools for enriching their relationships, and renew the presence of Christ in their marriages.

Topics covered will include: improving communication; understanding your spouse's emotional needs; fostering forgiveness and intimacy; and recognizing the presence of Christ in the sacrament of Marriage. Expert speakers include Fr. John Hopkins, LC; Dr. Lisa Klewicki; and Dr. Frank Moncher. The retreat day will close with a special Mass, including renewal of marriage vows for retreat participants.

The Spirit of Love Marriage Enrichment Retreat will take place on February 11 at St. Michael's Parish, located in the heart of downtown Silver Spring at 805 Wayne Avenue. The cost of the retreat

is \$50 per couple and includes continental breakfast, lunch, and a marriage enrichment workbook. To register for the retreat, please email St. Michael Parish at [smacc.marriage@gmail.com](mailto:smacc.marriage@gmail.com). All are welcome! Space is limited, and the registration deadline is January 31.

Gregory and Antoinette Wilkie, parishioners at St. Michael's Parish, recently attended a similar retreat at Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center and remarked that it was, "amazing and will do wonders for anyone's marriage, regardless of where you are in your relationship or how long you have been married. Fr. Hopkins and Dr. Klewicki are truly gifted experts in their respective fields and deliver a program that every married couple can benefit from."

Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center & Center for Family Development, located in Bethesda, Maryland, offers a variety of programs for engaged and married couples. Its programs draw upon the best in contemporary psychology, Church teaching, and practical wisdom from the experiences of married couples to reveal the beauty of Christian marriage and family life.

OPT

## St. Michael the Archangel Celebrates with Christmas Delight

On December 10, St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church had its first annual Christmas Delight. The Youth Choir serenaded parishioners with beautiful Gospel music. As a thank you, the choir was selected to judge our bake off. The bake-off table was filled with cookies, cupcakes, pie, brownies, and more. Jason, a humble dad of two, won the bake off with his eggless choco-



The gracious servers at the St. Michael the Archangel Christmas Delight, including Lauren, Rachel, Lauren, Gillian, Susie, Chrissie, Channon, and Anna Jane

late cake. For winning, he was presented with a mini loaf pan and spatula, both decorated with scripture verses.

After eating a baked ziti dinner baked and served by the women of Silver Spring Catholic's Women's Fellowship Group, parishioners captured their Christmas cheer at our photo booth. To wind up the night, the kids spun themselves silly in a Christmas Minute to Win It game.

OPT



The Fil-Am Ministry at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church celebrates their Simbang Gabi with a live Nativity Scene at their Filipino mass on December 18, 2016



Nicole Calaro receiving the Manifesting the Kingdom of God award from Cardinal Donald Wuerl

## Manifesting the Kingdom of God

By Nicole Calaro, Award Recipient

I received the Manifesting the Kingdom Award on the feast of Epiphany. When Monsignor Tolentino nominated me for the award and the Parish Council agreed, I was humbled. Everything I do for the parish and the young adult Catholic community is my way of showing God how thankful I am for the second chance he has given me. If you saw me today, you wouldn't

*Continued on page 39*

## Join Other Catholics in Fellowship for Lobby Day 2017

Join your fellow St. Michael the Archangel parishioners as well as many other Maryland Catholics on Wednesday, February 15th for Lobby Night, also known as "Catholics in Annapolis." Lobby day will include briefings on the Catholic Church's stance on relevant issues from Maryland Catholic Conference lobbyists.

The event will begin at St. John Neumann Mission Church, located at 620 N. Bestgate Road from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. (parking lot on location). Shuttles will then transport participants to meet state legislators in downtown Annapolis from 5 - 6:30 p.m.

Following the legislator meetings, a free reception will take place from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the Miller Office Building on Rowe Boulevard, catered by the

Iron Rooster. After the reception, shuttles will be available to drive the participants back to St. John Neumann Mission Church. All are welcomed to attend any or all of these three events. The events are free, but registration is required: [www.MdCatholic.org/LobbyNight](http://www.MdCatholic.org/LobbyNight).

OPT

The Youth Group at St. Michael the Archangel lead a Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long at the Springvale Terrace Retirement Center



### St. Michael's Parish

805 Wayne Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD

Rev. Msgr. Eddie Tolentino,  
Pastor

301-589-1155

Edwin Méndez,  
OPT Editor

301-589-1155

## Knights Celebrating Life at Sunday Mass

By: Sylvia Granados-Maready

**O**n December 4, the St. John Neumann celebrated its Culture of Life mass with Father Joe as the celebrant. The fourth-degree knights processed into the church with their formal attire. The Sunday mass honored the life of everyone, particularly the unborn as a way to evangelize and to pray for the end of abortion.

The mass however, was also

very special because Father Joe presented Marianne Hiles. MSN, RN, APRN-CNS, ACNS-BC, RNC-LRN, President of the Board of Directors of Shady Grove Pregnancy Center and parishioner of SJN, with a generous donation from the council of the Knights of Columbus from the proceeds of their Christmas Card sales. The Pregnancy Center is a private non-profit that started about 33 years, which helps pregnant women who might be expe-

riencing an unplanned pregnancy. Hiles explained that, "One of the things I love about the pregnancy center is that we support women where they're in life. Our focus is to help women choose life and we support them throughout that choice. We are here to support them throughout their pregnancy. We hope to help better the lives of these women and children."

Through the donation that the Pregnancy Center received, they are able to continue supporting women and men through parenting classes in English and Spanish, material assistance, counseling, and providing ultrasounds (limited), so that women can see and hear their unborn baby heartbeat. This truly was a joint effort from the Knights of Columbus and the parishioners of SJN to continue to support pregnant women and protect the life and dignity of all life no matter how big or small.

Lastly, Marianne Hiles expressed, "I'm so grateful to our parish for the spiritual support of the church community to live out God's calling for me, especially the pastoral guidance and support from Father Joe and all the priests at St. John Neumann."

OPT



Father Joe presenting the donation check from the Knights of Columbus to Parishioner and advocate of Pro-life efforts Marianne Hiles at the Culture of Life Mass.

## SJN Walking with Mary

By: Sylvia Granados-Maready

**E**veryone was bundled up on December 10 as parishioners of SJN waited to get on the buses to make their way to the Walk with Mary Pilgrimage at Shrine of the Sacred Heart to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. With the warmth of coffee and the sweetness of donuts provided by the Knights of Columbus parishioners were excited to celebrate Mary in D.C.

The buses dropped off everyone in front of the Shrine of the Sacred Heart and what a joyful atmosphere was felt in the air. Roughly twelve parishes were outside the streets of D.C. marching an estimate of 1.5-2 miles, while singing hymns, praying the Rosary, and experiencing great fellowship. Each of the parishes carried the beautifully lifesize statue of the Virgin Mary throughout the pilgrimage all the way to the Basilica itself.

Maria Cayane, one of our Sacristans and one of our bus drivers for the day recalls, "The day was perfect! I was so happy and enjoyed driving everyone and walking in the pilgrimage. I was impressed on how the mass was predominately in Spanish, the homily was incredible and great to see the amount of people who were non-Spanish speakers, yet still attended and still practiced their faith regardless of

the language. When someone truly has faith, language isn't a barrier. It was beautiful"

St. John Neumann being the 12th and last parish to carry the Virgin Mary had the honor and blessing to



The men from SJN have the honor to carry the Virgin Mary inside and outside the Basilica. Photo by Sylvia Granados-Maready

carry her into the Basilica and process into the church during the mass and carry her out. Our Parish had many representatives walking the whole pilgrimage or meeting at the basilica to attend the vibrant mass. It was a magnificent feeling being in the presence of hundreds of our brothers and sisters celebrating and honoring our Blessed Mother.

OPT

## Posadas Navideñas

By: Sylvia Granados-Maready

**T**his year was St. John Neumann's second annual Posadas. What are Posadas? They are a Hispanic tradition of a novenario, a nine-day observance for the birth of Jesus Christ, in majority of Latin American countries during Christmas. Posadas are like Carols, but with a twist. Posadas usually involve someone volunteering to host a posada in their homes, while parishioners or neighbors visit the homes to pray the Rosary, experience fellowship, celebrate the arrival of baby Jesus, and sing Christmas hymns.

It starts with the visitors knocking on the door with two people dressed as Joseph and Mary. The visitors sing verses of a traditional song as if they are Joseph and Mary asking for a place to rest before Mary gives birth to Jesus Christ. The hosts sing a verse as if they are innkeepers rejecting the couple. It is a back and forth singing tradition and remembrance of Jesus' birth as Jonathan Vargas, a Pre-Med student and parishioner of SJN clearly



College Students Jonathan Vargas and Sandra Granados dress to represent Joseph and Mary. Photo by Sylvia Granados-Maready

explains it as, "a reenactment of what Jose and Maria had to go through. It teaches us to be humble, because no one gave them a space to stay, until they found that stable. So it shows us how to be humble because the son of god was born in a farm among animals."

Miguel and his wife Flor Figueroa are the coordinators of the posadas. They wanted to bring forth traditions from the Hispanic Catholic Community and incorporate religious activities for the children, and more community building. The Posadas started the 16<sup>th</sup> up until the 23<sup>rd</sup> ending with a piñata for all ages.

Norma Jovel, a parishioner who volunteered her house to be the "stable" for a night of posada reflects on her experience, "Hosting the posada was beautiful! It was a way to participate in the celebrations of our parish and to experience, with our children and grandchildren, the true happiness and meaning of Christmas."

The last night of the Posada was at the Neumann House where many people attended to welcome Joseph and Mary one last time, and wait for the arrival of Jesus through church and cultural traditions.

OPT



Father Joseph Rogers with the Relic, small piece of a piece of garment of the Blessed Virgin Mary, alongside Deacon Carlo Caraballo, and Spanish Music Ministry Director Luis Marroquin after the bilingual Mass of the Immaculate Conception celebrated by Father Rogers. Photo by Yolanda Caraballo

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**Fr. Joseph Rogers,**  
Pastor  
**Sylvia Granados-Maready,**  
OPT Editor

**SPIRIT**

Con't from page 7

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

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

We ARE...people of faith. Ever mindful of our Catholic identity,

SJRCS fosters a strong faith commitment and religious spirit, values, and morals. Students attend weekly mass and adoration and monthly penance as well as participate in annual May Crownings and Christmas pageants, attend Rosary Group, and recite the school prayer and other prayers throughout their school day. Additionally, priests from the Shrine of St. Jude are involved with our students every day.

We ARE St. Jude...and you can be, too!

To learn first-hand what makes the St. Jude community unique, attend the upcoming Open House on Wednesday, Feb. 1, from 9-11:30 a.m. and 6-8 p.m., or schedule a visit to see students and teachers in action. You can also learn more about St. Jude Regional Catholic School on our website—www.stjuderockville.org. Additionally, Mr. Glenn Benjamin, principal, can answer any questions you may have about the school or the application process. He can be reached at 301-946-7888 or Glenn.Benjamin@stjuderockville.org.

OPT



**REFLECTION**

Con't from page 7

because I have always wanted to speak different languages. Science is a subject that I have always been interested in. As I get older, I love that I am getting opportunities to do hands-on experiments. English and Literature are helping me improve in my reading and grammatical skills. Mathematics is another subject that I have always liked, even though it can be frustrating sometimes. I feel like math is something that is essential in everyday life. History is really interesting and the main thing I really like about history is that I am learning about how everything came together. Lastly, Religion is special because it is not a subject at all schools. In Religion, I get to learn more about my Catholic faith. These are reasons why each and every class is great and helpful for me.

I like to stay active in the community. After school, I participate in clubs and teams that St. Jude has. In the past, I have been in Drama Club, and also on the basketball and softball teams. This year, I am in Student Government, Yearbook Club, and Drama Club. As the sport seasons come around, I hope to play basketball and softball again. I am also in the St. Jude chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. These extra-curricular activities help me develop new skills such as leadership, courage, and service.

St. Jude has definitely provided me with great education and I see a bright future for me. I hope to get accepted into a Catholic high school and a great college. I also hope to be a person of faith and honor and represent St. Jude well as a doctor or an interior designer. St. Jude has helped me develop into a young woman capable of setting high expectations and achieving goals.

OPT

**SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Con't from page 5

which meets monthly to receive updates.

For information on getting involved as a volunteer or leader of one or more of the social jus-

tice concerns at St. Jane's, please contact Joe Gallelli or Paul Eder through the St. Jane de Chantal parish office. Involvement of new members will help to continue St. Jane's centuries-old legacy of advocating for the poor, the weak, the uneducated, and the disadvantaged.

OPT

**Christmas Tree Sales – Another Successful Year**

By Brian Pettit – Coordinator, Christmas Tree Project

Yet again, we had a very successful season selling Christmas trees. We earned an outstanding profit of \$12,668 for the parish. There were 70 plus different parishioners who braved the elements, logging countless hours of service.

Special recognition is due to Wayne Burnside (former coordinator for many years), Gary DeBalso and Damien Clark whose selfless sacrifice ensured our success. Carolyn Brauer and her team of decorators, made beautiful wreaths that sold quickly.

Also, through the generosity of our customers, \$1,074 was raised for needy families. This was due to the efforts of Steve McCully.



Getting Ready to Load. Left to Right: Dick McKee, Tom Reese (volunteer truck driver), Father John Dillon, Zachary Potter (Tom's helper), Bobbie McLaughlin



Above, Loading the gifts for transport to Assumption Parish  
At left, Coordinator Bobby McLaughlin among the sorted gifts

**Alternative Christmas – Record Contributions**

By Pat O'Connor, Co-Coordinator

The St. Francis of Assisi Alternative Christmas Gift Program is still going strong after 16 years. Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners, we collected a record \$26,700 to support the good works of our participating charities -- St. Francis Haiti Medical Mission, Haiti Hurricane Matthew Relief Fund (new this year), So Others Might Eat (SOME),

St. Anne's Center for Families and Children, Heifer International, Little Sisters of the Poor, Montgomery Hospice, L'Arche, Salvadoran Enterprises for Women, Montgomery County Interfaith Refugee Resettlement Neighbors (new this year), and the Upper Montgomery Assistance Network. A card from the charity is given to a friend, or loved one, as a present in their honor.

OPT

**Christmas Spirit Tree – Joy Brought to the Needy**

By John McCarthy

Bobbie McLaughlin coordinated our Spirit Tree again this year—the 25th anniversary of the program. Bobbie has done it for several years and we appreciate her commitment to

the needy families at Assumption Parish in Washington, DC. There were 333 gifts collected—mostly for children. For the “Big Sort” on December 4, there was help from the teen youth group and several families. As Bobbie noted, “many

hands make light the work, and we were blessed the many hands that evening.”

A special thanks to all the parishioners who took a name, or names, off the Spirit Tree, and shopped for the requested gifts. For many of the children, this was the only gift they received. Last, but not least, we are grateful for the help of Tom Reese, and his helpers Zachary and Andrew Potter, who transported the gifts to Assumption Parish.

OPT



Coordinator Pat O'Connor at Alternative Christmas display after Mass

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# Christmas Season at Our Lady Queen of Poland

**O**ur Lady Queen of Poland and St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish celebrated our Annual "Oplatek" Christmas Dinner on Sunday, January 8, 2017, at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Silver Spring.

Nearly 250 parishioners and guests attended, among them HE

Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, and Consul and Mrs. Zbigniew Matynia.

Students from the OLQP Polish Saturday School presented the Nativity Play "Jaselka." This was followed by a blessing by OLQP Pastor Jerzy Frydrych of the

Christmas wafer, "Oplatek," and the sharing of the wafer by everyone at the dinner. Then came the delicious Polish food and camaraderie.

Entertainment included the singing of carols by individuals and members of the Polish Drama Club, and a violin duet by Mireille and

Julia Lechliter. A special treat again this year was the performance by "Ojczyzna", the dance troupe from Baltimore. They showcased traditional dances, dressed in the corresponding heritage costumes, from various regions of Poland.

The following Sunday, January 15, parishioners and friends were

treated to a Christmas Concert "Koncert Koled" at OLQP after the noon Mass. It was organized and directed by OLQP organist Janusz Bilinski with the participation of the youth and senior choir and other parishioners.

OPT

Rev. Jerzy Frydrych, Pastor of Our Lady Queen of Poland (OLQP) Parish in Silver Spring, welcomed everyone and presented special guest H.E. Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, at the OLQP Christmas Dinner "Oplatek" on January 8, 2017, at the Knights of Columbus Hall. In the background are students from the OLQP Polish Saturday School who put on the Nativity play "Jaselka."



Members of the Polish Drama Club, including Aleksandra Abramowicz accompanied by Kasia on the keyboard, sang Christmas carols "Koledy" at the OLQP Christmas Dinner on Jan. 8, 2017.

New OLQP parishioner Aleksandra Parczewska contributed her vocal talents to the Christmas Concert "Koncert Koled" on Jan. 15, 2017.



Aleksandra Abramowicz sang "Silent Night" in four languages at the OLQP Christmas Concert "Koncert Koled" on Jan. 15, 2017.

Sisters Julia and Mireille Lechliter contributed their musical talents in playing "Koledy" Polish carols on their violins at the OLQP Oplatek Dinner on Jan. 8, 2017.



3 photos above, Students from the Our Lady Queen of Poland Saturday School in Silver Spring, acted in the Nativity Play "Jaselka" at the Parish Dinner "Oplatek" on January 8, 2017. They represented people from all walks of life who came to adore Baby Jesus on His birthday.

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The Ojczyzna dance troupe from Baltimore dressed in regional costumes when they performed traditional dances from various regions of Poland at the OLQP Parish Christmas Dinner.



OLQP Pastor Jerzy Frydrych, on left, congratulated all the performers of the Christmas Concert "Koncert Koled" on Jan. 15, 2017, at the Parish.

## St. John the Baptist Christmas Program



## St John the Baptist Sister Parish Project

St. John the Baptist Parish's Sister Parish Project provides vision for solidarity with its sister parish of St. Pierre in Baradères, Haiti. Activities include:

- Annual Fall and Lenten collections
- Visits from the pastor of St. Pierre & SJB Parish delegation travels to Baradères
- Project Development & Fundraising

This past year has been one of great joy and sorrow. Under the leadership of our pastor, Fr. Jean Philippe St. Aubin, 100% of students from grades 9, 12, and 13 passed their national exams.

We were successful in exceeding our goal of \$8,000 to help purchase a new vehicle for St. Pierre which is scheduled to arrive in January 2017.

We hosted a hugely successful taste of Haiti. A great time was had by all. Over 150 people enjoyed fabulous, homemade, Haitian food, beverages; there were Haitian dancers, Haitian music by DJ; children had their faces painted, made bracelets and masks. Various Caribbean beverages were served including a very special passion fruit flown in from Florida. We hosted our first



Fr. Jean Philippe with rice bags after Hurricane Matthew devastated Baradères.

basket raffle with wonderful gifts and treats. People were so excited to win; one winner shared her basket goodies with her music group. Two parishioners won an original signed oil painting from Haiti. The recipes for the food at the festival are found in our cookbook, which sold out at the festival. It's not too late to get one if you missed the event. The price is \$15 for one or \$25 for two. 100% of the proceeds go to our sister parish.

October 5, 2016, Hurricane Matthew changed the lives of our brothers and sisters in Baradères, Haiti. Fr. Jean Philippe's letter told us in detail the damage: nearly four out of every five homes were destroyed; all live stock and gardens were destroyed. The sometimes-passable roads were completely impassible. There is little to no shelter from the sun and heat because the buildings were destroyed. With no place to bury or store the deceased, infection and disease is rampant.

Baradères rests near and is surrounded by the Bay of Baradères. This is comparable to the city of New Orleans and the effect of Hurricane Katrina. The only protection Baradères had were a few man-made break walls of wire, old cars, and tires. The 14 chapels of Baradères are in the mountains, lowlands, and on the Bay of Baradères. Through the generosity of parishioners and support from people around the country who learned of our situation, we raised over \$90,000. We understand that the rebuilding of Baradères will be slow, but the people are very resilient. Please continue to keep them in your prayers.

OPT

## Social Concerns Activities Report

At St. John the Baptist Catholic Community we strive to continue the mission of our Lord through our social concerns ministries. We see social concerns as integral to the life of our parish.

We strive to reflect on the social mission of the Church in all that we do. Recognizing that Baptism calls us all to mission, social concerns ministries strive to involve the entire parish:

- mission of educating in Catholic Social Teaching,
- reaching out in service,
- working for a just and peaceful world through advocacy and solidarity with the poor and vulnerable.

### Community Fund

The Community Fund is one important way in which the St. John the Baptist Catholic Community hears the call of the poor and answers it, by striving to be sensitive and responsive to the immediate needs of those suffering temporary or continued hardships. The Community Fund is supported by a second collection taken at every Mass on the designated weekend each Month. Private donations or memorial contributions are also accepted. The Fund provides financial assistance to help prevent eviction, utility disconnection, hunger. In addition to helping individuals in need, we also support 11 local agencies with monthly with monetary grants.

### Community Service

We seek simply to serve those in need in our community. Activities include:

- Advent Opportunities
- Alternative Gift Catalogue
- Blanket Sunday
- Casserole Project
- Colesville Council of Community Congregations (C4):
- Share the Cross for Lent
- Shepherd's Table Soup Kitchen and Homeless Drop-In Center
- Catholic Community of Langley Park Food Pantry (CCLP)

### Eco-Ministry

Through prayer, education and

action, we engage in various practical and spiritual efforts to make connections between our Catholic faith tradition and environmental issues.

Activities include:

- Annual St. Francis Pet Blessing
- New Hampshire Ave quarterly cleanup with participation of the Boy Scout troop.
- Participation in the Archdiocesan Care for Creation committee.
- Participated in Anacostia river boat tour.
- Conducted parish talks on Laudato Si.
- Presented displays on trees, Trash to electricity, ecofriendly lighting and Trees That Feed charity.
- Conducted Solar Sunday where parishioners discussed their experience with solar electric.

### Education Ministry

Leads parish efforts to teach Catholic Social Teaching principles. Activities include:

- Lenten Supper Talks
- Alternative Christmas Fair Trade Bazaar
- Educational Seminars & Activities- Programs to promote Catholic Social Teaching and ways to incorporate them in our day to day family life.

### Respect Life

We respect and protect human life from the moment of conception until natural death.

Working with our local Knights of Columbus Chapter, we participate in the annual March for Life, support for the Mentally Handicapped, and support for Centro Tepeyac and Gabriel Network.

### Prison Ministry

We promote opportunities for education, service and advocacy in support of bringing God's peace to prisoners. Activities include:

- Legislative advocacy: contact legislators--through letters, telephone calls and emails on pending legislation.
- Welcome Home Re-entry kits

OPT

## Veterans Support Services

Over the years, through the Community Fund, Community Service, and Share the Cross, SJB parishioners have reached out to and assisted veterans in a variety of ways: rental assistance, food, letter writing, supplying stamps to name a few. In September 2014, we donated \$500 to A Wider Circle to assist with the services they provide to veterans. Still much more was needed.

In November 2015, we started the Veterans Welcome Home Project. SJB partnered with two local Veterans Supportive Services organizations providing supportive services to veterans and veteran families who are transitioning from homelessness to a new home or need various types of financial support. SJB provides Welcome Home

supplies for formerly homeless vets. Since November 2015 SJB parishioners have assisted over 40 veterans with everything from toiletries and household supplies to a bed with bed linen. SJB has partnered with two Veteran Supportive Services agencies to provide many of the basic necessities that are missing when they move in.

OPT

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## Resurrection Preschool Fun

# Not Your Usual Paint by Numbers

**B** stands for broccoli and bananas. L stands for lemons and limes. But the children of Resurrection Preschool aren't just learning the corresponding words to each letter. They are taking the actual items like peeled bananas and broccoli heads and using them as paint brushes. Each composition on paper is a colorful array of amazing textures and unique forms which surround the alphabet letter of the week. Their unconventional brushes and resultant artwork is wonderful and covers the walls of one of the classrooms. It must leave a memorable association for the painters who created them.

This is just one of the clever, fun, and engaging activities the children

participate in here on the lower level of the Church building weekdays from 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM. Director Susan Quinn with the help of Helen Moxley, Jeannine Regan, Wendy Rodriguez, and Karen Schultz strive to instruct and promote the Catholic faith as well as teach basic age appropriate learning skills to the children who attend. It is open to all, not just parishioners and enrollment is not just in September - there are openings this month!

There is a definite routine for every day but children are allowed time to play with the toys and explore wonders found on shelves. Director Susan Quinn has tucked baskets of books in a corner of

every room. Story time is a favorite. The listeners hang on every word and gather around the reader to see the colorful pictures. They hear stories about important life skills like sharing, friendship, and kindness all with endearing pictures of animals and children like themselves. After a few minutes, Ms. Quinn calls the class over to sit neatly on a rug near the entrance where the three and four-year-olds sing a song, use flash cards to recognize their individual written names, review the marvels of a calendar, and learn terms for the weather. The Preschool is their first experience of a classroom setting and these children have quickly learned the ability to sit and pay attention. Being Friday, everyone



Reading and sharing stories with friends is a vital part of the morning at Resurrection Preschool in Burtonsville

is looking forward to eating nachos (to correspond with N, the letter of the week,) from the weekly cooking class. Then to finish a good week of learning and playing together, chil-

dren and staff will make the Friday walk to the quiet sanctuary above to visit God, pray, and give thanks especially for amazing teachers.

OPT

## Young People Reaching Out

**T**he Religious Education and Youth Ministry Programs at Church of the Resurrection under the direction of Helene Stever have been active throughout the winter months. When fire struck Flower Branch Apartments in Silver Spring,

Maryland in August and left many families still homeless in December, the students in grades K-HS made it their mission to provide help with donations of sweaters, mittens, blankets and scarves. Students also made over 500 Christmas cards to be given to everyone who needed assistance.

Winners of the "Keep Christ in Christmas" Poster contest sponsored by the Knights of Columbus #9808 were announced. The three student winners, Sarah Sheppard, Tyler Laskowski, and Isis De Souza were chosen from numerous Religious Education class entrants. Their pleasant scenes of the manger, Christmas trees, and angels were singled out as the superior posters. They each won a certificate to frame, a "Keep Christ in Christmas" car magnet, and last but not least, a \$50.00 Target gift card.

Arbor Ridge residents at Riderwood Retirement Community were treated to the lovely sounds of Christmas carols sung by the youth of the Parish. They were joined by Ms.

*Continued on page 37*



Resurrection Youth dress the part to sing Christmas carols for residents of Arbor Ridge at Riderwood Retirement Community



Resting her voice, a young caroler sits with a bingo enthusiast from Riderwood

## The Unthinkable: Santa upstaged by Special Guests at Winterfest!

**W**ide eyed with wonder and excitement, the visitors entered the doors of Resurrection's Amadeo room for the annual Winterfest craft fair. Upon entering, their excitement couldn't be contained and they rushed not to the countless tables filled with wonderful crafts by local vendors but straight into the open arms of a young lady in a flowing dress the color of canary yellow! "Bess," they exclaimed if they were of the age to talk.

That Saturday morning in

December, there were countless children accompanying their parents to Resurrection anticipating a visit with Santa played by long-time parishioner Phil Kane, almost a dead-ringer and veteran performer. But Santa was forgotten at the first sight of Belle from *Beauty and the Beast* played to perfection by Ella Jacobs and right behind her two young men, Jack Quinn and Vinnie Ford dressed as Batman and Captain America. Ella, an eighth grader at Briggs Chaney Middle School had performed the part in the school musical the previous year and had graciously volunteered to appear in character after Jack's mother had witnessed her performance and recognized the appeal of Belle and the Superheroes to young visitors accompanying their parents to Winterfest. They were a memorable success and will certainly be in attendance next year. Thanks Ella, Jack, and Vinnie! Oh! Phil too, of course!



Ella Jacobs as Belle from *Beauty and the Beast* greets enraptured children at Resurrection's Winterfest Craft Fair.



### Keep Christ in Christmas

Past Grand Knight, Jim Larkins of the Knights of Columbus Council #9808 poses with Resurrection religious education student winners of the 2016 poster contest "Keep Christ in Christmas."

### Church of the Resurrection Parish

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OPT



A wonderful Christmas Concert was enjoyed by all! A special thanks to our St. Elizabeth School Eighth Grade students for a beautiful pageant



Our Annual St. Elizabeth School Advent Calendar Exchange.... thanks, Fifth Graders for making the season so special for our Kindergarten students!



Thank you, Homeroom 4MM, for leading us in prayer during our Mass for the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We love our Blessed Mother at St. Elizabeth School!

## Fall Foliage Trip in September

Saint Elizabeth parish will sponsor a trip to Vermont and New Hampshire the week of September 24. We'll depart the church on Sunday, the 24th to travel to the Lake Morey Resort in Vermont, our home for the following six nights. While there, we'll take day trips to tour Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream factory, a maple syrup farm, Montpelier (the smallest capital city in the nation), President Coolidge's homestead and Littleton, New Hampshire.

We'll also ride the Cog Railroad on Mount Washington, visit Castle in the Clouds, and Squam Lake, where scenes from On Golden Pond were filmed.

There will be much more on this week-long trip to New England so if you'd like to join us, visit the parish website (StElizabethChurchMD.org) or email the office for a copy of the registration information (office@stelizabethchurchmd.org). Our trips generally sell out quickly, so contact us today!

OPT

Incoming pastor at St. Elizabeth's, Msgr. Bill Parent concelebrates at his installation mass on Nov. 5, joining Cardinal Archbishop Donald Wuerl, and colleagues. Left to right: Msgr. Bill English, Deacon Kevin Byrne (partially obscured), Msgr. Parent, Fr. Ray



O'Brien, Cardinal Wuerl, Fr. ?? (master of ceremony, in cassock and surplice), Fr. Jim Myers, Fr. Jacob George, Msgr. Steve Rossetti.

## Msgr. Parent Installed at St. Elizabeth Parish

On November 5, Cardinal Wuerl joined St. Elizabeth parishioners at the 5pm Mass where he presided over the formal installation of Msgr. J. Wilfrid

Parent as the parish's new pastor. Msgr. Parent (He prefers Fr. Bill) arrived at St. Elizabeth's on July 6 and becomes only the parish's third pastor in its 52 year history.

OPT

## Christmas at St. Elizabeth's

Another successful Christmas season came to pass at St. Elizabeth's with 1000 gifts collected as part of our Advent Giving Tree program, over 1700 trees sold in our 31st year of sales, and 4500 people attending our Eve and Day Masses. Indeed the spirit of Christmas is alive and well in Rockville!

Thank you to all who attended, and to the many volunteers who helped everything to go so smoothly. As we now begin 2017, we wish everyone a very happy, healthy and blessed New Year!



OPT

St. Elizabeth School students looked on as we lit a candle of our Advent Wreath during a prayer service in the front lobby!



One of our favorite days at St. Elizabeth School: Santa Hat Day!



Santa's Workshop returned St. Elizabeth School! Thanks to our chairs, Mrs. Holly Mayhew and Mrs. Jennifer Long... and all of their elves, for making the season so special!



St. Elizabeth School Preschool students enjoyed a visit from Eco-Adventures. As you can see, fun was had by all!



A fantastic show from our students in Preschool, Junior Kindergarten, and Kindergarten! We are so blessed here at St. Elizabeth School!

## Come Join Us For Our Pancake Supper!

Though Ash Wednesday does not occur until March 1, the next issue of OPT does not come out until later that month, thus it's not too early to invite you to mark your calendars for the annual St. Elizabeth Parish Pancake Supper to celebrate the entry into Lent! The Supper will take place on Tuesday, February 28, between 5 and 7pm in our parish hall and all are invited. Tickets will be available 2-3 weeks in advance of the event, but may also be purchased at the door. Visit the parish website for complete details (StElizabethChurchMD.org).

OPT

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The LIMS Prayer Group with Fr. Salinas

## Sunday After-Mass Lunches

The Lord Is My Shepherd Prayer Group has stepped up to “do” the third Sunday of the Month continental breakfast and then lunch (traditional Filipino food), as are being done by the Legion of Mary, after each of the first Sundays, and the Spanish Charismatic Prayer Group, the second Sunday of every month (these two having traditional Central American food).

Each group have offered to provide a parochial lunch these Sundays of the month (with Fr

Salinas encouraging any other parish group to step up to do lunch for the other Sunday in the month, and the occasional fifth Sunday – like we have in January this year!). These lunches will be priced at \$10 a plate, doughnuts and coffee separately priced the earliest after the 8:30am Mass, with all proceeds going to the Church. Still looking for another group to step up for the fourth Sundays, as well as a group for those four months on the calendar which will have a fifth Sunday!

OPT

## Christ The King Mass on YouTube

By Jean Barrionuevo, Parish Assistant

Christ the King has gone live! The project of streaming the Mass live began in the Hispanic Mission at the Cardinal McCarrick Center by now Christ the King Parochial Administrator Fr. Rodolfo Salinas in the hopes of extending the Mass to those who are incapable of going to Mass for any reason. We stabled a system of live cameras that are still functioning and being used by Center Administrator Fr. Mario Majano. Fr. Salinas continued this project at Christ the King in the hopes to bring the Mass live for those unable to come to Mass for any reason, such as illness or due to the weather.

The daily Masses are streamed Live at their appropriate times; the Saturday and Sunday Masses,

including the Tagalog Mass once a month, as well as any other special Masses that are added during the year, are streamed live at their scheduled times. Christ the King began streaming the Christmas Masses and have continued to do so with all of the Masses since. The streaming of the Masses live can be found on Facebook through Christ the King’s page: <https://facebook.com/ctkcatholicparish/>. The streaming also has been linked on the parish website ([www.ctkcatholicparish.org](http://www.ctkcatholicparish.org)) and the YouTube page as well: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCvs6CO9bZOVnaC29it9Q51w](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvs6CO9bZOVnaC29it9Q51w)

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## St. John the Evangelist



Fr. Cusick, Chris, Jackie, Eric, and LaToya caroling at Holy Cross Pediatric Unit

## Sharing the Christmas Spirit through Carols

On Friday, December 23, Father Cusick and members of the young adults group from St. John the Evangelist parish in Silver Spring sang Christmas carols for children and their parents at Holy Cross Hospital. From religious songs, “Angels We Have Heard on High” and “Silent Night,” to upbeat secular numbers, “Jingle Bells” and “Walking in a Winter Wonderland,” the range of songs carried messages of warmth and good cheer to mostly quiet but happy audiences.

The group’s idea of sharing the holiday spirit with the sick and suffering through music was rewarded with both smiling and tearful faces. The quintet left the halls of the hospital singing “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” a playful ode to Jesus, the Perfect Gift, and a conclusion to the ministry’s voluntary service that day.

OPT

## Bringing the Nativity story to life

Parish first-graders take a break after the dress rehearsal to pose with Father Calis. The children were practicing their parts for the reenactment of the Nativity story which took place during the Children’s Christmas Eve Vigil mass. Their rehearsal paid off as the first-graders did a wonderful job on Christmas Eve.



## ENROLLMENT

Con’t from page 12

and their mission is to assist school administration in the marketing and enrollment process. Fr. Hughes and I sat in this meeting feeling pretty reassured as we, along with an energetic group of parents; put together such a committee for HR this past spring!

HR’s Marketing/Enrollment Committee is comprised of over 50 parents and teachers who work within the following subcommittees:

1. Marketing
2. Open House

### 3. Community Outreach

This past fall the committee worked with Mrs. Ryan to revamp our Open House format. Their efforts proved to be a huge success as we had the biggest attendance we have had in years—over 100 guests! Prospective families were able to walk into our beautifully decorated auditorium and were able to talk to teachers from each grade level, meet Mrs. Ryan and other school parents, and take a tour of the school. There was even a kid friendly table where children worked on various art projects. This kept the children occupied so that parents were able to seek information from the various stake-

holders available. All involved in this event left so exhilarated with the success!

In addition to revamping our Open House format, the committee is also working on the following:

1. New print material
2. Professionally produced marketing video
3. Fostering relationships with prospective families to help them feel connected to our school community

Fr. Hughes and Mrs. Colleen Ryan are very excited to work with such caring and committed stakeholders who are just as passionate about our school and our mission.

OPT

## JOURNEY

Con’t from page 12

Still I was delighted to recently receive an invitation to spend a day at the United Nations as an official guest of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. The Sisters have a non-governmental organization (NGO) UN observer status.

During my visit I learned more about the UN’s 17 sustainable development goals, which includes by 2030 the abolition of poverty, ending human trafficking, and gender equality. Although the goals are ambitious, I am inspired by them.

One of the high points of the visit was hearing the ambassador to the UN from Ireland, David Donoghue, deliver his report on immigration. Initially, the report was to demand

the ending of all detention of children. From my own reading, I understand that the detention of a young child can scar her or him for a lifetime. Unfortunately, the report was modified to read that countries should be “encouraged” to end the detention of children.

During Donoghue’s presentation, I was sitting next to Sr. Winifred Doherty, RGS. Sr. Winifred is the Sisters of the Good Shepherd’s official UN representative. When Donoghue mentioned that the committee weakened the language regarding the detention of children in response to pressure, Sr. Winifred slipped me a note that simply read, “United States.” I realized that since our country has a policy and practice of detaining immigrant families, including very young children, we wanted softer

language rather than an outright condemnation of the practice.

As I left the UN to walk back to my hotel amid the hurrying crowd of New Yorkers, I was very grateful for the day. I no longer have the idealistic image of the UN that I had as a young man. Sadly, I see the limitations of the UN, the inhumanity of my own country and, in a different context, the scandals of my own church. Yet I still witness the work of the Holy Spirit leading all of us as we struggle with our weaknesses and failures. As I was caught up into the moving mass of humanity, I was reminded of the words of the poet and priest Gerard Manley Hopkins, “Because the Holy Ghost over the bent World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.”

OPT

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**St. Bartholomew**

**Benefit Concert Breaks Contributions Record**



St. Bartholomew Parish Choir prepares for its annual Mt. Carmel Benefit Concert. Photo courtesy of Carole Wysocki

**O**n Saturday, December 3, 2016, for the 30th year, St. Bartholomew Parish presented its annual benefit concert for the Mount Carmel shelter. Mt. Carmel House is a transitional housing program in Washington, operated by Catholic Charities. St. Bart's Choir Director Carole Wysocki told OPT, "We had a terrific turnout—nearly 300 people attended." The collection this year, \$4,734, was a new record, easily besting last year's total of \$3,601. All collected funds, without administrative fees or expenses, go the Mt. Carmel Shelter. **OPT**

**"Sweets with Santa" a Yuletide Hit**



St. Bart's children in tough negotiations with Santa Claus. Photo courtesy of Barb Henry

**T**his year's "Sweets with Santa" at St. Bart's was a huge Christmastime success as always. Families met for crafts, snacks and fellowship and then Santa arrived. Santa spent time visiting with the children, reading a story and singing with them before they lined up to tell Santa their Christmas wishes. It was a wonderful morning enjoyed by everyone. **OPT**

**Wise Men, Shepherds, Angels, and Animals Visit St. Bart's**

**T**he St. Bart's Christmas Eve Mass, which drew an overflow crowd, is a popular annual institution at St. Bart's. This year, Mass was offered by St. Bart's Pastor, Fr. Mark Knestout.



Fr. Mark Knestout preaches at Christmas Eve Mass.

In addition to the pageant, the Mass featured a Children's Choir made up of about 20 children from both the parish and St. Bart's School under the direction of Dan Villar. The standing-room-only congregation left with a large supply of Christmas Spirit. **OPT**

**St. Bartholomew Parish Honors Volunteers**

**O**n Saturday evening, January 7, St. Bartholomew Parish held its annual "Twelfth Night" volunteer appreciation dinner. The dinner, hosted by St. Bart's Pastor, Fr. Mark Knestout, was an opportunity for St. Bartholomew priests and staff to express their gratitude for the assistance that parishioners have contributed to the church, school, and larger community throughout the past year. The attendees were treated to a sumptuous dinner and lovely band music. **OPT**

**REACHING OUT**

Con't from page 34

Stever, Director of Religious Education and Louise Locke and Carol Williamson, Pastoral Associates at Riderwood. Both the young and the more mature enjoyed Bingo, light refreshments, and a lot of wonderful Christmas spirit!

Carols were heard again as young adults active in the Youth Choir joined the Resurrection Adult Choir for the annual Christmas Concert, part of Resurrection's *Living Arts Concert Series* under the leadership of Annick Kanter-Saint Hubert. They sang three love-



Resurrection's Religious Education and Youth Ministry director Helen Stever is flanked by Louise Locke and Carol Williamson, Pastoral Associates of Riderwood during a visit of caroling and bingo with the young people of the Parish.

ly selections and then joined the Women's Choir for *The Donkey*

*Carol* which one can imagine, was the big hit with both singers and listeners alike!

Forty students preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on May 4, just finished a weekend retreat at the Parish led by NET ministries (National Evangelization Team) from the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota. The students celebrated Mass and participated in large group talks and presentations, small group discussions, and faith sharing through games and skits. It was an excellent opportunity for the candidates to reflect on this important time in their Catholic faith life. **OPT**

**St. Bartholomew Parish Adopts Local Families for Christmas**

**T**he St. Bartholomew Parish and School Community adopted 18 local families this year for Christmas. Each of the families was contacted to find out what they needed and our community was able to provide them all with winter coats, boots, small and large appliances, grocery gift cards and some gifts for the younger children. It was truly a wonderful community effort which helped everyone engage in the true meaning of Christmas. St. Bartholomew School families organized each grade's participation and our Parish donated gifts, funds, and time as well. Many members of our community met to help sort and wrap gifts. It was a wonderful effort from our community! **OPT**



St. Bart's Youth Group members prepare to show their skating skills at Cabin John Ice Rink.

**St. Bart's Middle School Youth Group Kicks-Off New Year**

**O**n Sunday, January 15, Our Parish Times caught up with the St. Bart's Middle School Youth Group at Cabin John Ice Rink in Bethesda. Led by John Archer (who proved to be an excellent skater) the group took to the ice during the general skating session and showed serious skating skills. After skating, the group tested the rink's near-famous pizza. Looking ahead, the group will be having a number of sports events, several service opportunities, and various field trips in the near future. Be sure to check out the Parish Bulletin for news about an upcoming rock climbing trip, dodgeball night, and more. The St. Bart's Middle School Youth group are 6th, 7th, and 8th graders interested in serving our neighbor, playing together, and getting to know our Lord Jesus Christ. All are welcome. For more information, contact John and Maria Archer, 32kaufmann@cardinalmail.cua.edu. **OPT**

**St. Bernadette**



On December 9, St. Bernadette School held our annual National Geographic School Bee. All students in grades 4-8 participate in the preliminary round promoting ten students to the school finals. At the conclusion, Lucas Santos (Grade 6, FR middle) emerged as our school winner, Chloe Kuzner (Grade 5, FR left) captured second place and Thomas Mesafint (Grade 8, FR right) finished in third place. Lucas will sit for a test in January to earn a spot in the state-wide competition. Staff moderators L-R in back row: Samantha Pryor, Christina Hart and Virginia Cooper.

St. Bernadette School students take the top three places out of 87 entries in an essay contest offered to eighth-grade students in Catholic schools and Religious Education programs across the diocese, celebrating the legacy of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, sponsored by ADW Office of Cultural Diversity and Outreach. Pictured L-R is Grace Stanton (2nd Place), Joanne Draddy (3rd Place), Catalina Scheider (1st Place) and Sally Ingram (MS ILA Teacher). Full versions of their essays will be published in *The Catholic Standard*.



**CLASSROOM**

Con't from page 9

academic content, our students are taught an embedded but equally as important skill set that aligns to teaching the whole child which is at the heart of Catholic education. St. Bernadette School principal, Cheri Wood, believes that, "children learn best when they have strong socio-emotional skills coupled with the exposure to academic rigor. For example, through this approach, we are experiencing the use of positive language helping treat mistakes as a positive learning opportunity promoting growth."

In practice, students are greeted when they arrive by a message written by the teacher about the day. They then participate in a Morning Meeting. They begin the meeting by greeting one another and participate in a quick activity focusing on teamwork, inclusion and self-control. At the start of the year, the students spend the first six weeks creating a small list of rules that will create a safe classroom that

will help them achieve their hopes and dreams.

The *Responsive Classroom* approach believes that knowing the children we teach is equally as important as knowing the content we teach. Independent research has found that the *Responsive Classroom* approach is associated with higher academic achievement in math and reading, improved school climate, and higher-quality instruction. The approach has been backed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) as one of the most "well-designed evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs". Our St. Bernadette students agree. When asked about *Responsive Classroom*, Adelaide shares, "Morning Meeting creates a positive start to the day." Arsema continues, "Morning Meeting really gives us time to get to know one another." Chloe adds, "Morning Meeting helps us build a class community because we greet each other which helps us make one another know that we appreciate each other." Finally, from John, "Morning Meeting helps us feel like one big family." **OPT**



St. Rose parishioners from teen ministries and the Accommodating Hearts Ministry share songs, laughter and cookies at the third annual Carols and Cookies seasonal event. Photo by Sherry Moitoza

## Carols and Cookies Collaboration at its best!

By Sherry Moitoza

On Dec. 21, 2016, St. Rose of Lima celebrated the third annual Carols and Cookies – a seasonal event preparing hearts and minds for Christmas. Teens who participate in the Teens Love Christ Choir (TLC) and our Ministry of Hanging Out (MOHO) joined

efforts with the Accommodating Hearts Ministry to lead an evening of singing carols and sharing cookies with our friends with differing needs and their families.

Lively music led by our teens and Accommodating Hearts team leaders energized the crowd and filled the room with joyful music. Small percussion instruments brought by

UpCounty Community Resources allowed for spirited audience participation as well as greater collaboration between agencies that serve adults with developmental differences in our local area. It was a joy-filled event for all teens, music ministers, and our friends and families with special attributes.

OPT

## St. Rose of Lima Parishioner receives Nation Youth Ministry Award

By Taylor Henry

Dr. Mark Moitoza, Vice-Chancellor for Evangelization of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA (AMS), accepted a national award in December for his outstanding contribution to youth ministry to families in the U.S. Military. The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) presented its National Youth Ministry Award to Dr. Moitoza at the National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry in San Jose, California.

According to the NCCYM, the National Youth Ministry Award is given annually to “a Catholic/Christian adult who exhibits a behavior that serves as a model to other adults involved in ministry



Dr. Mark Moitzoa

with youth. The recipients must be recognized at the international, national, regional, or diocesan level for their contributions to the field of youth ministry or to work with youth. Their life and their work should reflect and support the ideals established in A Vision of Youth Ministry (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1976) and Renewing the Vision (USCCB, 1997).”

Dr. Moitoza was one of ten (10) Catholic youth ministry leaders throughout the United States to receive a 2016 National Youth Ministry Award in various categories. For each category, individuals are nominated by colleagues in the field of youth ministry. The

award committee reviews each nomination and carefully selects the recipients through a discernment process before presenting its choices for final approval to the NFCYM board of directors.

Dr. Moitoza holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Rhode Island and a Master of Arts degree from the Catholic University of Leuven, and he is currently working on a second doctorate in theology at LaSalle University in Philadelphia.

“Having grown up in an Air Force family,” Dr. Moitoza said, “I remember well all the people in so many places who shared their love of the Church by making time for others. Collaborating with leaders in the military today continues that tradition of encouraging faith in the midst of frequent moves and deployments. To all who continue to propose that we live, and move and have our being in Christ (Acts 17:28), I remain grateful for their willingness to serve with joy. It is an honor to receive this award on behalf of those who have shared the faith with me as well as those who dedicate their gift of time to do the

Continued on page 39

## St. Rose Parishioner Sheila Shea Receives Archdiocesan Award

Sheila Shea received the Manifesting the Kingdom of God Award for helping start a new ministry: offering religious education on a one-on-one basis to young people who have severe developmental, emotional and physical disabilities that present challenges for them to learn and grow in their own faith journey.

Shea’s work was particularly notable during the 2016 Year of Mercy. Shea is living a life of mercy because of her work of inclusion on behalf of young people, who have severe developmental, emotional and physical disabilities, a group that is often marginalized. Shea exemplifies the mission of The New Evangelization because she takes her own faith, in which she believes so deeply, and proclaims the Gospel to families and persons with disabilities. Shea evangelizes to families beyond St. Rose, as well as within, by reaching out, encountering and engaging the special needs community who are often less visible.

Shea’s enthusiasm for sharing the Gospel has spilled out and become a waterfall of people

doing the same – coming to Mass and Religious Education to deepen their faith and go forth to proclaim the Gospel to others.



Sheila Mateo with Father Mateo, St. Rose parish priest. Photo by Dan Shea

Shea accepted the award from Cardinal Donald Wuerl during Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Sunday, January 8. This award is presented annually to over 200 people in the Archdiocese of Washington who demonstrate a love of Christ in their lives and share it with the Church. Many of the honorees are often unnoticed because their work entails activities that make a parish or an organization run smoothly.

OPT



Merry Christmas from the Ministry of Hanging Out (MOHO) at St. Rose! MOHO is a weekly gathering of St. Rose teens where they can come in and hang out. Kids at MOHO talk about and share the ups and downs of their week and pray together each night. Photo by Gustavo Salazar

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Spirit Day at St. Raphael School celebrates its CYO and SRS teams at the start of basketball season. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia/St. Raphael School

## Merry Matchup at CYO Spirit Day

The start of another exciting CYO basketball season for third through eighth graders was officially kicked off at SRS Spirit Day. The whole school took time out to rally support for the players in a teachers-vs.-students basketball matchup, which

displayed competitive skill and fun. This battalion of Angels is preparing for CYO basketball with renewed energy and enthusiasm, and we wish all participants a safe and successful season!

OPT

### NEW

Con't from page 14

The BOOST Scholarship program is now helping 81 SFIS students better afford Catholic education. 29 of the BOOST Scholarship students are giving SFIS a try for the first time this year! SFIS was also blessed this year to have help from the Crimsonbridge Foundation to support nine new Latino students joining grades 6, 7, and 8.

Saint Francis International School looks forward to welcoming many new 3 and 4-year-old students again for 2017-2018 as well as students in grades K through 8 who are giving Catholic school a try for the first time. SFIS will have open houses for prospective families from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm on Feb. 2 and 16. The application deadline for Archdiocesan financial assistance is Feb. 20. ALL ARE WELCOME!

OPT

### WISE MEN

Con't from page 29

Men were following the star leading them to Jesus. They also had an opportunity to interact with them and to ask many questions. As the children said farewell to the kings, each boy and girl presented his or her letter to the visiting dignitaries so that they could be delivered to Jesus. This was a remarkable event that provided a teachable moment to the children of the parish. Many of the adults were touched by the innocence and faith of the children. If only we could have the faith of a little child!

OPT

### CAFÉ ST. JOE

Con't from page 16

Learn more and sign up to volunteer at [www.saintjosephshouse.net/caf -st.-joe.html](http://www.saintjosephshouse.net/caf -st.-joe.html).

St. Joseph's House is a nonprofit providing after school and summer care to children and teens with

OPT

### KINGDOM

Con't from page 29

guess how low I was in my life just four and a half years ago. I never felt like I deserved the recognition; however, just as we don't "deserve" the Kingdom of God, God, in his infinite love, makes us worthy. During His Eminence Cardinal Wuerl's homily, he said that all Catholics are meant to be beacons of the light of faith. We are meant to call others closer to God. I want to use this experience as another moment in my testimony of how good God is and how far God can take us if we just say yes.

OPT

intellectual and developmental disabilities in the DC area since 1983. Caf  St. Joe is a collaborative ministry of St. Joseph's House and Saint Andrew Apostle Catholic Church, supported by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington and Furnace Hills Coffee. Contact Natalie LaHood for more information at: [SaintJosephsHouse1983@gmail.com](mailto:SaintJosephsHouse1983@gmail.com).

OPT

### AWARD

Con't from page 38

same with military youth, families, and young adults around the world today. The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry and the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA are primary supporters of this endeavor. It is due

to their willingness to embrace and advocate for the particular pastoral needs of those in the military that this recognition is possible."

His Excellency, the Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D., Archbishop for the Military Services, commented on the award: "Dr. Moitza is an extremely generous, valuable, and trusted co-worker in the global vineyard of

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