



OUR Parish Times

Special Graduation Issue

MAY 2021

Living the Faith Together

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Celebrations of the Filipino American Ministry at St. Michael the Archangel

By Jeannette Abella

Each year on the third Sunday of February, the month of LOVE, the Filipino American Ministry (FIL AM) of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in Silver Spring holds one of their most anticipated events of the year – the Renewal of Wedding Vows and Blessing of Couples. This year, 14 couples participated. Our Spiritual

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Mr. Tony Calaro, President of the Filipino American Ministry of St. Michael the Archangel Parish, and his wife Denia Calaro before the Filipino Mass and renewal of wedding vows ceremony.



St. Francis of Assisi parishioners (left to right) Ann Pierre, Trish Olin, and Christine King, all members of the Pastoral Council's Ad-Hoc Committee on Racism, flank the "Made in God's Image" sign, which stands in front of the church in Derwood, Md. The committee hosted two listening sessions in April to hear parishioners' experiences and awareness of racism and violence.

Listening sessions on racism and violence allow for frank talk on parishioners' experiences

In its next step to facilitate a dialogue on racism among parishioners, members of the St. Francis of Assisi Pastoral Council's Ad-Hoc Committee on Racism in April hosted two listening sessions that laid bare the varying experiences and awareness of racism felt by minorities and white members in the parish and allowed participants

to begin considering how the color of their skin has impacted their navigation through life.

The virtual listening sessions, which took place over Zoom on April 10 and 17, gave approximately 18 parishioners a safe place to broach the challenging topic of racism in a small group setting. Modeled after the

parish's "Four Courageous Conversations" town hall meeting on clerical sexual abuse in 2018, the session format required all participants to only listen to one person's experience at a time without questioning or commenting while they spoke.

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No Act of Faith Is Too Small

I recently wrote a column for *The Catholic Standard* about the Resurrection and my absolute conviction that Jesus rose from the dead. I hold that conviction so firmly because the disciples witnessed it, and not just with their eyes and their words. They witnessed to it with all but one ultimately dying for that belief.



Fr. John Enzler

After reading the column, one of my priest friends reached out to me and said, "You know, John, that comes from your parents. That gift of having such trust and belief in God, the New Testament and the Resurrection that you base your whole life on it."

He is right, and I have been thinking about this for all of us in light of the past year. We

Continued on page 42

Nori Ponzio, '97, Appointed Principal of Visitation

Dr. Barbara McGraw Edmondson, Head of School of Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School, announced that Leonor (Nori) Limarzi Ponzio, '97, will be Visitation's Principal beginning in the new school year. After an extensive search and interview process by the Search Committee (comprising faculty, Board members, administration, and alumnae), Ms. Ponzio was selected from a large pool of candidates. She is a 1993 graduate of Saint Andrew Apostle School in Silver Spring.

An award-winning Catholic educator, Nori has devoted her career to serving in schools. A multi-linguist (fluent in Italian and Spanish), she taught middle school Language Arts, Social Studies, and Math before returning to her alma mater in 2005.

At Visitation, she was a member of the English Department for over a decade – and was selected as Visitation's New Teacher of the Year in 2008 – before



Nori Ponzio

stepping into the role of Director of Educational Technology in 2016. She spearheaded Visitation's development of a collaborative, mission-aligned vision and

Continued on page 61

Gratitude

We've reached the end of the school year, and what a challenging year it has been! With vaccines available to everyone and various and unpredictable school schedules behind, it's time for a grateful sigh of relief. This is the final issue of Our Parish Times until school starts again in August. A special thank you to all volunteer parish editors who faithfully supply news and photos to OPT for each edition. Enjoy your summer break!



Chuck Short

An appropriate reflection for this edition is **prayerful and sincere gratitude**. First, words of support and condolences for those who have lost loved ones and to those who have and continue to suffer as a result of the Covid pandemic. For many of you, current optimism and relief feel are tempered by social, economic and human losses. I am

Continued on page 24

Ms. Patricia McGann has been giving her full attention to a family situation for the last week. Her column on Catholic family life in Montgomery County will return in the next issue of Our Parish Times.



Patricia McGann

Annulment Information Session

Get the facts about annulments and learn more about the process at this free event hosted by the Office for Family Life and the Archdiocesan Tribunal.

When: Saturday, June 12, 2021 from 10:00am – 11:30am
Where: Online
Register:
<https://adwannulmentsession2021.eventbrite.com>

Dr. Sofia Markovich, J.C.D., Metropolitan Judge and Moderator of the Tribunal Chancery, will answer:

- What is an Annulment?
- What are the grounds to declare a marriage invalid?
- What is the process of determining the nullity of marriage?
- How long does it take? How much does it cost? Who can help?
- Which Tribunal can hear my

Petition?

- When can a future marriage be scheduled?

There will be time afterwards for questions and answers.

For more information, contact the Office of Family Life at 301-853-4546 or visibleesign@adw.org.

Source: Archdiocese of Washington, <https://adw.org/media-events/events/>

An information session on

ANNULMENTS

in the ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

June 12, 2021
 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

SPONSORED BY THE
 Office for Family Life
 and the
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A Poet is Honored

By Ellen Clifford

On Saturday, May 1, ten finalists took to the stage at The Avalon School in Wheaton to share their original poems in the first Joseph Warren McPherson Memorial Poetry Contest. Hosted by Avalon and by Brookewood School, Kensington, in honor of its founder and first Headmaster, the competition drew more than 60 contestants from 20 private and public schools as well as home-schooled students from throughout the metropolitan area in its inaugural outing.

Although Mr. McPherson was particularly known for the more than 3,000 sonnets written over his lifetime, contestant entries were not limited to any fixed form. The theme of the 2021 competition: what has provoked wonder in you? The length: not to exceed 25 lines. The initial submissions were judged by a panel composed of Cherie Walsh, AP English and Poetry teacher at Brookewood, Tom Tobin, AP English teacher at Avalon, and Sally Kindred, an award-winning



Winners of the first Joseph Warren McPherson Contest from left to right: first place, Lara Alarapon; second place, Sofia Ghosh; and third place, Ana Pantoja Alfaro.

poet whose third full-length collection of poems is scheduled for publication this year. The finalist panel who selected the first, second and

third place winners was composed of Mrs. Madlyn McPherson, widow of Joe McPherson and a lifelong

Continued on page 50

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Natural Family Planning Introductory Class

You are invited to a virtual introductory class about Natural Family Planning on July 29, 2021 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm.

Natural Family Planning is a modern, scientifically proven method which seeks to identify the naturally occurring changes a woman's body goes through during the window of fertility in each cycle. Based upon their observations, couples are empowered to act accordingly – to either seek pregnancy or postpone it for the time being. This effective method helps couples to manage their fertility in a way that respects God and each other.

Experts will present the science behind the key biological signs which women can observe to



chart their fertility, how the many natural family planning methods work, and which method might fit for you. This is a wonderful investment that women can make toward better understanding their reproductive health, and it is also very valuable for married couples and couples preparing for marriage.

For more information, call the

Office of Family Life at 301-853-4546 or email visiblesign@adw.org.

Cost is \$10.00/couple

To register, click the following link: <https://nfp101july2021.eventbrite.com>

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Source: Archdiocese of Washington, <https://adw.org/media-events/events/>

Statement of Cardinal Gregory on the Verdict in the Trial of Derek Chauvin

Washington Cardinal Wilton Gregory issued the following statement in response to the conviction of Derek Chauvin in the murder of George Floyd.

"As the Chauvin trial has now concluded and the guilty verdict about the murder of George Floyd is known, we are working through this moment of national anxiety as we accept the jury's decision.

We join our hearts and prayers with those in the Minnesota community. We echo the call of Archbishop Bernard Hebda for peace and non-violence in all of our communities.

As the Gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us and the life example of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. showed us, it is the virtue of charity, non-violence, prayer, and working together that moves us toward reconciliation and true healing from trauma we have experi-

enced. Unified, we build toward sustainable peace for our families, our communities, and our nation.

With this verdict now public, let us renew our commitment to respect one another and remember our shared humanity. We are one human family – of various cultures, races, religions, and backgrounds – all made in God's image.

May we choose to respond with civility and respect for the dignity of all of our brothers and sisters, as we continue the work of rooting out all injustices and systemic racism in our society.

Creator of All, Stay with Us Now and Always."

OPT

Source: Archdiocese of Washington, <https://adw.org/media-events/media-portal/news-updates/>

J&A Council

Love God and neighbor?

By Anthony Bosnick

What's love of God and neighbor got to do with the work of the Justice and Advocacy (J&A) Council of Montgomery County? Considering that we are called to reflect the presence and interest of the Catholic Church in local public affairs, everything.

But let's stop for a moment and ask how often at the local level, and at the state and national levels as well, do we hear concern that public policies reflect and promote love of God and neighbor. We might say "seldom," but if we say "never" that is probably closer to the mark.

Looking back. Looking ahead. Pope Francis reminds us: "Your identification with Christ and his will involves a commitment to build with him that kingdom of love, justice and universal peace. ... You cannot grow in holiness without committing yourself, body and soul, to giving your best to this endeavor" (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, no. 25). (In English, this document is called "On the Call to Holiness in Today's World," promulgated in 2018).

In other words, our lives and efforts must reflect the great commandment to love God and neighbor (see Matthew 36-40). When we reflect on public policy issues, the Church gives us guidance through Catholic social teaching (CST). We will get back to this in a moment.

This past year, the J&A Council has reflected on issues regarding promoting better public school education especially for minority students. We have also heard reports on School Resource Officers in the public schools. Several County Council members and other county officials have joined our meetings to discuss issues as well.

Planning for 2022, the J&A Council will host a forum around the election of County Executive. We are also exploring the possibility to include candidates for County Council. We have done this several times in the past and it has always been very helpful. Already a candidate has announced for Executive. Stay tuned for more on this.

Politics and power, or of love of God and neighbor? Fr. Julián Carrón, the current leader of the Communion and Liberation movement, writes: "If the substance of those who serve this great work that is politics lies only in politics, there is not much to hope for" (*Disarming Beauty*, p. 209).

Referring to Pope Francis' words, Carrón notes that Jesus "is the only one who fully answers the expectations of the human heart, to the point of making a pope free enough to resign for the good of his people" (p. 209). The Church calls us to bring the hope and vision of Christ into the public arena through Catholic social teaching.

Four helpful and easy to remember foundational points of CST include the following: • The Dignity of the

Human Person. At the core of CST is the understanding that "human life is sacred." And so, the Church stresses that "The dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society." • Subsidiarity. The Church teaches that "it is impossible to promote the dignity of the person without showing concern for the family, groups, associations" in which people gather or are organized (*Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church*, 185). Subsidiarity teaches us that "larger institutions in society should not overwhelm or interfere with smaller or local institutions. ..."

• The Common Good. The common good reflects "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily" (*Compendium*, 164). The common good teaches us that we are in this together and we need to consider and promote what is best for all. • Solidarity. A good summation of this principle is this: "Solidarity highlights in a particular way the intrinsic social nature of the human person, the equality of all in dignity and rights and the common path of individuals and people towards an ever more committed unity" (*Compendium*, 192-193).

Establishing good public policy is a noble calling. As we consider public policy options, we need to think about these options in terms of CST. Love of God and neighbor and building the kingdom of God require a Christian perspective. A good place to start is with the USCCB document "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship." It is relatively short at 43 pages of text. Look on the web for "Forming Consciences USCCB". The original document and many resources explaining it are available online (www.usccb.org/resources/forming-consciences-faithful-citizenship-pdf).

Join us for the next meetings of the J&A Council on Wednesday, May 26 and June 23 from 7:00 pm to 8:30 by Zoom. Contact Mary Bennett (mmcben58@gmail.com) or Larry Couch (lawrencecouch1@gmail.com) for more information and the link.

Anthony Bosnick is director of social ministry and adult faith formation at St. Francis of Assisi parish, Derwood.

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Mass Schedule

**Saturday
July 31
4:00 pm**

Saturday, July 31

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Congratulations to the Class of 2021

Seton's Class of 2021 has earned over 400 college acceptances and has been offered almost \$16 million in college scholarships. We offer our heartfelt congratulations and may God continue to bless them as they graduate and move on to college and university endeavors!

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Hawa Barrie	Angeliki Efantis	Amanda Johnson	Jaylin Northern	Raquel Stevenson
Abigail Beall	Barbara Martinez-Escolero	Jessica Johnson	Adena Norwood	Zora LeMaile-Stovall
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Khalilah Blackmon	Promise Fagbuyi	Annika Jones	Chiamaka Odidika	Hannah Taylor
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Nadiya Brown	Grace Golatt	Milana Lamar	Trystan Roberts	Taylor Wallace
Mattia Bryant	Abigail Gonzalez	Malaysia Latimer	Taylor Robinson	Ellee Ward
Jazmyn Gaines-Burns	Luisangely Navas Gonzalez	Makiah Lee	Elizabeth Rogers	Jada Washington
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Erin Caldwell	Sydnee Green	Beatrix Lippincott	Evony Salmeron	Tyne Watts
Kaitlyn Campos	Sydney Greene	Ana Lozano	Eysa Santiago	Brielle Wheeler
Pearl Cater	Jasmine Grooms	Cierra Maddox	Miriam Santiago	Danae Williams
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Isabela Chabla	Daia Hansford	Savanna Marshall	Abby Sellan	Promise Woods
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Alexis Christian	Kayla Hester	Christa Mathieu	Spencer Settle	Emma Young
MaryClare Cooney	Margaret Hillman	Emily McGraw	Emily Short	Christina Zerega
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*Your story is written
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We will always
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Forever a Viking



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Faith

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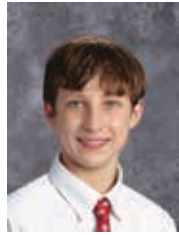
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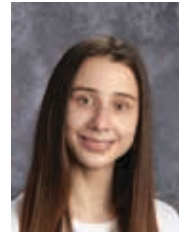
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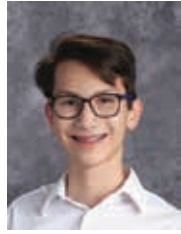
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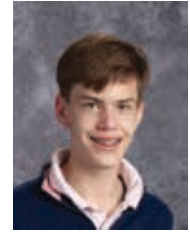


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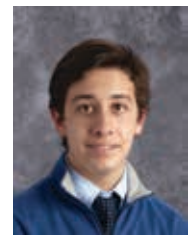
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St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, Foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart, 1800

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Living out the Virtues

Each month Holy Redeemer learns about and practices a particular virtue and studies about a saint who practiced that virtue in his or her life. The virtue for the month of March was Respect – recognizing the dignity of all people. Saint Jeanne Jugan was the Saint for Kindergarten.

Because St. Jeanne Jugan was the foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor, who care for the elderly who have no other resources, Kindergarten asked all the classes to bring in toiletries to donate to the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Over the Easter holidays, Middle School Religion teacher Mrs. Mary Harper, her son Kevin, and Kindergarten teacher Mrs. Pamela Hurley, with her grandchildren, Kindergartner Gabe Zullo, and second-grader JP Zullo, delivered the donated items to the Sister's St. Joseph's Villa across the street from Catholic University in Northwest Washington.

OPT



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

Eighth-Grade Retreat

Faith, Bonding, and Sunshine

By Deb Roby

This year, being an eighth grader at Holy Redeemer School has looked quite different than other school years. Many traditions that the eighth graders have enjoyed in previous years have had to be cancelled or adapted. One of the most anticipated eighth-grade activities has always been the two day fall retreat which takes place at the Claggett Center in Adamstown, Maryland. Although the fall retreat could not happen this year, the

eighth grade had the opportunity to participate in a spring retreat on Friday, April 23. Matt Avery, who leads the eighth-grade retreat each fall, graciously offered to provide an eighth-grade spring retreat at Holy Redeemer School.

Although the weather was supposed to be on the cooler side, God blessed the retreat with sunny skies and temps in the low 60s. During the retreat, Mr. Avery spoke of the bad things that can happen to everyone and how Christians learn to face these trials faithfully. He

also shared with the eighth graders how they can forgive others and themselves, as God had done for them. Students had time for reflection through various activities plus adoration and confession. The retreat also included plenty of bonding time for the students through various activities including a team obstacle course and an Emmaus Walk, which was taken with another student. The celebration of Mass was the perfect ending to this year's eighth-grade retreat.

OPT



After the procession following Mass, Kindergarten-eighth grade surrounded our statue of Mary as Father Ebuka proceeded with the May Crowning ceremony and blessing.

Through Mary to Jesus

By Ann Enkiri

At Holy Redeemer School, May has always marked a special time to honor Mary, Our Heavenly Mother. This year, more than ever, the Holy Redeemer School community sought to honor Mary in a meaningful and



memorable way: outdoors, socially-distanced, in classroom groups – and together! As one kindergarten student explained it, “We want to honor Mary for giving life to Jesus.”

On Friday, May 8, the sacramental classes of second and eighth graders began the procession after attending Mass. Each class from K-7, was waiting outdoors to join the procession which began at Mary's shrine, set against a back-



Above: Middle School altar servers served the procession by carrying the canopy, candles, and incense.

At left: Every class contributed flowers to the beautiful floral offerings to Mary for Holy Redeemer's celebration of the May Crowning.

drop of trees in the school's semicircular driveway. Students Joe Fisher, Sean Garayta, Will Harper, and Xavier Rienzo, served as canopy-bearers for Father Ebuka carrying the Blessed Sacrament. Kyle Bretting, Billy Mahoney, Dylan Meringolo, Matthew Morin and Rebecca Ryan participated as altar servers, candle-bearer, and thurifer (incense-carrier).

The solemnity of this procession with the Blessed Sacrament, inspired a profound reverence among all of the students. Each class viewed the procession in prog-

ress and then joined in, walking calmly and silently. Many students carried flowers to place before the Mary statue. The preschool three and four-year olds did not join the procession but watched from outside. Father Ebuka paused to bless these youngest HR Cardinals. “The quiet was really amazing,” a preschool teacher shared.

After walking around the entire school building, the procession ended back at Mary's shrine. The driveway and sidewalk leading to

Continued on page 17

**Shea Elizabeth Breslin**

Georgetown Visitation Preparatory High School
Just do it.
– Nike

**Ella Burnside**

St. John's College High School
The only thing that ever sat its way to success was a hen.
– Sarah Brown

**Connor Jon Buss**

Our Lady of Good Counsel
Today I will do what others won't, so tomorrow I will do what others can't.
– Jerry Rice

**David Richard Clarke**

St. John's College High School
If life were predictable, it would cease to be life, and be without flavor.
– Eleanor Roosevelt

**Caroline Grace Crowley**

Connelly School of the Holy Child
You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.
– Dr. Seuss

**Claire Annae Daignault**

Bethesda-Chevy Chase
Believe you can and you're halfway there.
– Theodore Roosevelt

**Eliza Pratt D'Albora**

Academy of the Holy Cross
May the rest of our lives be the best of our lives.
– Tanya, Mama Mia! Here We Go Again

**Shane Claudia David**

Bishop O'Connell
Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.
– T.S. Eliot

**Kingsley James Deerin**

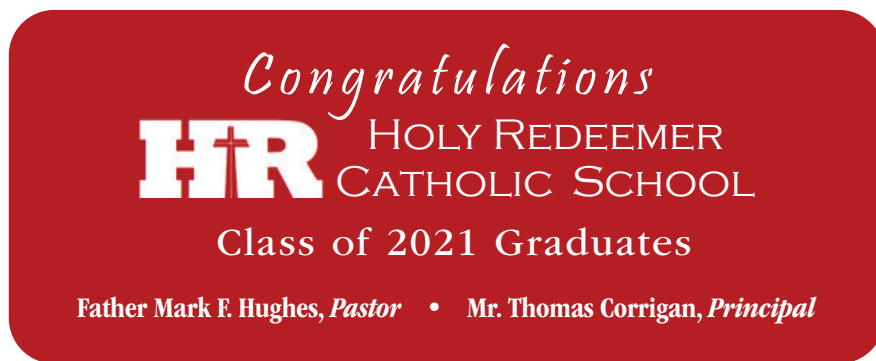
Bethesda-Chevy Chase
I am ready to face any challenges that might be foolish enough to face me.
– Dwight Schrute, The Office

**Andrew John Friedrich IV**

St. John's College
Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence.
– Vince Lombardi

**Reese Anne Garayta**

Connelly School of the Holy Child
Don't analyze everything. Just do it.
– Alex Karev

**Mary Frances Gormly**

Georgetown Visitation Preparatory
Today is where your book begins. The rest is still unwritten.
– Natasha Bedingfield

**Cecilia Grace Graham**

St. John's College
For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.
– Jeremiah 29:11

**Christopher Paul Heyl**

St. John's College High School
Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.
– Winston Churchill

**Morgan Lynn Hoffeditz**

St. John's College High School
Catch on fire with enthusiasm and people will come for miles to watch you burn.
– John Wesley

**Kieron Kane**

Richard Montgomery High School
Be the change you wish to see in the world.
– Mahatma Gandhi

**Grace Haley Lombardo**

St. John's College High School
Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.
– Ruth Bader Ginsburg

**Hailey Nicole Lucas**

St. John's College High School
Sometimes you never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.
– Dr. Seuss

**Piper Chandler Mach**

St. John's College High School
You can't just sit there and wait for life to come to you, you have to go and get it.
– Damon Salvatore

**Kyle David Magnino**

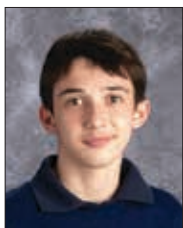
St. John's College High School
I wish there was a way to know you're in the good old days before you've actually left them.
– Andy Bernard, The Office

**William Francis Mahoney**

Georgetown Preparatory School
If you come to a fork in the road, take it.
– Yogi Berra

**Christian Charles Marmor**

Gonzaga College High School
I never lost a game; I just ran out of time.
– Michael Jordan

**Sean Patrick May**

Gonzaga College High School
Don't believe everything you hear. Real eyes. Realize. Real lies.
– Tupac Shakur

**Mary Margaret McCarthy**

Georgetown Visitation Preparatory
Life is short, the world is wide. I want to make some memories.
– Donna Sheridan, Mama Mia! Here We Go Again

**Dylan Thomas Meringolo**

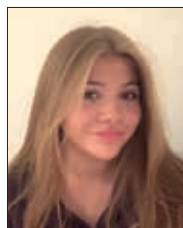
St. John's College High School
Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.
– Winston Churchill

**Maeve Catherine Mood**

St. John's College High School
A person's a person no matter how small.
– Dr. Seuss

**Meghan Lynn Morin**

St. John's College High School
Sometimes you never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.
– Dr. Seuss

**Alejandra Mendoza Neal**

St. John's College High School
Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today.
– Benjamin Franklin

**Anamaria Grace Palacios**

St. John's College High School
The future is always blank. Only your willpower can leave foot-steps there.
– Satoru Fujinuma, Erased

**Abigail Grace Rufe**

Bethesda-Chevy Chase
You must always have faith in people, and, most importantly you must have faith in yourself.
– Elle Woods, Legally Blonde

**Rebekah Fay Ryan**

St. John's College High School
The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good people do nothing.
– Majestia, Miraculous Tales of Ladybug and Chat Noir

**Adelaide France Sanders**

Academy of the Holy Cross
Just be yourself, there is no one better.
– Taylor Swift

**Henry Lothar Schaefer**

Undecided
Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.
– Theodore Roosevelt

**Cauan Shaw**

Undecided
Sometimes your highlighter is out of ink.
– Cauan

**Alyssa Faith Skinner**

Bethesda-Chevy Chase
The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.
– Mark Twain

**Aki Marie Takata**

Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart
You can't live for the past and hide from the future.
– Erin Hunter

**Raey Theodros**

St. John's College High School
No one can change a person, but someone can be a reason for that person to change.
– Snnaghh

**Sawyer Ryan Trigiani**

St. John's College High School
Smell the roses, blow out the candles.
– Murphy

**Colleen Mary Whitty**

St. John's College High School
You must do the thing you think you cannot do.
– Eleanor Roosevelt

**Kathryn Worch**

Academy of the Holy Cross
How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so sweet.
– Winnie the Pooh



CONNELLY SCHOOL OF THE
HOLY CHILD



Congratulations!



**CLASS
OF 2021**

ALL FEMALE. GRADES 6-12. CATHOLIC
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**CONGRATULATIONS,
GEORGETOWN PREP CLASS OF 2021!**

Lights, Cameras, Roar!

By Nancy Hopkins

Join Saint Peter's School is celebrating its 20th annual seventh and eighth-grade spring drama production, *The Lion King Jr.* This long-standing tradition began in the 1999-2000 school year and led to Saint Peter's School's first Blue Ribbon School Award in 2012 on the strength of its drama, visual arts, and music arts program. Sadly, the 2020 production, *Frozen Jr.*, was cancelled due to COVID-19.

The faculty drama team – director, Mrs. Phyllis Bottegai, Music Director, Mr. Peter Nguyen, Mrs. Virginia Riley, and Ms. Lauren DeZinno – could not watch another school year go by without a production. They decided to turn the production into a “movie” so that the show could go on in adherence with health and safety guidelines.



Students first recorded their vocals in a studio setting.

“*The Lion King* was a natural choice,” explained Mrs. Phyllis Bottegai. “The show lends itself to wearing creative masks and filming outdoors. Mr. Nguyen’s music room has been transformed into a spacious production studio for maintaining social distance.”

The cast is smaller than years past, seventeen compared to the typical seventy, and this year’s stage crew is also smaller, nine in total. The students will be filming, editing, and managing sound, lights, costumes, and makeup in new ways. Actors will perform without audience feedback as they record their music in-studio, and film movements in costume later.

Instead of working behind the stage, the crew will flex new managerial and technical skills as they work behind the camera and sound board. Our Lady of Good Counsel High School continues to offer strong support, loaning state of the art lighting and technical expertise.

“In this extraordinary time, we have all been given the opportunity to stretch our creative minds and find solutions rather than excuses. Though I’ve never filmed or created a “movie” before, many of the students at Saint Peter’s have waited so long to finally be a part of the Drama program. If learning the art of film making is what it takes, then that is what we will



The final phase included filming their movements outdoors in costume.

do,” said Mr. Peter Nguyen, Saint Peter’s School Musical Director. A school-wide Premiere Watch

Party is planned once the production is finished.

OPT

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2900 Sandy Spring Road
Olney, MD

Rev. Thomas Kalita,
Pastor
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stpetersolney.org

St. Peter's School
Mrs. Kristen Cocozzella
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Eighth Grade Rises to the Challenge

By Nancy Hopkins

With a leap of faith, giant swing, rock wall, and various strategy games, Saint Peter's Class of 2021 challenged their confidence, trust, and teamwork in the annual eighth-grade “Challenge” field trip. Home room teachers, Mrs. Lynn Farrell and Mrs. Helene Redmond, were eager for the tradition and team building experience to go forward, while adhering to COVID-19 guidelines, as the class prepares for high school. The challenge trip was arranged by Go-Adventures and took place at High Point Farm in Germantown. The class was divided into three groups, each accompanied by faculty and venue staff as they set off for a series of activities.

In the “leap of faith,” students climbed to dizzying heights, then jumped from the top of a telephone pole to grab a trapeze before swinging back down to earth. To test their



Above at left: The Eighth Grade Challenge trip is a beloved school tradition where students participate in various team-building activities.



faith in one another, students were blindfolded before falling backwards into the arms of their friends. Team building activities included working together to move suspended balls into a bucket, solving a route to escape an island, and rescuing a trapped animal. “We were able to solve every challenge with teamwork,” said student Ally DeLisi.

“It was a great opportunity to connect with my classmates,” added student Molly McNamara. Though the temperatures reached nearly 90 degrees, plenty of sunscreen, bug spray, and water made the day a welcome alternative to the classroom.

More St. Peter News on Page 56



Sebastian O.
Aguayo



Jace
Alexander



Reilly
Keating
Baratian



Aden
Barcelo



Mitchel
Patrick
Basso-Luca



Christian
Keanu
Blassingame



Matthew
Bowers



Lucy
Burnford



Mikael
Bustamante



Joelle
Marie T.
Bustamante



Ryan M.
Bykowski



Michael
Byrdy



Soledad
Cabigas



Fernando
Ccance



Yulia
Chang



Thomas
Checkan



Gianluca
Conte



Jonathan
Tan Davis

ST. PETER'S SCHOOL
Congratulates the Class of 2021
God bless you in high school



Annabelle
Grace
Davis



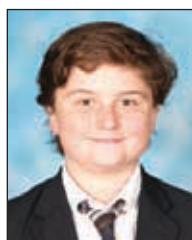
Natalie
Adela
De La Oliva



Allyson
DeLisi



Miles
Oliver Dinh



Joseph
Robert
Donodeo



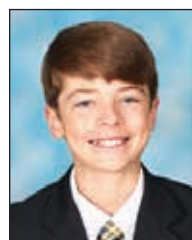
David
Alexander
Dowdell



Horeb
Fikremariam



Julia
Girard



Brady M.
Giron



Audrey
Grace
Hopkins



Darian
Judd



Azeem
Karzai



Emerson
Elizabeth
Kasley



Joseph
Patrick
Keefe Jr.



Jackson
Robert
Maher



Francis E.
McDonnell



Molly
Kathryn
McNamara



Shane
Edward
Meyer



Jessica
Thanh
Nguyen



Kennedy
Mary
O'Keefe



Isabelle
Faith
Ramirez



Franklin
Ernesto
Ramirez



Jacob G.
Roberts



Christian
Rodriguez



Kelly
Sanchez-
Herrera



Mikayla
Dawosu
Sando



Sanjay
Sarai



Meghan
Scanlon



Sebastian
Alejandro
Secaira-



Leighton
Shortley



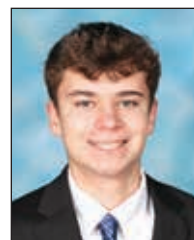
Ethan James
Smith



Sandyn Jude
Solozano



Randall J.
Washington, Jr.



Anthony
Wimsatt-
Ramey

DeChantal School Celebrates Mary in the Month of May

St. Jane DeChantal School's annual May crowning is always a beautiful way to honor our heavenly mother

By Catherine Tomsbeck

The Month of Mary, the Month of May is a time the Students at St. Jane de Chantal School honor the Blessed Virgin daily. Students bring in flowers for their classroom Mary Statue, Kindergarten Students make and pray the rosary and May Crowning for the Eighth and Second Grade Students is a very special recognition of Mary's love for all children. On Saturday, May 8, the Mary Garden at St. Jane de Chantal was a popular place for Second Grade First Communicants to reflect on the reception of their third Sacraments, the Eucharist.

This year, the First Communion Mass and May Crowning were live-streamed and available to all family members. Links to these events are available on the St. Jane de Chantal Parish website home page: stjanedechantal.org.

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DeChantal students crowned the Blessed Mother statue in the church's Mary Garden during a May crowning ceremony.

Daughters of the American Revolution Honor St. Jane DeChantal Students

DeChantal School students participate in DAR's annual essay contest with great success

Two St. Jane de Chantal School students, brothers Luke and Matthew Matelis, are winners in the American History Essay Contest sponsored by the Goshen Mills Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. Luke is the Chapter's eighth-grade winner, and Matthew is the seventh-grade winner. The students read their essays during the Chapter's February ZOOM meeting as their parents, John and Jennifer Matelis of Potomac, and grandparents Joe and Bernie Matelis and Larry and Carol Blume, listened in.

The DAR sponsors the annual essay contest nationwide, and it is open to students in grades five through eight. It is designed to encourage the knowledge and appreciation of American history among our country's youth. This year's assigned topic was the Boston Massacre. On the 250th anniversary of that confrontation, students were challenged to imagine they were living in Boston and after witnessing the events of March 5, describe their family's discussion about the Boston Massacre and what role it played in organizing the colonists against the British King and Parliament. Matthew's essay took the form of a journal kept by the son of a loyalist to the King, and recorded his evolving views, slowly becoming a sup-



Essay Winners Luke Matelis on the left (eighth-grade winner) and Matthew Matelis (seventh-grade winner) show their award certificates

porter of the colonists' cause. Luke wrote from the point of view of a journalist reporting on the rising tensions between the British and the colonists, eventually leading to the Boston Massacre.

After they read their essays,

the Chapter's American History Chairman, Karma Beal, reported that the boys would each receive a certificate, a bronze medal, and a \$50 gift card to Barnes and Noble. Then, she announced the great news that both students are Maryland State DAR winners in the state-wide contest. Their essays will now be judged along with entries by other 7th and 8th grade winners from the mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia. Luke and Matthew will be honored at a May 15 Awards Luncheon to be held during the Maryland State DAR's Annual Conference.

St. Jane de Chantal School has a long record of winners in the DAR American History Essay Contest sponsored by the Goshen Mills Chapter. For the first time last year, St. Jane de Chantal students won national recognition by the DAR. While a seventh grader, Luke was the third-place winner nationwide, and then eighth-grader Caitlin Brown was the second-place winner nationwide – both remarkable achievements!

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Pastor
301-530-1550

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

Michelle D'Amour Flynn
OPT Editors

ST. JANE DE CHANTAL SCHOOL



Alexia Aguilar-Jimenez
Walter Johnson
You gotta seize the opportunity.
~Mark Lee



Matthew Alcorn
St. John's
Family is not an important thing; it is everything.
~Michael J. Fox



Connie Bartoli
Pinero Visitation
The most important thing in life is to stop saying 'I wish' and start saying 'I will.'
~Charles Dickens



Daphne Beuzelin
St. John's
If you can't make it good, at least make it look good.
~Bill Gates



Anderson Bishop
Gonzaga
Success is not final; failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts.
~Winston Churchill



Johnny Broome
Gonzaga
He who has the Spirit in his heart and the Scripture in his hands has all he needs.
~Alexander MacLaren



Clare Daniels
Visitation
I'm intimidated by the fear of being average.
~Taylor Swift



Jeanne de Pascao
Walt Whitman
It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving.
~Mother Teresa



Sydney Debnam
Good Counsel
There is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.
~Amanda Gorman



Chase Donahue
Georgetown Prep
Life is beautiful. It's about giving. It's about family.
~Walt Disney



JJ Edwards
Gaithersburg HS
I like criticism. It makes you strong.
~Lebron James



Ezra Etherly
Good Counsel
You only live once, but if you do it right, then once is enough.
~Mae West



Grace Gaenzler
Visitation
Nothing is given; everything is earned.
~Lebron James



Ryan Gleeson
St. John's
When life gives you money, instantly blow it on useless things.
~Me



Quinn Gozycki
Georgetown Prep
It is not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get back up.
~Vince Lombardi



Jordan Hassan
Good Counsel
You do not find the happy life. You make it.
~Camilla Eyring Kimball



Francis Hoag
Good Counsel
Music - that's been my education. There's not a day that goes by that I take it for granted.
~Billie Joe Armstrong



Congratulations to the Class of 2021



Andrew Hoffman
Gonzaga
I feel that I'm very blessed. But with great blessings come great responsibility.
~Kanye West



Landon Jana
Georgetown Prep
I love when people doubt me. It makes me work harder to prove them wrong.
~Derek Jeter



Aria Jefferson
Visitation
Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.
~Dr. Seuss



Patrick Kelley
Georgetown Prep
A trophy carries dust. Memories last forever.
~Mary Lou Retton



Caroline Kirvan
Visitation
Be the change you want to see in the world.
~Mahatma Gandhi



Tessa Kuta
St. John's
Be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud.
~Maya Angelou



Heath Long
St. John's
For those who love, nothing is too difficult, especially when it is done for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.
~Saint Ignatius



Teagan Long
Holy Cross
All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle.
~St. Francis of Assisi



Dani Maier
Undecided
Your limit is someone else's start.
~Steve Maraboli



Andrew Marcey
St. John's
Strong people stand up for themselves, but stronger people stand up for others.
~Chris Gardner



Luke Matelis
Gonzaga
The greatest glory in living lies not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall.
~Nelson Mandela



Austin Medina
St. John's
For every dark night, there's a brighter day.
~Tupac Shakur



Lily Owens
Holy Cross
More gratitude. Less attitude.
~My mom



Allie Rhea
Visitation
Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard.
~Herb Brooks



Mike Russell
Good Counsel
What I do is temporary, but what I leave behind is forever.
~Markiplier



Heather Ryan
Visitation
Just be yourself; there is no one better.
~Taylor Swift



Nick Schnappauf
Landon
Progress is man's ability to complicate simplicity.
~Thor Heyerdahl



Dylan Schoen
Walter Johnson
Be the change you want to see in the world.
~Mahatma Gandhi



Tommy Shaffer
St. John's
Would I rather be feared or loved? Easy. Both. I want people to be afraid of how much they love me.
~Michael Scott



Bertille Souberbielle
St. John's
The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.
~Dolly Parton



Luke Varanelli
St. John's
If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live.
~Martin Luther King, Jr.



Patrick Veith
Georgetown Prep
No one outside ourselves can rule us inwardly. When we know this we become free.
~Gautama Buddha



Fefe Verella
Undecided
There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure.
~Paulo Coelho



Ellie Wright
Stone Ridge
Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough.
~Oprah Winfrey



Mickey Wubneh
Good Counsel
You have one life; live it to your expectations.
~Mickey Wubneh

St. Stephen's Food Pantry at the Shrine of St. Jude and Pet Food Distribution

St. Stephen's Food Pantry at the Shrine of St. Jude has been operating since the beginning of May 2020 and continues to serve, on average, 300 families per week. Donations of non-perishable items can be left on the table in the breezeway on Saturdays and Sundays or after 3:30 p.m. on school days. These include boxes of cereal, canned items (tuna, chicken, soups, vegetables, tomatoes, and fruit), boxes of pasta, sauce in plastic jars & macaroni and cheese. In addition, baby diapers (sizes 3-6) and wipes are always needed. Monetary donations can be given through "Faith Direct". You can also click the Donate button on the church webpage at www.shrine-stjude.org (search for St. Stephen's Pantry) where you can make a one-time gift. We will also accept cash and check donations as well as gift cards

to grocery stores. Follow us at www.facebook.com/StStephenfoodpantry.

- Food distribution is on Saturdays from 9–11 a.m.
- Pantry is located at 12701 Veirs Mill Road, Rockville

For furry family members: The Montgomery County Partners for Animal Well-being (MCPAW.org) and the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center (MCASAC) have teamed up to provide county pet owners with pet food distributed Saturday mornings from 8:45 to 11:00 a.m. adjacent to the St. Stephen Food Pantry distribution (in the back parking lot). Pet food or gift cards can also be donated at that time or by calling 240-462-5000 or 301-437-6189. Monetary donations are accepted online at MCPAW.org and are tax-deductible.

OPT

Catch Our Spirit at SJRCS

St. Jude Regional Catholic School still has openings for enrollment; however, spaces are filling up quickly. Applications for Fall enrollment are being accepted on a first-come basis for the 3-year-old Pre-K through seventh grade (limited spaces available).

For information on the curriculum, admissions policies, and registration, contact Ellen Donnelly in the SJRCS office at 301-946-7888 – or register your student online at www.StJudeRockville.org.

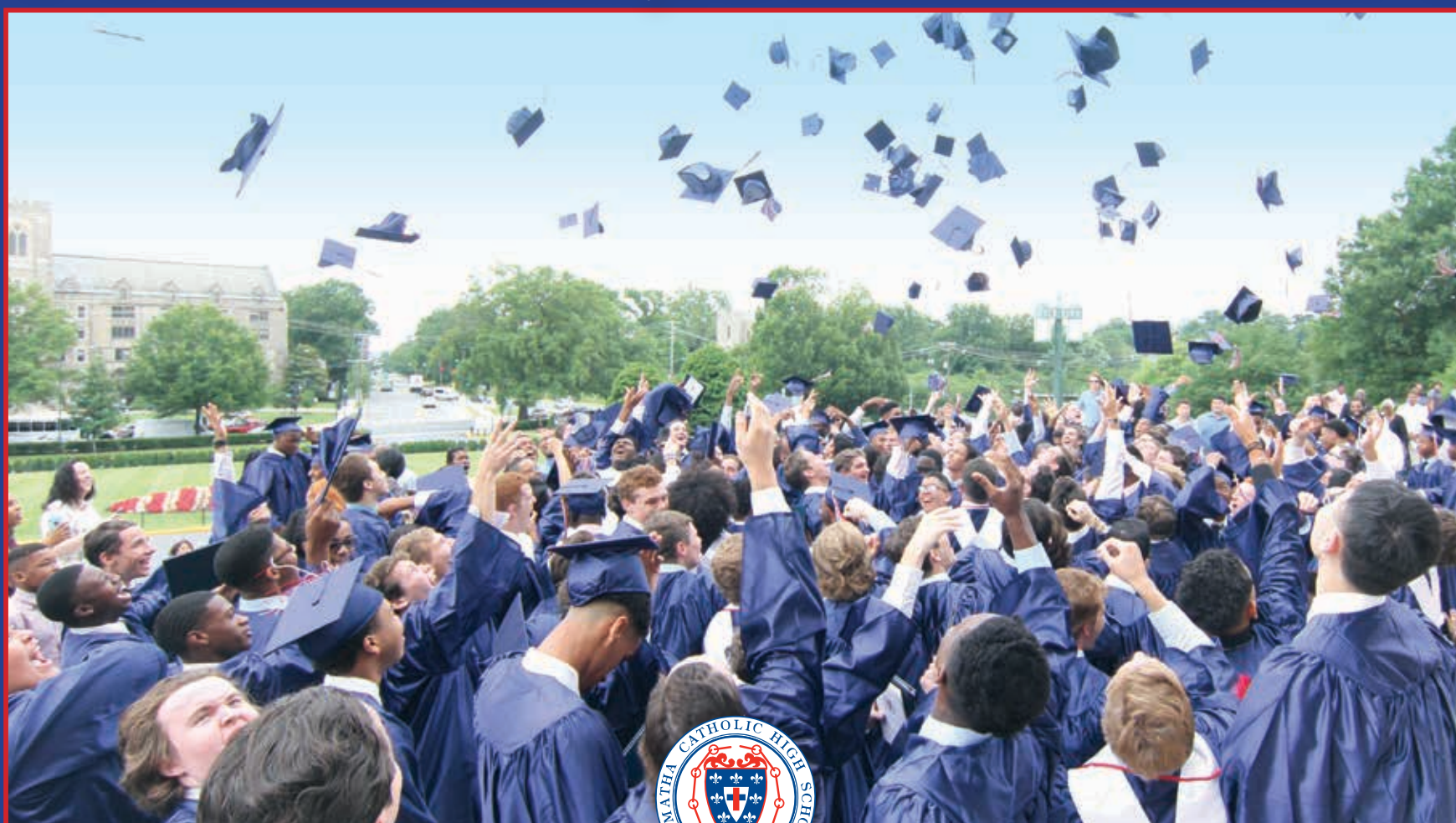
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Welcome to the Lord's Table!



Congratulations to the 37 young people who received their First Communion on Saturday, May 1, at the 10 a.m. Mass (pictured on left with Rev. Paul D. Lee, STD, Pastor, and Fr. Robert Kosty, Senior Priest) and the 30 young people who received the Body of Christ for the first time at the 12:30 p.m. Mass (pictured on right with Fr. Jorge Ubau, Parochial Vicar) at the Shrine of St. Jude. Additionally, on May 9, 12 students received their First Communion at the 10:30 a.m. Parish Mass and seven received at the 5 p.m. Spanish Mass. The school children from St. Jude Regional Catholic School will have their joyous day on May 13, and the last Faith Formation group will receive on Pentecost at the 5 p.m. Spanish Mass. Welcome, all, to the Lord's Table! Photos by Tom Roach

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Confirmed in the Holy Spirit!

Sixty-six Faith Formation students in grades eight through twelve (pictured above) were confirmed by the Most Reverend Mario E. Dorsonville on March 19, 2021. While everyone had to observe COVID-19 protocols, it was a solemn and prayerful event. Wishing the Confirmandi a life full of faith and love, and may you be blessed in all that you do.

OPT

Shrine of St. Jude Blood Drive Collects 34 Units

Grand Total of 552 Units in Past Four Years

Thank you to everyone who was able to donate blood at the Saturday, March 27, blood drive in Madigan Hall at the Shrine of St. Jude. Thirty-four units of blood were collected for patients in the Metro area. Through the generosity of donors – including many parishioners – the total units collected from St. Jude Blood Drives in the past four years has reached 552 units. Thank you to everyone that participated and helped make this possible!

The next American Red Cross Blood Drive at the Shrine of St. Jude (Madigan Hall) is Tuesday, June 29, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please register your life-saving donation online at www.redcross-blood.org and enter Sponsor ID: SJC Rockville. Eligibility concerns, please call the Red Cross at 1-866-236-3276. For more details on the drive, please contact one of the following: Frank.Benedetti@gmail.com or David.Hull@redcross.org.

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Rockville, MD

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

St. Jude Regional
Catholic School
Mr. Glenn Benjamin, Principal
301-946-7888

Maureen Martin,
OPT Editor
MaureenCMartin@verizon.net

More Shrine of St. Jude
News on Page 63

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATES OF 2021!



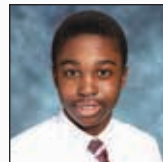
We are . . . St. Jude!



Principal: Dr. Glenn J. Benjamin
Pastor: Rev. Paul D. Lee



Fatima Anahui
The Academy of the Holy Cross



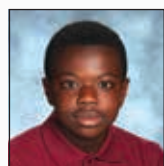
Gavin Bragg
DeMatha Catholic High School



Alexis Braswell
The Academy of the Holy Cross



Elizabeth Breece
The Academy of the Holy Cross



Jonathan Etti
St. John's College High School



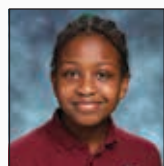
Santiago Flores
The Heights



Isabelle Frisby
Churchill High School



Caleb Garcia
St. Vincent Pallotti High School



Sally Gitau
The Academy of the Holy Cross



Abraham Kery
Our Lady of Good Counsel High School



Yonatan Negatu
Wheaton High School



Clare Rowedder
The Academy of the Holy Cross



Jackson Santoro
Northwood High School



Santiago Tellez-Leon
Wheaton High School



Eden Tewodros
Our Lady of Good Counsel High School



John Young
The Heights

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You may be familiar with 529 savings plans that offer federal and state tax incentives for college tuition, but did you know that Maryland 529 plans also can be used to pay up to \$10,000 annually in Catholic school tuition? And that Maryland will match up to \$500 in contributions to a 529 plan through the State Contribution Program?

The Maryland Senator Edward J. Kasemeyer College Investment Plan (MCIP), one of the state's 529 investment plans, can be used both for college tuition and for K-12 educational expenses, including tuition. In addition to federal tax benefits, Maryland taxpayers who contribute to an MCIP may be able to receive up to \$2,500 in deductions off of their state adjusted gross income per beneficiary (so up to

MARYLAND 529 PLANS

Tax incentives for Catholic school tuition



\$5,000 if you set up 529 plans for two children, etc.).

Learn more about the 529 program at the Maryland 529 website and download and share the flyer at: <https://maryland529.com/K-12>

Grandparents, godparents, friends, and family can contribute

to your child's 529 and get tax benefits. Contributions can be as low as \$25.

Get a state \$500 contribution match through May 31. The State of Maryland matches up to \$500 through the 529 Match Program. Account holders must apply annu-

ally to receive the match and the beneficiary must be a Maryland resident. The account holder's Maryland taxable income cannot exceed \$112,500 as an individual or \$175,000 as a married couple filing jointly (based on the previous taxable year). **The deadline to apply**

for this year's State Contribution Program is May 31, 2021.

Nothing herein constitutes tax advice. You should consult a tax professional for more information.

Source: Maryland Catholic Conference

529 funds can be used for K-12 tuition

Your Maryland 529 plan is more flexible than ever. You can now use the money saved in your Maryland Senator Edward J. Kasemeyer College Investment Plan (MCIP) for tuition expenses of up to \$10,000 each year at private, public, and religious K-12 schools—giving you more options for your child's future.

OPT

MARY

Con't from page 6

the Mary altar, had been beautifully decorated with colorful chalk drawings called *infiorata* by students. The highlight for so many of the children was the crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth. Eighth-grader Colleen Whitty was chosen to crown Mary. Colleen shared the "burst of excitement" she felt on learning that she would crown Mary. Lasting memories were made as so many senses were involved in this prayerful experience. The sounds of beautiful music played outdoors, the sight of so many flowers placed on the altar, the scent of incense and the sight of it rising "like blessed smoke", as a second-grader described it.

Father Ebuka offered all assembled a beautiful Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Piously, the students knelt to pray the Litany of Loreto. How beautiful to say Mary's many beautiful names aloud and together, in prayer. Overwhelmingly, participants shared the experience as calm and peaceful. For one First Communicant, it "felt like the holiest day of the year!"

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

OPT

Biography of the Parents of "The Little Flower"

Ignatius Press' new Vision Series book, *Louis and Zélie: The Holy Parents of Saint Thérèse*, by St. Jane parishioner Gina Marie Tennant, brings their story to life for young people. Reviewer Cease Pappas of St. Peter's Parish in Olney: "It is a beautiful, touching story of family life lived with Christ as the center." To order, visit: www.ignatius.com/Louis-and-Zélie-P3783.aspx



OPT



Congratulations CLASS of 2021

David Gottlieb Bajwa
Joseph Christopher Basinger
Louis Frederick Basinger
James Alvin Bell III
Howard Otha Bell IV
Christopher Frederick Bellamah
Michael James Cahill III
James Nathan Canady
Paul Gregory Clement
Rory Michael Croarkin
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Bradley Ralph Diller
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Michael Anthony Gutowski
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Rowan Michael Francis Hanby
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Adam David Valentin Koffler
Alexander Christian Kreins
Lucas Benjamin Leder
Pablo Eduardo Mazariegos
Thomas James McGiffin
Michael James Melnyk
William Wright Mitchell
Nicholas Lee Monahan
John Tarcisius Nava
Thomas Chase O'Donnell
Nicholas James O'Neil
Gregory Samuel Pakaluk
Eduardo Andres Paz
William Paul Pecknold
James Morris Pelletier
Stephen Nicholas Perencevich

Grant Mardin Polla
Ian Jacob Riekhof
David Sadek
Charles Alfred Santangelo
Grady William Smart
Robert Edward Spence
Mark Leo Stachura
Matthew Frederick Stachura
Alexander Stuart Terry-Emanuel
Benjamin Owen Thomas
James Joseph Torres
Justus Kolbe Ullman
Michael Christopher Wall
Samuel Henry Wallace
Michael MacDara Walsh
Michael Joseph Watson
William Tracy White
Dominic Paul Yantiss
George William Hollinger Yoder

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

The following list is representative of the wide variety of colleges and universities where Heights students have been accepted over the past three years:

Ave Maria University ■ Baylor University ■ Boston College ■ Boston Conservatory at Berklee ■ Bowdoin College ■ Bucknell University ■ University of California at Berkeley ■ University of California, Los Angeles ■ Carnegie Mellon University (Carnegie Institute of Technology) ■ Case Western Reserve University ■ Catholic University of America ■ College of Charleston ■ University of Chicago ■ Christendom College ■ The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina ■ Clemson University ■ Claremont McKenna College ■ Colby College ■ Colgate University ■ Columbia University ■ Cornell University ■ University of Dallas ■ Dartmouth College ■ Davidson College ■ Denison University ■ Dickinson College ■ Duke University ■ Emory University ■ Fordham University ■ George Mason University ■ The George Washington University ■ Georgetown University ■ Georgia Institute of Technology ■ Gettysburg College ■ Harvard University ■ Hillsdale College ■ University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign ■ Indiana University ■ James Madison University ■ Johns Hopkins University ■ The Juilliard School ■ Loyola University Maryland ■ Marymount University ■ University of Mary Washington ■ University of Maryland, College Park ■ Miami University, Oxford ■ University of Michigan ■ Mount St. Mary's University ■ University of Navarre ■ New York University ■ The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ■ Northwestern University ■ University of Notre Dame ■ University of Pennsylvania ■ Pennsylvania State University, University Park ■ Pepperdine University ■ Princeton University ■ Providence College ■ Purdue University ■ Rice University ■ University of Southern California ■ Stanford University ■ St. Joseph's University ■ Texas A&M University ■ Tulane University ■ United States Coast Guard Academy ■ United States Military Academy at West Point ■ Vanderbilt University ■ University of Vermont ■ Villanova University ■ Virginia Military Institute ■ Virginia Tech ■ University of Virginia ■ Wake Forest University ■ Washington and Lee University ■ Wesleyan University ■ College of William and Mary

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Saint Bernadette Church Celebrates First Communion!

On Saturday, May 1, Saint Bernadette Church rejoiced as 37 of our young children received their First Holy Communion. The first communicants sat in pews with their parents, siblings, and relatives and safely participated in the Church's worship of our loving and merciful God. Our pastor, Msgr. Smith, told the children that the Eucharist is the best food they will ever receive. As Saint John the Evangelist tells us, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (Jn 6:56).

The children returned in their first communion attire on the following day for their second communion and to honor Mary during our annual May Crowning. After a



Saint Bernadette's first communicants wait with their families to receive the Eucharist from Msgr. Smith on May 1!

rosary procession led by all of our first communicants, two of the chil-

dren assisted Msgr. Smith in placing a crown of beautiful flowers on



Monsignor Smith presides over the May Crowning on May 2 with assistance from Alexis Collins and Peter Beegle, who received their First Communion the day prior.

the statue of Mary. After helping to ensure that the crown was on just

right, parishioners sang "Hail Holy Queen Enthroned Above."

OPT

Saint Bernadette School's Greater Love initiative has been able to keep many projects going despite the pandemic limiting student involvement with in-person service. The Pre-K 4's class is pictured here during a recent Tag Day with the money they donated to support the St. Camillus Food Pantry. Our students have raised over \$1,000 this year.



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A Full Day Out!



Eighth graders from Saint Bernadette School took the theme to heart on May 4, following up the ADW's Eighth-Grade Day Out with retreat time with their classmates, and then a service call to tidy up the school and church grounds!

SAINT BERNADETTE

A Pre-K – Grade 8 Catholic School



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KEVIN KANE
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congratulations!
**CLASS OF
2021**



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Elizabeth Seton



ROBERT KOMINS
Archbishop Spalding



DEVIN LEWIS
DeMatha Catholic



MICHAEL LONG
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KARA MORELAND
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BRAULIO RAMOS
Our Lady of Good Counsel



GAVEN RAMOS
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JACKSON ROSS
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ALEXANDER SANTOS
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ABIGAIL SAWYER
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MINA SUNTUM
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St. Raphael School blossoms in faith, science, and creativity

By Gabriela Herrera Gugiu

Spring was in full bloom this year as St. Raphael celebrated second grade First Communion, eighth-grade Confirmation, science fairs, and art exhibits.

In the weeks and days leading to our celebration of the sacraments, the halls and classrooms were filled with buzz and excitement as our second grade and eighth grade classes planned for and held their First Communion and Confirmation on May 1. At St. Raphael, we believe that education and faith formation are precious



Volunteers help Michael Shwedick of Reptile World, left, display an impressive 15-foot, 238-pound Indian rock python – the star of the show at SpringFest. Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia

lifelong gifts that parents offer their children at home and through our school and parish. A special thanks to our faith formation teacher Mary Beaudoin for another fantastic year for our children.

Because everything thing else about this school year has been wild, our annual fundraiser, SpringFest, was no exception. Food, drinks, and a live animal show impressed our socially distanced guests. The online auction delivered impressive results thanks to the generosity of our community. We extend a special thanks to Michael Shwedick of Reptile World for his engaging and educational presentations, and

a special note of gratitude to our team of volunteers for pulling off the impossible!

The Third Grade Artists Tea is a favorite SRS tradition. Under the tutelage of art teacher Yolanda Prinsloo, our students recreated pieces by La Belle Époque masters. The class then worked with homeroom teacher Alicia Madlala to write poems describing the creations. At St. Raphael School, we are proud that the arts are an essential part of our curriculum.

Each year, science teacher Melissa Kelly guides students in

Continued on page 23



St. Raphael School second-grade students celebrate First Communion during a historic year. Photo by Catherine Byrne

Special Recognitions

After more than 25 years of teaching, Mary Ellen Vassallo is retiring. Vassallo taught music and religion to our preschool Angels and also taught music to grades K-2. From the Chicken Dance to the Snow Dance to Shaking Hands with a Friend, Mary Ellen made music fun and allowed our students to dance, sing, and give big shouts because that's what St.



St. Raphael School bids a fond farewell to retiring longtime staff members Mary Ellen Vassallo, left, and MJ Zafis-Garcia, right, shown with Principal Teri Dwyer. Photo by Nan Waffan

Continued on page 60

St. Raphael Parish St. Raphael School

1513 Dunster Road
Rockville, MD

Rev. Michael Salah, Pastor

Teri Dwyer, Principal

MJ Zafis-Garcia,
OPT Editor

301-762-2143

www.straphaels.org
www.straphaelschoolmd.org

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Congratulations, Class of 2021!



ST. RAPHAEL SCHOOL

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of the Sacred Heart

Mia Bertolini

Quince Orchard H.S.

Isaias Blandino

DeMatha Catholic H.S.

Charlie Browning

St. John's College H.S.

Blythe Cook

Winston Churchill H.S.

Gracie Drummond

St. John's College H.S.

Cata Dulcey

Richard Montgomery H.S.
IB Program

Kiley Flaherty

St. John's College H.S.

Zach Foulkes

Gonzaga College H.S.

Lauren Johns

Stone Ridge School
of the Sacred Heart

Ryan Kaufman

Thomas S. Wootton H.S.

Meredith Kearns

Richard Montgomery H.S.

Peyton Kimmel

St. John's College H.S.

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Anna Mattick

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of the Sacred Heart

Patrick O'Connor

Georgetown Preparatory
School

Anjola Somefun

Brookewood School

Nathalie Ventura

St. John's College H.S.

Caitlin Woodward

Poolesville H.S.
Global Ecology Program

Francesca Zara

St. John's College H.S.



A 2019 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

Kindergarteners show off their outfits during St. Martin's School's Multi-cultural Day. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.



St. Martin's students enjoy the return of the annual Book Fair. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.



Medwin Nora and Mr. Logan are the champions of St. Martin's eighth grade / teacher table tennis tournament. Photo courtesy of St. Martin's School.

Reflections on Religious Education at St. Martin's

By Pat Dorney

As St. Martin's continues to celebrate its Centennial Year, longtime staff member Pat Dorney was asked to look back on her years of service to the parish.

I was Director of Religious Education (DRE) at St. Martin's Church from 1982 to 2005. I began as DRE under Fr. Americo DiNoria and my office was housed in a small building that was at the end of the parking lot – prime parish property! The 1980s brought about many changes for St. Martin's. In addition to traditional Religious Education classes, the SPRED (Special Religious Education Development) program was expanded to include special liturgies. I was so grateful for the time I had spent before 1982, working under Ms. Peg Custer (former DRE), who guided me through the writing of Liturgies for many occasions. The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) preprogram was no longer administered by me in 1988, but was given its own director, Mrs. Marilyn LaRue. There was also an increase in the Spanish speaking community in the Religious Education programs and a Spanish Mass was added. At that time, we had enrollment of about 1200 students, which included both

English and Spanish.

The original school building built in 1925 was aging fast. With the cost of maintenance, the decision was made to tear down the old school and my small building and build a new school structure. This meant that my secretary and I would now be housed in trailers until the new school building was completed in fall of 1988. This presented many new obstacles for holding classes; however, with the dedication of the Catechists, parents and children, Religious Education thrived. This could not have been possible without more than 200 volunteers.

Continued on page 25

St. Martin of Tours Parish

201 South Frederick Ave.
Gaithersburg, MD

Fr. David G. Wells,
Pastor

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Stephen Lamont, Principal
301-990-2441

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

A Memorable Eighth-Grade Year

By Medwin Nora, Eighth Grader

This year at St. Martin's was the strangest year of school I think I will ever experience.

It all started last year in March. When the Coronavirus outbreak occurred. We were all told to take our books home because we will be virtual for two weeks. We said

our last goodbyes saying, "See you in two weeks!" thinking we would see each other again. Little did we know those two weeks would

Continued on page 25

St. Martin's Catholic School



Class of 2021

Academy of the Holy Cross
Mary Jasper

DeMatha Catholic
Diego Ramirez

Don Bosco Cristo Rey
Melanie Armas

Gaithersburg
Regina Antonetti
Bianca Bonanno

Lake Linganore
Kwabena Appiah-Dankwah

Magruder
Jason Raffo

Our Lady of Good Counsel
Hugo Diaz
Medwin Nora
Erika Velasquez

Poolesville
Lourdes Reyes

Quince Orchard
Sofia Nasrin
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Emiliano Vigil
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St. John's College
Honora Manyin

Undecided
Maame Ekua Andoh
Gabriela Rivas
Blair Walton



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Diaper Drive is a Runaway Success!

By Matthew Curley

The last week of March, St. Mary's School participated in their first annual Diaper Drive to benefit Shady Grove Pregnancy Center. Each class competed throughout the week to collect the most individual diapers and wipe packages. Shady Grove Pregnancy Center provides resources and supplies to local mothers and mothers-to-be in need. It was amazing to witness the Christ-like generosity of the families of St. Mary's School. Each day of the week, student arrived at school with boxes of hundreds of diapers and wipes to be donated. Many students needed a handcart to transport all of their donations into their classrooms! One class was even inspired to construct a throne for their teacher using the diapers and wipes they had collected!

While all classes donated to the cause, the competition in the St. Mary's middle school was the fiercest. The sixth through eighth grade students were constantly checking on the running diaper tallies to



St. Mary's students show their kindness and their love for life by donating over 16,000 diapers to the mothers in need.

see who was ahead in the contest. Some students were even requesting to contact their parents during the school day in hopes that they might be able to bring a few extra diapers to school at dismissal time.

By the end of the week, St. Mary's had collected a grand total of over 16,000 brand new diapers

and wipes of various sizes to be donated to Shady Grove Pregnancy Center. There were so many donations that a local moving company, Markham Movers, graciously donated one of their box trucks to transport all of the diapers and wipes. The employees at Shady Grove Pregnancy Center were overwhelmed by the kindness shown by the St. Mary's School community. The staff at Shady Grove Pregnancy Center reported that the donated diapers and wipes overflowed out of the center's storage room and into the staff break room. Shady Grove Pregnancy Center has since informed St. Mary's School that, because of their generous donations, they were able to give diapers and wipes to two other local crisis pregnancy centers in desperate need of supplies. The friendly competition was fun for students and staff alike, but St. Mary's School feels the most rewarded knowing that they have helped numerous local mothers in need to provide for their children.

OPT



St. Mary's students pose with their impressive haul of diapers and wipes, collected to benefit Shady Grove Pregnancy Center.

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A Joyous Day of Love Second Graders Celebrate Their First Communion

By Jacqueline Means and
Kathleen Morris

On April 24, 2021, the second-grade students of St. Mary's Parish and School celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion, surrounded by their families and the St. Mary's Community. The second-grade students had been preparing for this day for over a year, learning about the Holy

Eucharist in school, in CCD, in Mass, at home, and in prayer. St. Mary's teaches their students about the sacrifice of Jesus and the Transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Pope Francis has called the Eucharist the "Sacrament of love", saying, "The Eucharist is at the heart of 'Christian

Continued on page 30



Students from our parish programs celebrated their First Holy Communion on May 1 surrounded by friends and family. Photo by Allan's Fine Portraits



CCD students received the Eucharist for the first time on May 1. Photo by Allan's Fine Portraits



Homeschool students shared their First Eucharist Day with the St. Mary's School Second Grade Class on April 24. Photo by Allan's Fine Portraits

St. Mary's Parish
520 Veirs Mill Road Rockville, MD
Msgr. Robert Amey, Pastor
301-424-5550

St. Mary's School
Mrs. Debby Eisel, Principal
301-762-4179
Mrs. Debby Eisel, Parish Editor
301-762-4179

Spring has Sprung in Saint Mary's Kindergarten!



Two young scientists are planting seeds.



Mrs. Sweet and students examine different types of seeds to be planted.



The Kindergarteners show off all of the weeds they pulled!

By Kelly Sweet

In early spring, the St. Mary's School Kindergarten class began preparing their outdoor classroom: garden bed labs for science exploration. The Kindergarten classroom is adjacent to a large courtyard, which is perfect for planting and observing the growth of plants, vegetables, and flowers. Mrs. Sweet and Mrs. Davis led the young scientists in their gardening endeavors.

Over the next several weeks, the Kindergarten students were hard at work during their science classes. Kindergarteners learned how to pick weeds, plant seeds, supply new soil, and mulch the outdoor classroom. While preparing their garden beds, the Kindergarteners discovered some delicious purple potatoes! The students harvested the potatoes, cut, and roasted them, and enjoyed eating them, with and without ketchup.

By the first week of May, the outdoor garden bed labs were ready to be planted with various plants, seedlings, and seeds. This fall, St. Mary's students are looking forward to harvesting tomatoes, cabbages, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, radishes, lettuce, peas, beans, squash, purple and red potatoes, herbs, sunflowers, and a variety of butterfly pollinators. This spring has been a very exciting time for the young scientists!

OPT

SCHOOL

Con't from page 20

sixth through eighth grade in conducting experiments for the St. Raphael School Science Fair. The long-term projects begin with a research paper in the fall and culminate into a final presentation before judges in the spring. We are incredibly proud of the hard work put in by our middle-school students, who came through with stellar projects this year.

On May 26, we will round out this historic year with our eighth-grade graduation. The Class of 2021 and their families have already been busy with end-of-the-year traditions and celebrations. See our ad honoring our graduates in this issue of *Our Parish Times*.

OPT



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The faculty and staff of St. Mary's School, Rockville, MD
would like to congratulate St. Mary's Class of 2021

Students accepted at these schools:

Academy of the Holy Cross, Brookewood School,
Colonel Zadok Magruder HS, DeMatha Catholic HS, Gonzaga HS,
Our Lady of Good Counsel, Richard Montgomery HS,
St. John's College HS, St. Vincent Pallotti,
Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart.

SHORT

Con't from page 1

certain I reflect the sentiments of your Catholic brothers and sisters in every parish in conveying our condolences, prayers and continuing commitment to assist you as we can. God bless you and bring you peace.

Please join me in gratitude and prayer for the many individuals and teams in local parishes who have served to sustain the spiritual, educational, and social missions of our Catholic communities and schools. Their work has never been more challenging and their devotion to faith and parish more critical.

Thank you to everyone associated with our Catholic schools.

Administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers faced unprecedented educational and logistical challenges. Each of them should be recognized with a special honorary degree! We are grateful for their effort and creativity and wish you all a restful summer vacation.

Thanks to parents. No doubt they have worked hard. Many have faced difficult challenges associated with working at home in addition to assisting their children with education and a sense of normalcy during the pandemic. Blessing your families by nurturing their spiritual lives has been difficult. This work is surely worth a special "plenary indulgence".

Thanks to priests and deacons for helping their flocks quite literal-

ly, "keep the faith". They creatively and safely maintained our loving spiritual homes while our churches were largely dark. We are grateful for their leadership and care. Their diligence could be recognized by an honorary medical degree.

We are grateful to all parish staff who have faced this difficult year. In some cases, parish ministries slowed, while others were called upon to ratchet up responses to new and vastly greater human need. Finance councils, like other corporate boards, were challenged to make ends meet while protecting parish jobs and activities. Many individuals stepped up with creative financial solutions as well as assisting parish staff with complex financial forms. I'm especially

grateful to the musical ministries. We Catholics love our hymns during Mass and other services. With singing banned in church (a certain relief to anyone who has been near me during Mass), the singular voices of cantors have lifted my heart and soul. I was blessed to attend my granddaughter's First Communion recently. We are grateful for those who prepare our children for the sacraments and those seeking marriage and baptism. The often-lonely funerals of the lives of our loved ones were comforted by loving clergy and staff.

We are grateful to the Justice and Advocacy Council for its uninterrupted advocacy during the pandemic. Sadly, racism and inequity are not shut down by the virus.

Thank God Catholic communities are acting to identify and end these in Montgomery county.

As Catholics, we should be proud and grateful to the diverse social service ministries which have endured throughout the pandemic. Unprecedented need for food pantries, diapers, virtual friendly visiting, and rental assistance are the results of soaring unemployment and chilling isolation. If the Church offered a medal for courage, these dedicated and selfless servants would be at the front of the line.

Few of us see or know the **parish custodial and grounds maintenance teams**. Our churches and schools were able to open only because of their hard work and concern for us. Where once a dusting cloth was sufficient, their conscientious response to the pandemic has been bleach and scrubbing, not once week, but often several times a day. Often invisible to us, perhaps we should honor them by climbing to the highest point in our parish community, sound the trumpets, and scream "thank you" at the top of our lungs.

Youth activities leaders, including coaches, club moderators, mentors and others, have found ways to safely engage our children in constructive programs. The social isolation of the pandemic was difficult for all. We are grateful to those who have stepped up to ease it for children. In recent months, the CYO and other sports leagues have returned to action. After school and evening clubs are meeting again. Being a coach or youth leader is always a labor of love, but in the Covid era, their duties, like schoolteachers, have multiplied. Protecting themselves, their young participants, families and spectators from Covid is a lot to ask of a volunteer. Yet, we have observed many of them doing just this with remarkable diligence. We are grateful to them. Each of them deserves the MVP award.

And the list could go on. Thanks to all of you who read OPT and to Larry and Kathleen Hamm for their continuing commitment to parish life as the publishers of this unique communication.

Safe summer and God Bless!
Kindness today,
Chuck Short
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Biography of the Parents of "The Little Flower"

Ignatius Press' new Vision Series book, *Louis and Zélie: The Holy Parents of Saint Thérèse*, by St. Jane parishioner Gina Marie Tennant, brings their story to life for young people. Reviewer Cease Pappas of St Peter's Parish in Olney: "It is a beautiful, touching story of family life lived with Christ as the center." To order, visit: www.ignatius.com/Louis-and-Zélie-P3783.aspx



MEMORABLE

Con't from page 21

turn into two more. Then those two turned into four more. Then sadly ending the school year completely virtual. We were all confused on how the start of the school year would start.

At the end of June, we received an email telling us about our summer work and the plan for picking up books for school. We all received Chromebooks and schoolbooks in plastic bags.

We could go to school in person around October as the school slowly brought classes in. Many people stayed virtual and still are today. We were all wondering how our school year was going to go. We all aspired to be eighth graders because of all the amazing things we heard about it. Sadly, we did not get to experience many of them, but St. Martin's tried to make our year memorable. Many events that were supposed to happen in-person still happened virtually like our spirit week. We played

Bingo, wore Wacky-Tacky clothing, and played Table Tennis. We had our school food-drive and brought in 15,000 cans total. We received rewards for how many cans we brought in. We were able to watch a movie, have extra recess, have a no homework day, and more!

Although this school year could not be what we expected and wanted, I am really happy that St. Martin of Tours worked hard to make our eighth-grade year a lot better than we expected.

OPT

REFLECTIONS

Con't from page 21

On a personal note, I feel I have been blessed and privileged to be able to watch so many young people receive and accept Jesus for the first time in their First Communion, their First Reconciliation and Confirmation. I cannot express the joy and peace I felt every year as I looked at their faces as they returned from the altar. I was also privileged to see some second-generation children enter St. Martin's Religious Education program.

I retired in 2005. Then, our Pastor Fr. Mark Brennan asked if I would take over a new program new in Parishes. It was the Child Protection Program which the Archdiocese of Washington was implementing to protect the children. I said yes and am now the Child Protection Compliance Coordinator for the Parish.

I thank God, the staff and the people of St. Martin's for allowing me to be involved with the children and parishioners of the Parish. It has helped me grow in my own faith.

OPT

SESSIONS

Con't from page 1

"The listening format enabled people to absorb what the other was saying and feel their experience," said Christine King, a co-chair of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Racism. "It opened the door to having an open discussion on this difficult topic."

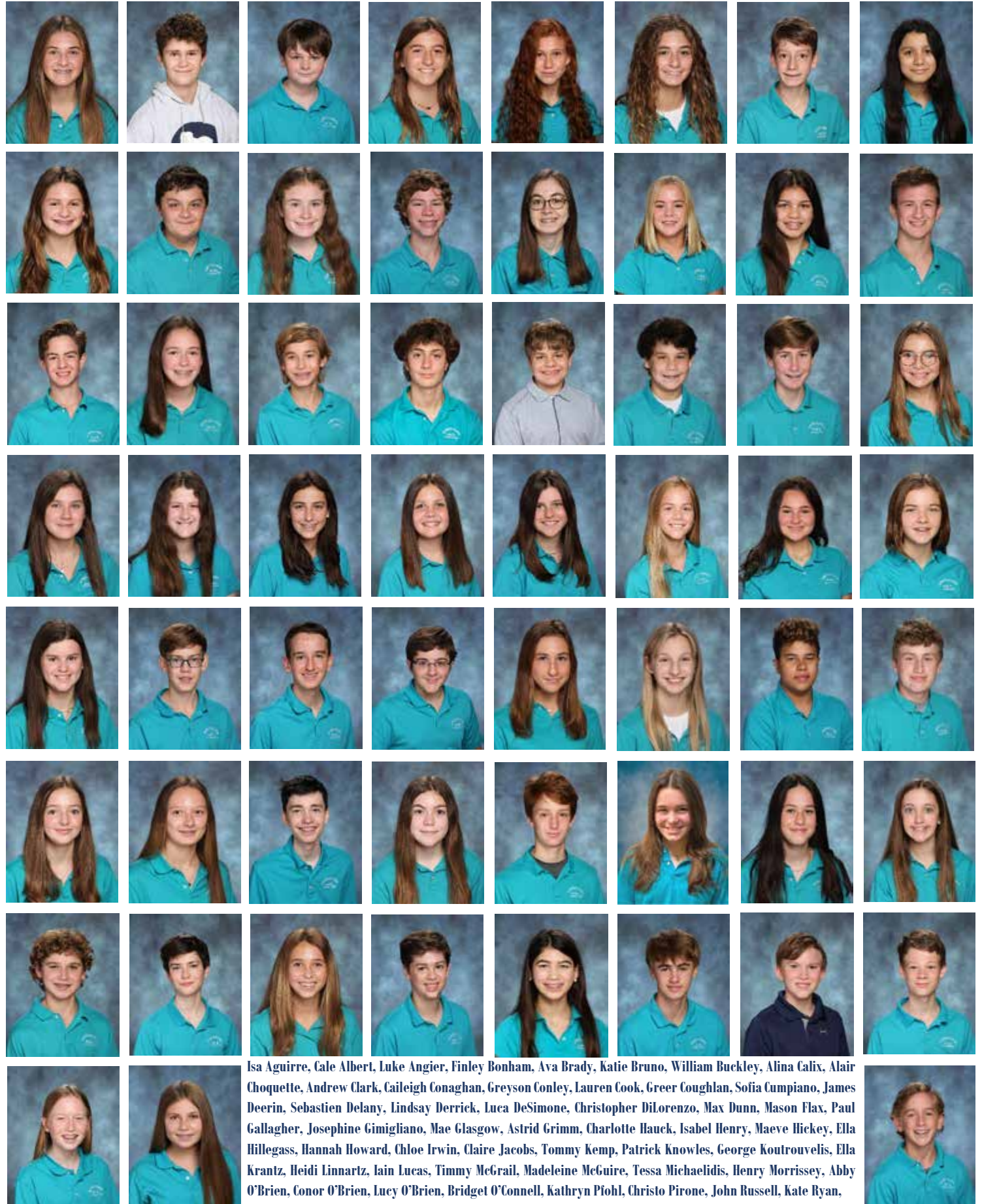
Following a prayer service led by Fr. John Dillon during the April 10 listening session and Deacon Jim Datovech during the April 17 listening session, the participants split into two breakout groups where they answered questions posed by a facilitator. The questions offered participants a chance to reflect on their feelings regarding racism and violence in the country and what they heard from listening; how they perceived white privilege and other factors affecting their understanding and experiences of racism and violence; what they believe are the most important items they want leaders to consider in responding to racism; and how the parish should move forward.

In their responses, recorded anonymously, parishioners expressed feelings ranging from disbelief and confusion, surprise and sadness, and frustration and numbness when considering racism in the United States. In hearing one another's responses, they commented on how they heard feelings of responsibility and regret, the different perspectives individuals have, and the importance of education in eradicating racism.

King said the Ad-Hoc Committee's next steps will include developing an action plan and focusing on those items parishioners most frequently said need to be addressed. These will include continuing the dialogue on racism, educating parishioners on racism, including conscious and unconscious biases, and encouraging church leaders to continue discussing racism from the pulpit.

"Many of the participants noted that they were not initially comfortable with discussing this topic, but felt a weight lifted after sharing and listening to others," King said. "The conversation on racism is not an easy discussion to have, but our parish is largely an open and caring community, and people noted they felt safe sharing with their fellow parishioners."

OPT



Isa Aguirre, Cale Albert, Luke Angier, Finley Bonham, Ava Brady, Katie Bruno, William Buckley, Alina Calix, Alair Choquette, Andrew Clark, Caileigh Conaghan, Greyson Conley, Lauren Cook, Greer Coughlan, Sofia Cumpiano, James Deerin, Sebastien Delany, Lindsay Derrick, Luca DeSimone, Christopher DiLorenzo, Max Dunn, Mason Flax, Paul Gallagher, Josephine Gimigliano, Mae Glasgow, Astrid Grimm, Charlotte Hauck, Isabel Henry, Maeve Hickey, Ella Hillegass, Hannah Howard, Chloe Irwin, Claire Jacobs, Tommy Kemp, Patrick Knowles, George Koutrouvelis, Ella Krantz, Heidi Linnartz, Iain Lucas, Timmy McGrail, Madeleine McGuire, Tessa Michaelidis, Henry Morrissey, Abby O'Brien, Conor O'Brien, Lucy O'Brien, Bridget O'Connell, Kathryn Pfohl, Christo Pirone, John Russell, Kate Ryan,

Drew Santiviago, Phoebe Sood, Jimmy Spallone, Sean Stanton, Sam Stogoski, Francie Taylor, Morgan Trifilo, Michael Yost



Blessed Sacrament School
Class of 2021

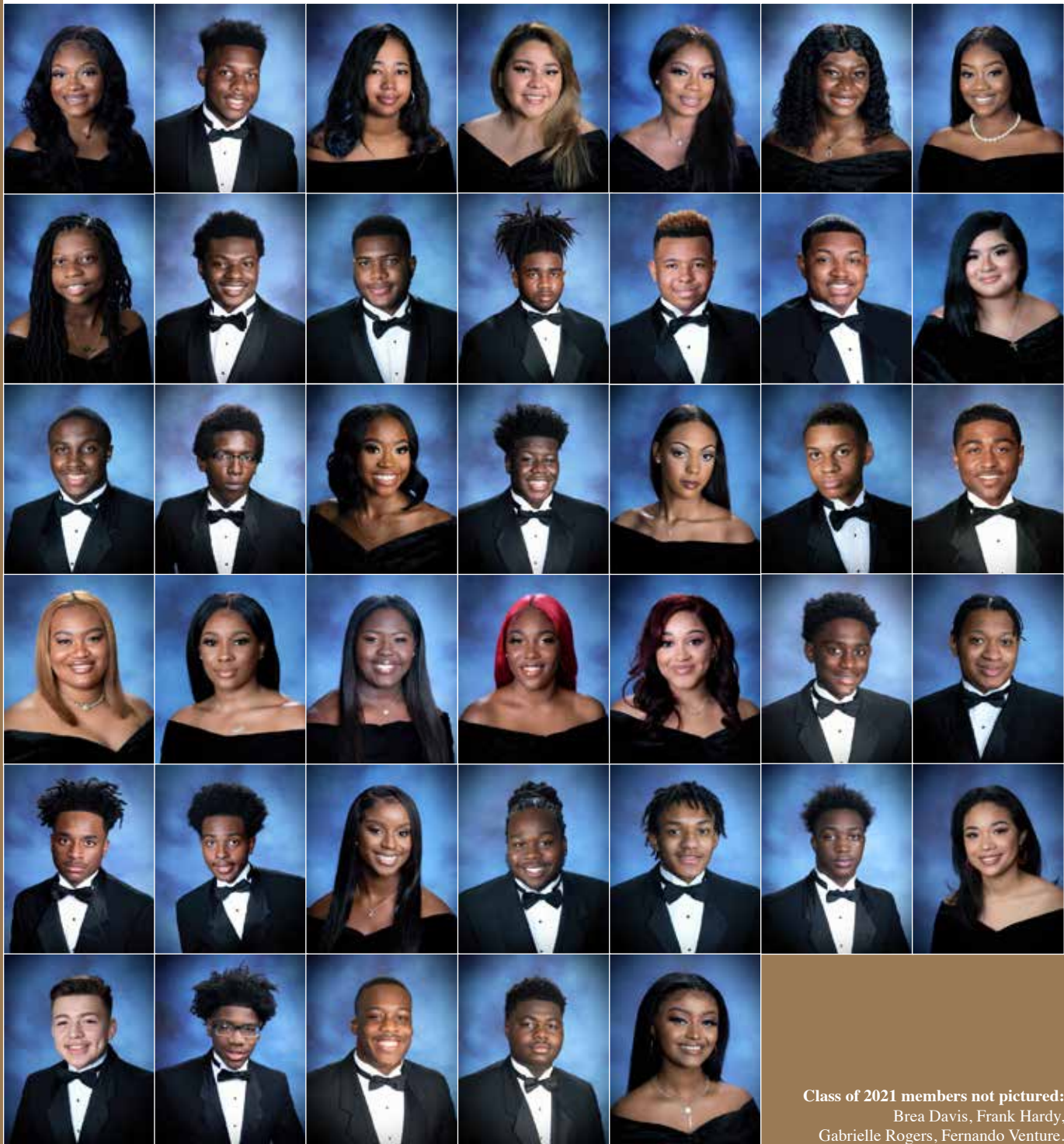




Congratulations to the
Class of 2021



Archbishop Carroll High School



Class of 2021 members not pictured:
Brea Davis, Frank Hardy,
Gabrielle Rogers, Fernando Venture.

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Anne Arundel Community College ♦ Arizona State University ♦ Bowie State University ♦ Centre College ♦ Denison University ♦ Florida State University ♦ Frostburg State University ♦ George Mason University ♦ High Point University ♦ Hood College ♦ James Madison University ♦ Kalamazoo College ♦ Kentucky University ♦ Kentucky University ♦ La Salle University ♦ Lawrence University ♦ Loyola University of Maryland ♦ Mount Saint Mary's University ♦ Old Dominion University ♦ Penn State University, Mont Alto ♦ Penn State University ♦ Saint Mary's College of Maryland ♦ Salisbury University ♦ Seton Hall University ♦ Shepherd University ♦ St. Olaf College ♦ Stevenson University ♦ Temple University ♦ The Catholic University of America ♦ Towson University ♦ University of Arizona ♦ University of Iowa ♦ University of Kentucky ♦ University of Maryland, College Park ♦ University of Maryland, Eastern Shore ♦ University of Oklahoma ♦ Wabash College ♦ Washington College ♦ West Texas A&M University

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Noah Edem Azomme
Julian Nowak Calloway
Tomas Abecasis Correia
Giacomo Maria De Silvio
Nicholas Michael Gilmore
Asaun Anthony Grooms
Sean Ricardo Henderson
Liam Bartholomew Htay
Matthew Riley Jackson
Patrick Dalton Knapp
Kingsley Cornelius Andrew Layne
Jalen Barrett Manley
Charles Oluwale Martins

Aaron Anthony Pio McEleney
Gabriel Emmanuel Moore
Luke Douglas Neely
Minh Duong Nguyen
Matthew Kalala Pulanco
Giovanni Francesco Ratti
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Aaron Conrad Rivas
Jordan St. Clair Robinson
Jalen D'metri Satchell
Paul-Luhumbu Alengo Tangelo
Javier Alejandro Valencia-Romero
Nathan Yidnekachew

the Avalon School

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Congratulations CLASS OF 2021

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10401 ARMORY AVENUE, KENSINGTON, MD 20895

WWW.BROOKEWOOD.ORG



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Agatha S. Baum
Aleksandra Bilinski
Chiara Elizabeth De Marchi
Elizabeth Kateri Downey
Naniah Jenay Echols
Giuditta Asja Maria Herber
Gabriella Ida Kushner
Bryanne J. Manley

Grace Ann Maria Myer
My Tra Nguyen
Grace Ann Ostuni
Katerina Maria Parker
Allison Muadi Pulanco
Maria Luisa Stohlman
Aleana de Rocha Vieira
Ashna Samadhi Wickramasekera



CLASS OF
2021



*"Be who you are
and be that
well."*

- St. Francis de Sales



*The Monks and Faculty of St. Anselm's Abbey School
Congratulate Our Seventy-fifth Graduating Class*

THE CLASS OF 2021



**Markos
Atikem**
Alexandria, VA
Georgia Tech



Anand Beh
McLean, VA
*Carnegie-Mellon
University*



**Vincent
Blum**
Washington, DC
*University of
North Carolina at
Chapel Hill*



**Griffin
Burchard**
Alexandria, VA
*University of
Alabama*



Xinkai Cai
Washington, DC
*University
of Southern
California*



**Nicholas
Casertano**
North Potomac, MD
Georgia Tech



Wai Chen
University Park, MD
*Case Western
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Silver Spring, MD
Gannon University



**Lorenzo
Cruz**
Takoma Park, MD
*Johns Hopkins
University*



Hayden Dangle
University Park, MD
*Loyola
University
Maryland*



**Nicholas
DeCarlo**
Arlington, VA
Georgia Tech



**Stephen
DeCarlo**
Arlington, VA
*University of
Notre Dame*



**Koki
DeFosse**
Kensington, MD
*Sophia University,
Tokyo, Japan*



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Hyattsville, MD
*University of
Maryland,
College Park*



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Grimaldi**
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*University
College,
London, UK*



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Jadotte**
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Kuhn**
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*Gettysburg
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*Cornell
University*



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Virginia Tech



**Lorenzo
Marra**
Falls Church, VA
*St. Louis
University*



John McKean
Arlington, VA
*Virginia
Commonwealth
University*



**Noah
Mekonnen**
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Baltimore County*



**Cole
Mitchell**
Chevy Chase, MD
*Lafayette
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Boston University



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Jason Reyes
Lanham, MD
*Villanova
University*



**Eduardo
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Washington, DC
*Northeastern
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Jayson Sella
Olney, MD
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University*



**Hugh
Shepard**
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*The University of
Chicago*



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Polytechnic
Institute*



**Mianfeng
Zhang**
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University*

PAX IN SAPIENTIA

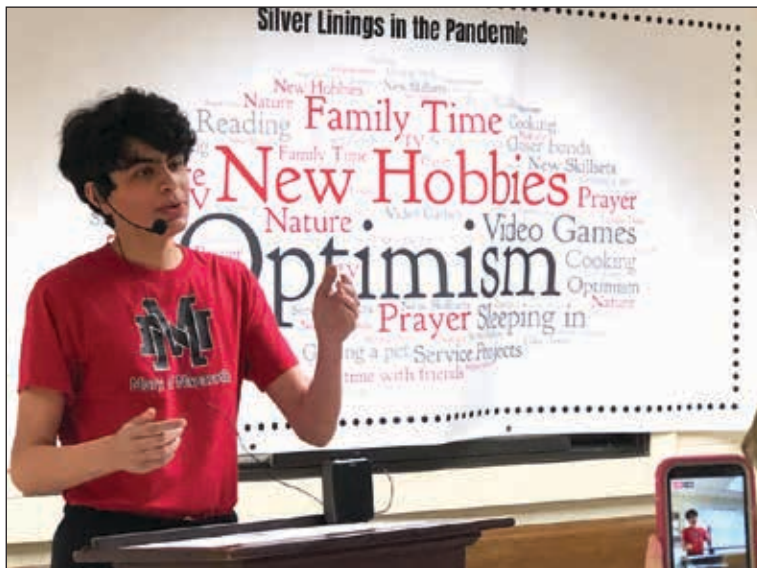
Silver Linings – Even in The Pandemic

By Anderson Harlor, Class of 2021, SGA President

Recently, we crossed the one-year anniversary of the pandemic. Many people stopped and reflected on their experiences. I did too. One common theme persisted among all people; it was hard. It's still hard. Yet, another theme emerged. People found silver linings, positive things that they would not have found otherwise.

My family and I talked about our silver linings and the importance of a positive mindset especially when things are grim. It dawned on me that staying positive even when some people said that there is no joy to be found in the pandemic was powerful. The truth is, there is joy to be found in the pandemic. We just have to look for it in unconventional ways.

I know my school and my fellow classmates have tried very hard to make the best out of this difficult time. The effort we displayed deserved to be commemorated and



Anderson Harlor, SGA President presenting the Silver Linings poster to the community via Facebook Live.

celebrated. We are so lucky at Mary of Nazareth to have such receptive teachers and a great principal who are open to working with students to bring their ideas to fruition.

That is why I approached our guidance counselor and principal about embarking on a project to celebrate our school's resilience.

We spoke with middle school

students, and it was amazing to hear about all the different silver linings they discovered. There were obvious ones like family time, getting a new pet, and getting to take up new hobbies. There were less obvious ones like sleeping in, having more free time, and expediting the process of weaving technology into our everyday learning and moving away from pen and paper learning.

Hearing this feedback was inspiring but being able to clearly see all the good my school has found over the course of the pandemic would be even better. We created a banner that included all the silver linings my school community has discovered during the pandemic and hung it up as a reminder that we can persevere even in the darkest times. We also created a new Student Government Association website which debuted with a student article about staying positive in the pandemic.

In a bad time, we have our faith, our families, and each other to lean on. I wanted to reassure people that

they are feeling what we are all feeling and that we can get through this and when we do, we will come out the other side better than ever. I felt lucky to have the opportunity to give a presentation to the entire school community reminding them that the message "there is a silver lining to every cloud" isn't just a cliché.

In difficult times, the best thing to do is to look for the bright moments no matter how impossible that feels. Find those things that act as a respite. Find hope. I wanted to reassure people that they are feeling what we are all feeling and that we can get through this. When we do, we will come out the other side better than ever. Finding a positive during a rough patch in life is incredibly important. It is like our lifeline and keeps us anchored to the truth that better days are coming around and that bad situations do not last forever.

OPT



Stella Humphries, NJHS President, presenting the Comfort Case collection from Mary of Nazareth

Comfort Case Collection

By Stella Humphries, NJHS President

Our Mary of Nazareth Nation Junior Honor Society Chapter held a drive for the charity Comfort Cases over a two-week span. Comfort Cases is a charity that gives backpacks with necessities to children in foster care. In total we donated over 1,000 items to the Comfort Cases cause!

It is important to give to children in foster care because when they receive a backpack full of necessary items they feel loved and needed. Each backpack is filled with items that give children a sense of hope when they may be feeling down. Overall, our Comfort Cases drive was a great success, and we made a lot of kids happy.

OPT

COMMUNION

Con't from page 22

Initiation', together with Baptism and Confirmation, and it constitutes the source of the Church's life itself. From this Sacrament of love, in fact, flows every authentic journey of faith, of communion, and of witness."

Monsignor Amey was the celebrant for the Mass, but many more people in the St. Mary's

Community helped the students along the way: Father Fields, our parochial vicar; Mrs. Eisel, our school principal; Mr. Patchan, our Minister of Religious Education; and Mrs. Finnell, our school and CCD administrative assistant; just to name a few. The second-grade students from our school and parish received beautiful rosaries from the St. Mary's School sixth-grade students and their families to mark the special occasion. They also wore white dresses and suits to acknowl-

edge the welcoming of Jesus in their bodies and souls through the Holy Eucharist.

We look forward to celebrating the Holy Eucharist in Mass each week with all of our second-grade students. Springtime and celebrating First Communion with our second graders is an excellent reminder that we should praise and thank God for the wonderful gift of the Holy Eucharist every time we receive Communion.

OPT



Students from the second-grade class of St. Mary's School celebrated their Sacrament of First Holy Communion on April 24. Photo by Allan's Fine Portraits

It pays to advertise in Our Parish Times

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Assistant Principal:
Mrs. Rosemary Adams
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301-869-0942 (fax)

Mary of Nazareth
OPT Editor: Katherine Schultz,
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Gonzaga
College HS



Annelise Allport
Poolesville HS
Magnet Program



Fadi Ayoub
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College HS



Alyssa Bailey
Quince Orchard HS



Joaquin Ballesteros
Poolesville HS



Ava Bell
Georgetown
Visitation



Lucy Beucher
Our Lady of
Good Counsel



Avery Boesch
St. John's
College HS



Eduardo Bunag
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College HS



Lorenzo Bunag
Gonzaga
College HS



Alyson Carranza
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Catholic Prep



Camila Carrion
St. John's
College HS



Chanda Chung
Academy of the
Holy Cross



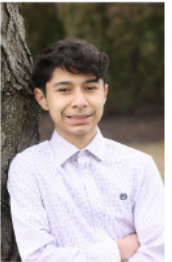
Liam Coskun
Our Lady of
Good Counsel



Gabriel Cuellar
Urbana HS



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Anna Driscoll
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Visitation



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Lynn Everly
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Giovanni Fabi
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College HS



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St. John's
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Zachary Fischer
Quince
Orchard HS



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Good Counsel



Tyler Garrett
Georgetown
Preparatory School



Christy Gregorian
St. John's
Catholic Prep



Anderson Harlor
Gonzaga
College HS



Stella Humphries
Our Lady of
Good Counsel



Sarah
Jankowski
Damascus HS



Henry Johnson
Our Lady of
Good Counsel



Jack Kelly
Gonzaga
College HS



Georgia Koutsos
Northwest HS



Kevin Long
St. John's
College HS



Kian Ly
Seneca
Valley HS



Piper McBride
Connelly School of
the Holy Child



Andrew McDonald
Urbana HS



Ethan Merkle
Gonzaga
College HS



Kyle Merkle
Gonzaga
College HS



Christos Moshovitis
Quince
Orchard HS



Carter Murphy
St. John's
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Visitation



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Seneca
Valley HS



Pierrindo Palmer
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Magnet Program



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Congratulations
CLASS OF 2021

First Communion

It was a special time for all of us at Our Lady of Lourdes parish and school as the school and CCD students gathered together to receive their First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 1. The children and their families were blessed with a beautiful morning as they processed into church in their beautiful white dresses and handsome suits and ties. The students were joyful and confident, having prepared for this day for many months in the loving presence of their teachers and priests. The pandemic influenced the traditional set up of the day, assigned seats, social distancing, wearing masks, no group pictures, and so on, but the importance of the day and the emotions of pride, joy, and love were the dominant themes.

This year we are especially grateful to all who worked tirelessly to prepare our students, including our teachers in the classroom at OLOL, catechists teaching virtually to CCD students, and supportive parents instructing their children at home. The preparation for this day may have looked different from past years, but one thing remained the same, the excited students ready to receive the Body of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

When students were asked how they were feeling in anticipation of



Above: Excited OLOL students ready for First Communion

First Communion, Luke Hessick, 2nd grader at OLOL said, "I'm nervous I might drop it. It kind of feels exciting, like when you are waiting for your birthday." Many students shared this common feeling Saturday morning as the 33 First Communicants prepared to receive this important sacrament of initiation.

After First Communion, the students waited in line to have individual photographs taken in the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. Joyful faces were evident all around as brilliant smiles and happy chatter



Above: Joyful faces and open hearts ready to receive Christ in the Eucharist.

At left: Second-grade teacher Ms. Hipp and one of her First Communicants.



could be seen and heard by everyone. Sammie Melluzzo, 2nd grader at OLOL, commented, "I feel happy because now I can go up with the rest of my family when they go to communion." What a wonderful day it was, joining together as one family in faith, as the boys and girls of Our Lady of Lourdes parish and school became fully part of the celebration of the Mass. Truly a glimmer of light as we come out of the darkness of this past year.

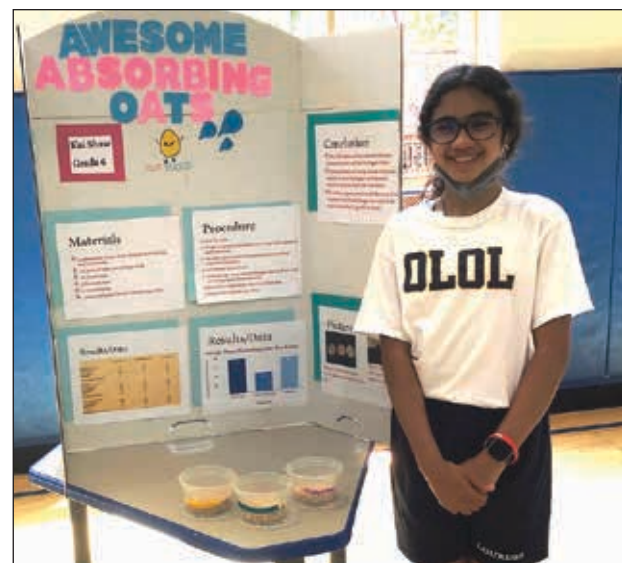
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Proud OLOL students show off their projects.



Third-Place Winner Charlotte Lacey (Eighth grade)



Second-Place Winner Kai Shaw (Sixth grade)

Our Lady of Lourdes Science Fair 2021

By Peter Capizzi, Maria Foley, and Kai Shaw

On April 28, the OLOL middle school held the first science fair since the pandemic started. This year, the science fair was a little bit different than usual. It was held in the gym, like always, but featured socially distanced desks, masked students, and open windows. All classes from kindergarten to fifth grade attended in their respective time intervals. This was the first OLOL science fair in a decade that was judged. Our judges included Fr. Rob, our pastor, Fr.

James, our parochial vicar, Sister Claudia, our pastoral associate, Mr. Long, our assistant principal, and Mr. Dwyer, our fourth through eighth grade math teacher. And what did the judges decide? Well, there were so many wonderful projects that they could not decide on just three winners, so aside from first, second, and third place, there were 16 honorable mentions awarded to individuals and groups for their outstanding science fair presentations.

Our third-place winner was Charlotte Lacey, a student in the eighth grade. Earning silver was

Kai Shaw in the sixth grade. And, with both a spectacular project and presentation, the student who took home the gold was Judah Malkus in the seventh grade! Judah's experiment was on which place in his house had the most bacteria. In order to find this out, he had to get petri dishes, but Judah wanted to be creative. Instead of ordering them, Judah made his own petri dishes, with homemade agar, and was able to see how much bacteria was growing in different parts of his house. Our second-place winner, Kai, investigated which oat absorbed the

most water in a set amount of time. Finally, to round off the top three scientists, Charlotte investigated if the dominant side of your brain affects the way you think.

The science fair was a huge success. Many OLOL students and teachers consider it the best one yet. Of course, the science fair would not have been possible without the unwavering support of the OLOL parents, faculty, staff, and the entire student body. We would like to say a special "thank you" to Ms. Capizzi, the middle school science teacher, and science fair organizer;

this would not have been possible without you! Congratulations to Our Lady Lourdes for another great science fair!

OPT

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

7500 Pearl Street
Bethesda, MD

Fr. Walsh, Pastor
301-654-1287

Ms. Amy Moore
Principal
301-654-5376

Congratulations Class of 2021 Graduates!

Ms. Amy Moore, Principal

Mr. David Long, Assistant Principal

Father Rob Walsh, Pastor



**NOUR
ABOUASSALY**
BETHESDA CHEVY CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

"We meet the people we're supposed to when the time is just right."
- Alyson Noel



**MARIAELENA
ALARCON-LOPEZ**
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

"If you set your goals ridiculously high and it is a failure, you will fail above everyone else's success." - James Cameron



**MATTHEW
APGOOD**
UNDECIDED

"The only impossible journey is the one you never begin."
- Anthony Robbins



**RICHARD
APGOOD**
UNDECIDED

"Success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm."
- Winston Churchill



**AUDREY
BROWN**
STONE RIDGE SCHOOL OF THE SACRED HEART

"All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."
- Walt Disney



**MATTIAS
BUNAI**
BETHESDA CHEVY CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

"History will be kind to me for I intend to write it."
- Winston Churchill



**HIWOT
DANIEL**
GEORGETOWN VISITATION

"Fortune favors the bold."



**DEANNA
DAVIS**
CONNELLY SCHOOL OF THE HOLY CHILD

"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude." - Maya Angelou



**ALEC
ESKENAZI**
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

It's a good day for dreaming!



**ALEXANDRA
FERNANDEZ**
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

"For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone." - Audrey Hepburn



**ISABELLA
FIGUEROA**
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

"Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest."
- Mark Twain



**EMERSON
HARDWICK**
GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL

"The person you become is the person you decide to be."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson



**MARY KATE
HAVERBACK**
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

"I'm not afraid of storms, for I'm learning how to sail my ship."
- Louisa May Alcott



**CHARLOTTE
LACEY**
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

"The truth of your character is expressed through the choice of your actions."
- Dr. Steve Maraboli



**MILO
LONG**
UNDECIDED

"Let us endeavor so to live so that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry."
- Mark Twain



**DAKOTA
NEMITZ**
UNDECIDED

"Seek respect not attention. It lasts longer."
- Ziad Abdelnour



**LILY
POLMATEER**
THE ACADEMY OF THE HOLY CROSS

"Vivamus, moriendum est."



**GRACE
REILLY**
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

"Veni, Vidi, Vici - I came, I saw, I conquered."
- Julius Caesar



**LILLY
SHERMAN**
THE ACADEMY OF THE HOLY CROSS

"There's a million things I haven't done, but just you wait!"
- Lin-Manuel Miranda in Hamilton



**CHRISTOPHER
SMITH**

SANDY SPRING FRIENDS SCHOOL

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change we seek."
- Barack Obama



**ARISSA
STEPHENS**

THE ACADEMY OF THE HOLY CROSS

"Where there's hope, there's life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again."
- Anne Frank



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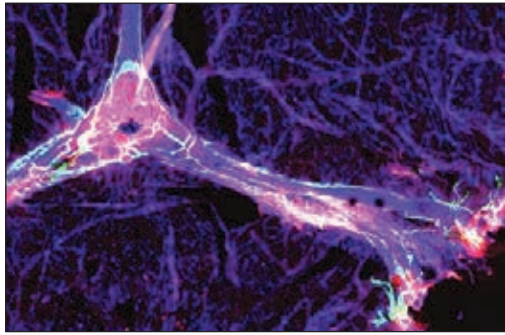


Brain's waste removal system may offer path to better outcomes in Alzheimer's therapy

NIH-funded study in mice suggests lymphatic boost could help reduce amyloid buildup

Enhancing the brain's lymphatic system when administering immunotherapies may lead to better clinical outcomes for Alzheimer's disease patients, according to a new study in mice. Results published April 28 in *Nature* suggest that treatments such as the immunotherapies BAN2401 or aducanumab might be more effective when the brain's lymphatic system can better drain the amyloid-beta protein that accumulates in the brains of those living with Alzheimer's. Major funding for the research was provided by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, and all study data is now freely available to the broader scientific community.

"A broad range of research on immunotherapies in development to treat Alzheimer's by targeting amyloid-beta has not to date demonstrated consistent results," said NIA Director Richard J. Hodes, M.D. "While this study's findings require further confirmation, the link it has identified between a well-functioning lymphatic system in the brain and the ability to reduce amyloid-beta accumulation may be a significant step forward in pursuing this class of therapeutics."



The meningeal lymphatic vessels are in green, the blood vessels are in blue, and amyloid beta is in red. Image courtesy of Sandro Da Mesquita.

Abnormal buildup of amyloid-beta is one hallmark of Alzheimer's disease. The brain's lymphatic drainage system, which removes cellular debris and other waste, plays an important part in that accumulation. A 2018 NIA-supported study showed a link between impaired lymphatic vessels and increased amyloid-beta deposits in the brains of aging mice, suggesting these vessels could play a role in age-related cognitive decline and Alzheimer's. The lymphatic system is made up of vessels which run alongside blood vessels and which carry immune cells and waste to lymph nodes. Lymphatic vessels extend into the brain's meninges, which are membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord.

OPT

Wheaton Revitalization Project a finalist in Urban Land Institute's Awards for Excellence competition

Montgomery County Department of Transportation's Wheaton Revitalization Project is one of 23 international finalists for the ULI Americas Awards for Excellence program. The program criteria are based on design, planning, technology, economic impact, community engagement, innovation and sustainability, and the winners will be announced in June.



The Wheaton Revitalization project was selected for its sustainable mixed-use design and for contributing to the revitalization of downtown Wheaton. The project includes a 200-seat auditorium and new town square that includes public space with an amphitheater as well as a fountain and public art on the plaza.

Approximately 900 government employ-

ees will eventually work out of the 14-story office building, including Montgomery Planning and Montgomery Parks headquarters, and six other Montgomery County departments.

Earlier this year, the Wheaton building became the first government-owned office building in Maryland to receive the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

The winners of the regional ULI Awards for Excellence programs in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific become finalists in the 2021 ULI Global Awards for Excellence (uli.org/gae). ULI will announce the winners of the Global Awards for Excellence in conjunction with the ULI Fall Meeting in October.

OPT

Have Questions? Call 311

For assistance with Montgomery County issues such as down tree limbs, pot holes, illegal dumping, illegal signage, traffic and street light outages, storm drain issues, special bulk pick-up, permitting inspections, and more, call MC311 for assistance at 311 (or 240-777-0311) or submit your issue/request online at: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mc311/.



OPT

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2021 Jubilarian Mass June 27, 2021 | 3:00 p.m.

Are you celebrating a special wedding anniversary? Each year the Archdiocese of Washington honors couples married 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70+ years at the annual Jubilarian Mass. This year's Mass will be held Sunday, June 27 at 3:00pm at the Cathedral of St. Matthew. Seating is limited to allow for social distancing. The Mass will also be live-streamed to allow all Jubilarian couples to participate virtually.

Registration is required to attend the Mass in person. To register to attend the Mass in person, or to receive a signed Jubilarian anniversary certificate, please contact your parish office to notify them of your wedding anniversary as soon as possible.

Misa de Jubileo 2021 27 de junio de 2021 | 3:00 p.m.

¿Está usted cumpliendo un aniversario especial de matrimonio? Cada año, la Arquidiócesis de Washington rinde homenaje a las parejas que celebran 25, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 o más años de matrimonio sacramental en una Misa de Jubileo. Este año la Misa se celebrará el domingo 27 de junio a las 3:00 de la tarde en la Catedral de San Mateo. El cupo es limitado, a fin de permitir el distanciamiento social. La Misa también se transmitirá en directo para que todas las parejas que celebren jubileo de bodas participen en forma virtual.

Para asistir a la misa en persona es necesario inscribirse. Para asistir a la Misa en persona, o para recibir un certificado firmado de aniversario de Jubileo, comuníquese con la oficina de su parroquia lo más pronto posible para avisarle de su aniversario de bodas.

Source: Archdiocese of Washington, <https://adv.org/media-events/events/>

OPT



2021 Maryland Senior Olympics

MSO has posted the following tentative schedule of 2021 events.

Saturday August 7:
Track & Field

Sunday August 8:
Track & Field

Friday August 27:
Pickleball women's
doubles

Saturday August 27:
Pickleball mixed doubles

Sunday August 29:
Pickleball men's doubles

Monday August 30
Pickleball singles
Sunday September 5
5K Race at the Kentlands

Saturday September 11:
Badminton

Monday September 13:
Golf

Saturday October 2
Archery

Sunday October 24
10K Race for Our Kids

Registration is not open
yet. For updates, visit:
<https://mdseniorolympics.org/>

OPT

May is Older Americans Month

When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthday. About a third of older Americans lived in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. Interest

Continued on page 36



STATE PLAN ON AGING VIRTUAL TOWN HALLS

These sessions are designed to provide the opportunity for stakeholders to offer **public comment** on the draft State Plan on Aging covering October 2022 through September 2025. All interested individuals are welcome to attend.

Please attend one:

May 26: 10am - 11:30am

May 27: 2pm - 3:30pm

June 1: 6pm - 7:30pm



To register for a Virtual Town Hall, visit:

<http://bit.ly/MDOAVirtualTownHall>

or call 410-767-4170

To inform your comments, please review the draft of the State Plan on Aging 2022-2025. Visit our website: aging.maryland.gov

For more information, contact the Maryland Department of Aging at: mdoa.executiveoffice@maryland.gov or call 410-767-4170.

If you require an accommodation, please call 410-767-4170 at least five business days in advance of the Virtual Town Hall you plan to attend.

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Seventh graders dig in to create the St. Francis Garden.



Student Initiative Sparks School-Wide Engagement

St. Bartholomew student Thomas W. had no idea what he would set into motion when he proposed getting more school “swag” to wear with his uniform. The seventh grader spoke with administrators, who gave him the green light to work with a ven-

dor to design a hooded sweatshirt and figure out pricing so the new garment could be sold to the school community. He proposed his design at a Student Government meeting, and others chimed in with ideas.

Seventh-grade Class Representative Cooper A. suggested using the sweatshirt sale as an opportunity to raise funds for a campus improvement project. Specifically, Cooper wanted to spruce up the landscaping around the seventh-grade homeroom/science room. The grounds were home to a statue of St. Francis of Assisi, but little else. Soon after, it was determined that \$5 from each sweatshirt sold would be used to develop the “St. Francis Garden.”

St. Francis of Assisi is well-known as the patron saint of animals and ecology. Each year, St. Bart’s students joyfully celebrate

his feast day each October by gathering around his statue for a Blessing of Pets ceremony which, like most events, was canceled this year due to the pandemic.

The seventh-grade students sketched their vision for the garden, researched plants that would best thrive in the location, and secured a sponsor to provide low-cost or free plants for the garden (thank you Chris Kelley and Metro Grounds Management). The Student Government announced a school-wide Earth Day campus clean up and seventh grade unveiled the new garden at an outdoor family picnic over Earth Day Weekend, complete with an outdoor zoo. It was a blessing to come together and celebrate the success of this student-led initiative.

OPT

St. Bartholomew Parish

6900 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20816

Rev. Mark Knestout
Pastor
301-229-7933

St. Bartholomew School
Frank English, Principal
301-229-5586

Frank Maguire, OPT Editor
202-512-8226

MONTH

Con't from page 35

in older Americans and their concerns was growing.

Historically, Older Americans Month has been a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country, in particular those who defended our country. Every President since John F. Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation asking that the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities during May. Older Americans Month is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs, and other such activities.

The theme for 2021 is “Communities of Strength.” Older adults have built resilience and strength over their lives through successes, failures, joys, and diffi-

culties. Their stories and contributions help to support and inspire others. Throughout May, the strength of older adults will be celebrated with special emphasis on the power of connection and engagement in building strong communities.

Here are some ways to share and connect with older adults in your community:

- **Intergenerational Pen (or Keyboard) Pals:** Encouraging intergenerational pen pals can reduce isolation and increase resilience in people of all ages. Here are some writing prompts to get the conversations started.
- **Distanced Outdoor Event:** Seeing other people in person—even with masks on and from a six-foot distance—can offer a richer sense of connection and community than virtual gatherings. The CDC says that outdoor gatherings with plen-

ty of ventilation, masks, and social distancing pose less risk of spreading COVID-19. Check out our event tip sheet for a fun and safe event!

- **Reach out to neighbors:** Even if you can’t get together in person right now, you can still connect with your neighbors. Leave a small gift on their doorstep, offer to help with outdoor chores, or deliver a home cooked meal.
- **Volunteer an hour of your time:** There are many seniors in your community who could use an hour of your time. Find your local area agency on aging to learn about volunteer opportunities today. Volunteer to be an Ombudsman who advocates for residents in a nursing home or a Veteran in a VA home.

Source: Age Safe America

Pro-Life Democrat: 50 Brief Insights, An Apologia

Montgomery County Author Interviewed

People from area parishes and throughout the pro-life community attended a Zoom event sponsored by Democrats for Life, in which Kathy Kelly, its Maryland chapter director, interviewed the pro-life activist and author John Cavanaugh-O’Keefe about his new book *Pro-Life Democrat: 50 Brief Insights, An Apologia*. Kathy Kelly is a member of Our Lady of Lourdes parish and John Cavanaugh-O’Keefe is a member of St. Paul’s parish.

John was asked to comment on the major themes of his book, including pro-life strategy, the Culture of Life, political failures, the Seamless Garment or Consistent Ethic of Life, Population Control and Common Ground and Civility. John made a case that a strong resilient presence of pro-lifers is needed in both major political parties. He addressed his dedication to



bridge-building between pro-lifers and social justice advocates in a Church which he believes should be more united.

OPT

Reversal of Limits on Human Fetal Tissue Research Denounced

The National Institutes of Health announced in April that it is reversing limits on human fetal tissue research that were put in place by the previous Administration. Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City in Kansas, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities issued the following statement in response:

“The bodies of children killed by abortion deserve the same respect as that of any other person. Our government has no right to treat innocent abortion victims as a commodity that can be scavenged for body parts to be used in research. It is unethical to promote and subsidize research that can

lead to legitimizing the violence of abortion. Researchers have demonstrated that we can do effective scientific research and develop efficacious clinical treatments without harvesting tissue from aborted babies. It is also deeply offensive to millions of Americans for our tax dollars to be used for research that collaborates with an industry built on the taking of innocent lives. I call on the Biden Administration to instead fund research that does not rely upon body parts taken from innocent children killed through abortion.”

Source: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, www.usccb.org

OPT

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CLASS OF 2021 GRADUATES

St. Bartholomew School

Reverend Mark D. Knestout, **Pastor** • Mr. Frank English, **Principal**



**Gabriela
Bautista**

GEORGETOWN
VISITATION

*"Die with memories,
not dreams."*
-Anonymous



**Jah-ir
Birt**

ST. JOHN'S
CATHOLIC PREP

*"When you want to do
something, do it right away.
Do it when you can.
It's the only way to live
a life without regrets."*
-Sonic the Hedgehog



**Partridge
Carey**

ST. ANSELM'S ABBEY

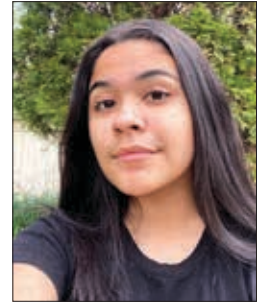
*"Nobody's
perfect, but, yet,
here I am."*
-Hannah Montana



**John
Cresswell**

UNDECIDED

*"What lies behind us
and what lies before
us are small matters
compared to what
lies within us."*
-Ralph Waldo Emerson



**Sofia
Delgado**

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL

*"Maybe there's something
you're afraid to say, or
someone you're afraid to
love, or somewhere you're
afraid to go. It's gonna hurt
because it matters."*
-John Green



**Valentina
Goodfellow**

UNDECIDED

*"Happiness is the new rich.
Inner peace is the new
success. Health is the
new wealth. Kindness is
the new cool."*
-Syed Balkhi



**Cole
Hessman**

WINSTON CHURCHILL
HIGH SCHOOL

*"Darkness cannot drive out
darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate;
only love can do that."*
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



**Benjamin
Lee**

GONZAGA COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL

*"Some people want it
to happen, some wish it
would happen, others
make it happen."*
-Michael Jordan



**Madeleine
Morrison**

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL

*"All our dreams can
come true, if we
have the courage to
pursue them."*
-Walt Disney



**Ana Lucia
Obermeier**

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL

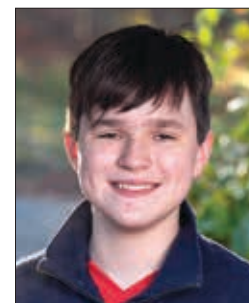
*"You can't stay in your
corner of your forest
waiting for others to
come to you. You have to
go to them sometimes."*
-A.A. Milne



**Reed
Phillips**

LANDON SCHOOL

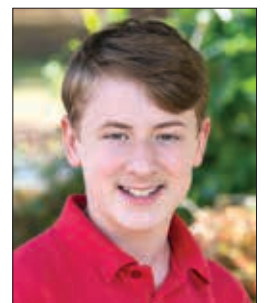
*"You have to be able
to accept failure,
to get better."*
-LeBron James



**Jamie
Sechser**

WALT WHITMAN
HIGH SCHOOL

*"Life moves pretty fast.
If you don't stop and
look around once
in a while, you
could miss it."*
-Ferris Bueller



**John
Stanek**

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL

*"You miss 100%
of the shots
you don't take."*
-Wayne Gretzky

Call for Prayers for Israel and Palestine Amidst Recent Violence

In the midst of recent heightened violence in Jerusalem and Gaza, Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on International Justice and Peace expressed renewed commitment to the people of the Holy Land and called for prayer.

Bishop Malloy's statement follows:

"We are greatly saddened that simmering tensions erupted into violence in the Holy Land this week. It is a cycle we have unfortunately witnessed and spoken out against many times, but because of our great love in Christ Jesus, we remain ever present and close to the people of this land until the Peace of God reigns in its fullness forever.

"We call on all parties to cease the violence. The maiming and killing of one's neighbor only serves to demonize one's adversary and deepen passions that divide and destroy. The Holy Father reminded the world on Sunday, 'Violence begets violence. Enough with the clashes.'

"The U.S. bishops have long called for upholding the Status Quo of the Holy Places, including the Al-Aqsa Compound, the site of much of this week's violence. We affirm the need to adhere to international law in settling these disputes, rightly rooted in moral law, the rights of nations, and equal dignity of every people.

"We join with the Holy Father, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and other brethren who have called on the international community to intervene in the promotion of a just peace in the Holy City. We especially offer our prayers for all those who rightfully call the Holy Land home, as it is through them any lasting peace will come. May the primary adversaries in this conflict be given the guidance, strength, and courage that only comes from on High to build trust amidst those who are eager for belligerence. With our suffering Lord as our model, we renew our enduring commitment to our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land."

OPT

Montgomery County Foster and Adoptive Parent Services

Foster parenting is form of giving and sacrifice that results in the most rewarding experiences one can hope for.

Who is in foster care?

Children in foster care have been removed from their homes due to some form of abuse or neglect that posed a significant risk to their safety. They are Montgomery County children and they come from all backgrounds – a variety of social and economic backgrounds, from every race, religion and nationality. Their ages range from infancy to young adult. These children are not orphans and have experienced significant trauma. Foster parents are trusted to keep children safe while Child Welfare Services works with the biolog-

ical parents to put services and a plan in place so that children will be safe upon reunification. Only if this plan cannot be achieved is there a possibility of adoption.

Can I be a foster parent?

The most important qualification to become a foster parent is a desire to protect children. The second most important is

flexibility! Since foster care is a government program, the requirements to become a foster parent are mandated by law. We are not able to make exceptions.

To learn more about becoming a foster parent in Montgomery County, visit:

<https://www.montgomery-countymd.gov/HHS-Program/CYF/CYFFosterCareMeetings.html>

OPT



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 HIGH SCHOOL

"Hearts that possess love are fit to receive all God's graces." – St. Vincent Pallotti
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St. John the Evangelist School News

Masked Instruments and Scrambled Results

St. John the Evangelist's amazing band teacher, Kristin Maloney, has returned in person after spending this school year giving online music lessons. Grades four through eight take turns in front of the school playing music with other classmates under Miss Maloney's direction. The students are physically distanced, and the instruments wear masks!

Mrs. Gutierrez's eighth-grade Science students were testing the laws of physics and their ingenuity. They were tasked with designing a device that would



Above: First Communion class with the rosaries they made

At left: Four-meter egg test

At right: Fourth-grade band members playing outdoors

Below: First Communion banners



Eighth-grade "School Daze" musical



keep an egg safe when dropped from one meter, two meters, three meters, and four meters. There were many successes and a couple of "scrambled" results!

St. John the Evangelist second graders received their First Communion on May 1. Earlier that week, they had a retreat, either in-school or from a distance, when they make rosaries and their First Communion banners.

Every year our eighth graders

Continued on page 41

St. John the Evangelist Parish
10103 Georgia Ave.
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Einstein HSB. Demeke
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St. John the Evangelist CLASS OF 2021

We Congratulate You!

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Miss Emily Pacconi, Eighth Grade Teacher

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Einstein HSQ. Mulholland
The Heights

Colella Digital

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Good Counsel HSN. Pauley
Academy Of The Holy CrossC. Peters
St. John's College HSH. Rutz
DeMatha Catholic HSM. Tankesley
St. John's College HSA. Tewodros
Good Counsel HSJ. Zamora
Rockville HSC. Zarzecki
St. John's College HS

RESULTS

Con't from page 40

highlight our Spring Recital with a mini-musical. Last year, they were unable to do this because everyone was a distance learner. This year our music teacher, Mrs. Ruppert, and our super-parent and tech guru, Ms. St. Clair, teamed up to create a video of the eight graders performing "School Daze." Both in-person and distance learners could take part in the production. Now the whole school as well as parents can enjoy this happy event.

We would like to congratulate all of our school and parish eighth graders who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on Ascension Thursday. May the Gifts of the Holy Spirit carry you through the coming years.

We also wish the very best to our graduates. They had an eighth-grade year that no one could have imagined. Even though they could not participate in some of the traditional events that mark their last year here at SJE, and they had to adapt other activities to meet required Covid restrictions, they managed to grow academically and spiritually, and they did it with resolve and a good sense of humor. We will miss this class, but we wish them the very best on their high-school journey.

OPT

Jesus' Ascension brings us joy says Pope Francis

On Ascension Sunday, May 15, Pope Francis said that Jesus' Ascension into heaven as true God and true man and His promise of the Holy Spirit are causes of joy.

By Christopher Wells, Vatican News

There are none of the usual feeling of loss or abandonment among the disciples when Jesus ascended in the Heaven, said Pope Francis at Sunday's Regina Coeli. Instead, "despite their separation from the Lord, they do not appear grief-stricken, but rather, are joyful and ready to go into the world as missionaries." (Along with the prayer, the Pope often adds a brief commentary on the Gospel of the day and others on current issues today.)

"Why are the disciples not sad?" the Pope asked. "Why should we too rejoice at seeing Jesus ascend into Heaven?" His answer: "The Ascension completes Jesus' mission among us."

In Italy, as in many countries throughout the world, the solemnity of the Ascension is observed liturgically on the sixth Sunday after Easter. "After descending into our humanity and redeeming it, now Jesus ascends to heaven, taking our flesh with Him," the Pope said. Jesus is the first human being to enter Heaven, precisely



The Ascension of Jesus, by Giotto

because He is both true God and true man. "Our flesh is in heaven," the Pope exclaimed, "and this gives us joy!"

His Ascension is not "an abandonment," because Jesus "remains forever with the disciples, with us" in prayer. Jesus shows the Father the wounds "with which

He redeemed us," — and this, the Pope said, "should give us security, and even joy, great joy!"

The second reason for joy, the Pope continued, "is the promise of Jesus" to send the Holy Spirit. After His Ascension, Jesus "sent us the Holy Spirit, He promises us the Holy Spirit, in order to go out

to evangelize. This is the reason for the joy of today, for the joy of this day of the Ascension."

Pope Francis concluded his remarks with the prayer that "Mary, Queen of Heaven might help us to be in the world courageous witnesses to the Risen One in the concrete situations of life."

OPT



Congratulations Graduating Class of 2021!



John Abel
The Avalon
School



Karl Adou
Winston Churchill
High School



Julianna Aguerro
Pooleville HS
Global Ecology Program



Julia Bielawski
Pooleville HS
Global Ecology Program



Claire Bielski
Pooleville HS
Global Ecology Program



Brea Brown
Our Lady of
Good Counsel



Wendy Cruz
Richard Montgomery
High School



Sean Dyer
Georgetown
Preparatory School



Rania Elias
Northwest
High School



Niyat Fessuh
St. John's
Catholic Prep



Christian Gjoni
Our Lady of
Good Counsel



Joseph Haddad
Damascus
High School



Alessandra McDonald
St. John's College
High School



Karen Mitrik
Albert Einstein HS
Visual & Performing Arts



Matthew Oglesby
St. John's
Catholic Prep



Richard Roche
Urbana
High School



Ryan Staub
Georgetown
Preparatory School



Giselle Yanes
Magruder
High School



Sonya Zahed
Clarksburg
High School

WWW.MOGSCHOOL.COM

St Elizabeth School News



St. E's Virtual Gala

St. Elizabeth School has been very busy as we headed into our last months of our very successful school year. We began the quarter with a virtual family gala. Our theme, "The Magic of St. E's," celebrated our resilient community and the challenges we have overcome together this year. Featuring a live magic show, a slide show tribute to our community, and a live auction segment, the St. E's virtual gala was a night not to be missed. Thank you to our families, co-chairs, and many volunteers for reminding us how much fun we have together as we raised funds for our school. Our families did a carpool drive through to pick up their dinners and goodie bags for the gala!



Spring is in the air!

From lessons about chicks in the Kindergarten classroom and virtual Mother's Day Tea events in our lower grades to Easter preparations and time spent outdoors with their St. E's friends, our students have embraced this season with renewed joy, eagerness, and curiosity. Here third graders enjoyed trying out the wind vanes they made in science class!



Eighth-Grade Celebrations

We then celebrated our 2021 graduating class with a student vs. faculty socially distanced basketball shooting competition. Students lined the sidewalk with cheers and clapping as our eighth graders proudly ran through our campus to take their places. Our eighth graders came out on top after a close match, and it was wonderful to see so many smiling eyes above those masks. St. Elizabeth seventh and eighth graders then participated in our beautiful Candle Mass tradition as our seventh graders become the new leaders of our school.



God Bless our Eighth Graders!

Our eighth-grade students received their Confirmation during three different Masses in April. Please join us for praying for them as they receive this important sacrament of our Catholic faith. We look forward to continuing the celebrations with a virtual graduation dinner and an in-person graduation ceremony at the end of May. Our school community could not be prouder of these young men and women for their leadership, commitment, encouragement, and faith during a year like no other.

St. Elizabeth Parish

917 Montrose Road
Rockville, MD

Msgr. J. Wilfrid Parent

Pastor

301-881-1380

St. Elizabeth School Principal

Mary Penny

301-881-1824

Victoria Wesley

OPT Editor

301-881-1380

FAITH

Con't from page 1

have all had an abnormal experience of church and faith for the last 14 months, and it has impacted each of us differently. I know some of you may be more involved than ever with your faith and your parish. Many have turned to God in these times in prayer, and many have also done more than ever to help others and support them in their journeys.

At the same time, I know many of us have felt isolated. We have missed being at Eucharist together. We missed major liturgical events that are important to us. Most recently, it may have been the entire Lenten journey, Stations of the Cross, Holy Week and Easter.

Our celebrations this year were beautiful as always, but not yet at the level we usually experience.

The pandemic has knocked us out of our rhythms and perhaps caused us to lose a little bit of our faith "mojo." Because of this, I think we all would do well to make a concerted effort to return to our faith journey. Before he left to become bishop of the Springfield diocese in Massachusetts, Father Bill Byrne liked to say, "We don't want to just return to normal. We want to return to better."

Coming back to Mass when you feel safe is critical, as we talked about in the last issue. My friend's comment reminded me that faith goes beyond Sunday Mass to every aspect of our lives. For some, it may be returning to or beginning volunteer work at your parish. It may be your time to be among the

leaders in your church, a go-to person in your parish, your neighborhood and your family for celebrating the gift of faith.

These can be seemingly simple things and yet still profoundly impact you and those around you. Mother Teresa spoke beautifully of not so much seeking to do great things, but to do small things with great love.

I saw that in my parents, and I know that even the simplest things created a strong faith in all 13 of their children. In Advent, it may have been the wreath, or Kris Kringle or Secret Santa traditions. In Lent, it was praying the Stations of the Cross together and reflecting upon what it means to fast and do penance.

We are now in May, which is dedicated to Mary. We would often pray the Rosary together during

May, and, by the time I was a teenager, our big family prayed a decade of the Rosary after every single dinner.

I mention this to remind all of us that faith is not just what happens in church or on the church property. It is also what happens in our homes, our work, and everywhere else, especially when children and grandchildren are learning from our example.

As life starts to feel a little more normal again, let us take the time to think about how we practice our faith and what we may be able to do better. It is critical that the Eucharist remain central to all we are. It is our basic belief as Catholic Christians that we receive Jesus in a very special way.

It is also important to carry that faith into our daily lives. What more can we do to draw closer

to God? To enrich our faith? To remind ourselves and others us that we are not Catholic in name only but that we live our faith? And what more can we do to fulfill our role as baptized Christians to share the faith that has been handed on to us with our children, grandchildren, and all we encounter?

As we head into the summer, may we use the coming months to look for more ways to bring our faith alive. I always encourage people to start small but commit to doing whatever they choose regularly. No matter how big or small, every time you do something spiritual and faith-filled, God comes even more alive in you.

May you feel God's presence within you more each day, and may others see God in you more clearly than ever.



Claudio Andon
St. John's College High School



Natalie Annulis
Walter Johnson High School



Leah Antony
Thomas S. Wootton High School



John Boland
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Edward Boland
St. John's College High School



William Boland
St. John's College High School



Lydia Burgess
St. John's College High School



Hannah Chen
Academy of the Holy Cross



Kylie Clark
Seneca Valley High School



Rafael Correa
Georgetown Preparatory School



Matthew Culkin
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Chase Davenport
Georgetown Preparatory School



Natalia D'Costa
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Mimi Dietrich
Walter Johnson High School



Claire Dooren
St. John's College High School



Hugo Ducoudret
St. John's College High School



Adam Duran
Our Lady of Good Counsel

St. Elizabeth Catholic School

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2021

Mrs. Mary Penny *Principal*

Monsignor J. Wilfrid Parent *Pastor*



Daniel Familiar
St. John's College High School



Daniel Frick
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Isabella Gentile
Academy of the Holy Cross



Emma Gieseman
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Isabella Goycochea
Academy of the Holy Cross



Sara Greaser
Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart



Elizabeth Griffin
Thomas S. Wootton High School



Olivia Grimberg
St. John's College High School



Alfonso Gruss
St. John's College High School



Maggie Hennessy
Thomas S. Wootton High School



Carter Hoatson
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Daisy Javier
St. John's College High School



Ryan Kaelin
Georgetown Preparatory School



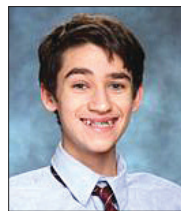
Annabelle Kehoe
Academy of the Holy Cross



Carter Kilburg
Thomas S. Wootton High School



Jaidan Kim
Connelly School of the Holy Child



Dylan Kraft
Richard Montgomery High School



Michael Licamele
Gonzaga College High School



Sullivan Locraft
Gonzaga College High School



John Lukasiak
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Louis Marmillot
St. John's College High School



Patrick McDonough
Georgetown Preparatory School



Camryn Medley
Undecided



Eric Joseph Mil
Walter Johnson High School



Daniela Moina
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Antonella Molina Rivas
Our Lady of Good Counsel



James Mulholland
Gonzaga College High School



Connor Murphy
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Alice Osborne
Richard Montgomery High School



Norah O'Toole
Academy of the Holy Cross



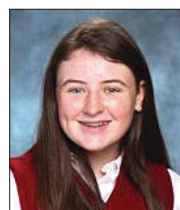
Dimitrios Panteris Le
Our Lady of Good Counsel



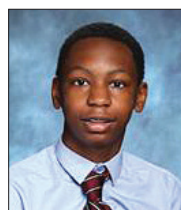
Elsa Raedeke
Academy of the Holy Cross



Blake Reid
Georgetown Preparatory School



Lindsey Reynolds
Academy of the Holy Cross



Tobias Sanwo
Gonzaga College High School



Liora Sheh
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Matthew Shioutakon
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Isabella Spurgeon
Academy of the Holy Cross



Magdalena Starkes
Academy of the Holy Cross



Dylan Valencia
Gonzaga College High School



Nicolas Velarde
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Mackenzie Woodward
The Madeira School



Bryant Worch
Our Lady of Good Counsel



Declan Worch
St. John Paul II Academy, Boca Raton, FL

SCAMP Reimagined for the Pandemic

As a result of continuing health concerns, (Summer Camp at Mercy) will not take place at Our Lady of Mercy this summer. Over the years, not only the campers have enjoyed SCAMP, but many regular volunteers and counselors look forward to an experience that is a parish tradition and a source of memories. The work of preparing for SCAMP each year is rewarded

by laughter, fun and learning. Even a few tears shed by young campers in a new situation are quickly forgotten as everyone begins having fun. Funds received from the special parish collection for SCAMP will be used to make fun kits for kids and sent to Assumption and St. Thomas More Parishes for the kids who would have attended SCAMP this summer.

OPT

Special Masses in May

Mercy has a tradition of celebrating Pentecost with special music and that tradition will carry on at the 9 AM and 11 AM Masses on May 23, 2021. The celebration has been altered slightly because of the pandemic.

Chairs will be positioned outside the church, near the Easter fire pit, and outdoor speakers will be used so that the music and Mass will be available to people who would not be able to gather inside the church due to covid restrictions.

In addition, on Memorial Day, a special Mass will be celebrated at St. Gabriel's Cemetery in Potomac. St. Gabriel's Church and Cemetery were established in the 1890's to serve C&O Canal workers. The workers left the area after floods in the 1920's. After that, the church was abandoned and later burned down. The cemetery is within the boundaries of Our Lady of Mercy Parish and parishioners have been laid to rest there up to the present time.

OPT

Our Lady of Mercy Parish

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Potomac, MD

Fr. Charles Antonicelli, Pastor
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Our Lady of Mercy School

D Engel, Principal
301-365-4477

Gerry Burgess, OPT Editor
301-330-5676

Visiting Presiders at Our Lady of Mercy

We welcome two new presiders, Father Peter Folan S.J. and Father Luca Caveada to Mercy. New people and new ideas keep things interesting. Father Folan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theology at Georgetown University. Father Caveada is assigned to the Apostolic Nunciature of the Holy See in Washington, D.C. He is a native of Italy and his work has taken him to Niger and Burkina Faso in Africa, Haiti and now the United States. We appreciate the assistance of our new presiders and look forward to getting to know them.

OPT

Our Lady of Mercy School News



Mercy's Parochial Vicar, Fr. Joe Cwik, led the students in a beautiful May Crowning.



Mercy students participated in the school's May Crowning.

May Crowning

In celebration of the Month of Mary, Mercy students, led by Father Joe Cwik and the beautiful voice of Stephanie Lopez, participated in a very special May Crowning ceremony. Students processed out to the garden, laid flowers at Mary's feet, and then said a rosary while Father Joe placed a student-made crown and heart on Mary.

Mercy Fund - We Did It!

Once again, the Mercy community came together in support of the mission of Our Lady of Mercy School. Through the generosity of our school parents, staff, parishioners, alum, and grandparents, we achieved 100% participation in the 2021 Mercy Fund, reaching our goal of raising \$145,000 for the school!

Celebrating Mercy's Class of 2021

We are planning a series of events to celebrate the achievements and graduation of Mercy's Class of 2021. Parents placed Class of 2021 signs in the yards of the 8th graders and "#8thGradeSpotlight"

Continued on page 47

OUR LADY OF MERCY SCHOOL CLASS OF 2021



Sophia Beahn



Andrew Ribeiro



Mary Clancy



Caitlin Dougherty



Carly Dougherty



Sky Glasson



Alex Gutierrez



Lila Horrigan



Caroline Humiston



Drew Kelly



Whitney Lamanna



Levi Leder



Anna Luther



Jake Phillips



Eloise Quinn



Matias Beariault



Gabriel Rock



Luis Rodriguez



Jack Sporidis



Sam Sporidis



Evie Stamos



Tate Wardell

CONGRATULATIONS!

THE WOODS ACADEMY

Congratulates the Class of 2021



The Class of 2021 has been accepted to the following High Schools:

Academy of the Holy Cross • Bullis School • Connelly School of the Holy Child
 Edmund Burke School • The Field School • Georgetown Day School
 Georgetown Preparatory School • Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School
 Gonzaga College High School • National Cathedral School
 Our Lady of Good Counsel High School • St. Andrew's Episcopal School
 St. John's College High School • Sidwell Friends School
 Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

The Class of 2021 has been awarded over \$200,000 in merit scholarships.

From the Desk of Holy Cross Principal, Lisa Kane

This past year was like no other—an understatement by all accounts. To borrow the often-quoted line from Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, "It was the worst of times. It was the best of times." For the Holy Cross School community, we were all challenged, but the experience also became one of the most rewarding and uplifting we can recall.

The great pivot to all-virtual learning began in the spring of 2020. Our faculty, students, and families did not miss a beat. We

were in a fortunate position: the generosity of our families over the years allowed us to invest in technology with a one-to-one student ratio of Chromebooks, a forward-thinking faculty was already integrating technology platforms into the learning environment, and our wonderful, supportive parents created partnerships that allowed for an almost seamless transition.

Behind the scenes throughout the summer, the faculty met with me weekly to keep abreast of the ever-changing landscape of Covid-19

preparedness and the implications it posed to opening school. Catholic school educators always say that teaching is not just a job; it is a vocation. The dedication that was on display throughout the summer months was proof of that. We were committed to providing the best for our students and families. No detail was overlooked, and we were ready for every eventuality.

The campus opened on time, following all of the guidelines required of us, and beyond. Understanding the need for a virtual learning

option, we ensured that a workable hybrid educational model was offered in addition to on-campus learning. Covid-19 could not mask our determination to make it work well, and with the support of our families it did work well.

As the year draws to a close, it is with great satisfaction and pride to look back on all that we have accomplished. Our students persevered and were successful. Our parents came through and supported their children and the faculty with enthusiasm and generosity. The

faculty worked diligently to find innovative ways to present lessons to both our virtual students and our in-class students. My admiration and gratitude for every member of our community has grown with each passing day.

It is said that light shines brightest in the darkness. The light of Holy Cross certainly shined through the darkness of Covid-19 ... and the future looks bright.

OPT

Holy Cross Kindness Tree Blossoms with Thanks to Principal, Lisa Kane

The hallway outside the administrative office at Holy Cross is the home of our "Kindness Tree." Students and staff place leaves on its branches, each with a description of a kindness shown between classmates or co-workers. On May 1, in honor of National Principals' Day, our Kindness Tree transformed into a "Thank You Tree" for Principal, Mrs. Kane.

Every student in Kindergarten through Grade Eight, as well as faculty members, inscribed a note with a personal message to Mrs. Kane. Some expressed gratitude for her leadership and being able to attend school in-person, but many acknowledged Mrs. Kane in other ways. One Kindergarten student wrote, "Mrs. Kane, you are special. Thank you." Third Grade students said, "You fill my heart with joy," and "You always have a sweet smile. 'Thank you for always being there for my family,'" wrote one Fifth Grader, while a Middle School



Holy Cross Principal Mrs. Lisa Kane was surprised with her very own kindness tree on National Principals' Day.

student new to Holy Cross this year wrote, "Thank you for providing such a warm, welcome school. I have loved the year so far."

One thing is for certain: Holy Cross loves Mrs. Kane!

OPT

The CBN-MC Awards Scholarships to Four Holy Cross Students

Four Holy Cross Eighth Grade students received scholarships from The Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County (CBN-MC) this year. Scholarship recipients are selected based on the quality of the essays they submit for consideration.

This year, students were asked to reflect on this passage from the Bible: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22: 37 - 40. Essayists were asked to consider how, as Christians, we can live out this message of love in today's world.

"I am very proud of our scholarship recipients," shared Middle School Language Arts teacher, Lurana Hogan. "Over the past sev-



Congratulations to four Holy Cross Eighth Grade students, pictured here, who received scholarships from the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County.

eral years, they have made significant progress in developing skills to become effective writers – it is gratifying to see that their talents were recognized." Principal, Lisa Kane, added, "We are grateful to the Catholic Business Network

of Montgomery County and their sustained commitment to supporting families who want a Catholic high school education for their children. The scholarships are extremely generous, and always received with gratitude."

OPT

Holy Cross Honors Simon of Cyrene Award Recipient

Submitted by Christine Zaleski, Holy Cross Director of Development and Admissions

The entire school and parish were excited by the announcement that Mrs. Cindy Kratz was named as the recipient of Holy Cross' 2021 Simon of Cyrene award. Mrs. Kratz was selected for this award due to her unparalleled commitment to our community. As the Parish Council Chairperson since 2017, Cindy's countless hours



Cindy Kratz, Parish Council Chairperson since 2017, was presented with the Simon of Cyrene award at the Holy Cross virtual Gala on May 1st, in recognition of her commitment to the Holy Cross community. Photo credit: Christine Zalewsky

and experience with additional ministries such as being a School of Religion teacher, along with her unique vision and perspectives, have been a guiding force for the parish.

Cindy carries on the rich tradition started by her parents who moved their family to Garrett Park and Holy Cross parish in 1966. Cindy attended The Academy of the Holy Cross while her siblings attended

Holy Cross School. Cindy and her husband Peter were married in Holy Cross Church. Their three children received their sacraments at Holy Cross and two of them were married at the church. Seven of Cindy's nine grandchildren were baptized and several grandchildren made their First Communion at Holy Cross. Cindy's parents and her son Peter were buried from Holy Cross. Additionally, her two sisters are also parishioners!

During her tenure as the Parish Council Chairperson, Cindy is most proud of the efforts the Parish Council and our parishioners made in response to the pandemic. Cindy's leadership was instrumental in implementing a weekly outdoor mass for the community after the county lifted restrictions on religious institutions in outdoor settings at the end of May 2020. Cindy shares that, "Our spacious beautiful lawns were the perfect setting for families to gather at a distance. The outdoor mass is a great success due

to the many dedicated efforts of our parishioners and the support of our pastor, Father Robert. Folks from nearby parishes and as far away as Bowie and Baltimore found their way to the only outdoor mass in our county."

With the ongoing pandemic, the traditional gala celebration to honor the Simon of Cyrene recipient could not take place. However, Cindy and her accomplishments were recognized during the school's virtual gala held in early May. Cindy states of her experience with the parish that, "Holy Cross is blessed with many pairs of hands doing the Lord's work. Their dedication calls to mind the words attributed to St. Teresa Avila: "Christ . . . has no hands but yours; no feet but yours . . ."; we are called to be Christ's presence in our world."

Cindy is truly a testament to the spirit of what makes Holy Cross parish so special . . . our people.

OPT

Holy Cross Parish

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Fr. Robert Buchmeier, Pastor
301-942-1020

Holy Cross School

Lisa Maio Kane, Principal
301-949-0053

Lurana Hogan, Parish Editor
l.hogan@hcross.org

SCHOOL NEWS

Con't from page 44

photos were posted to social media pages along with a profile of each student. The school will hold its annual "Clap-Out" celebrating our outgoing 8th grade students with applause, signs, and music!

Community Building

Community and spirit building initiatives are helping to keep students, staff, and parents connected during this pandemic year. A com-



Principal Engel became "Where's Mrs. Engel" as part of fun school contest for Mercy students.



One of Mercy's Virtual Cake Decorating contest winners!

ination of re-imagined traditions and newly created programs are keeping our community motivated! A few of the fun programs we have run are:

Where's Mrs. Engel? – Styled after the popular "Where's Waldo" books, students were challenged to locate a cardboard Principal Engel each week. Clues were announced over Mercy's MML (Mercy Morning Live) broadcast.

Field Day – one of Mercy's favorite year-end traditions will be held in late May. Each class will wear a unique team color and participate in a variety of fun outdoor activities.

Principal's Coffees – Mercy parents have been able to join Mrs. Engel for a monthly zoom coffee,

offering them a chance to connect on important school topics such as enrollment, facility updates, and covid protocol.

MPTO Relaunch – Mercy's Parent Teacher Organization has been busy planning and running some great events in support of students, parents and staff. Our first ever Cake Decorating Contest was held virtually, a fabulous fajita fiesta Cinco de Mayo lunch was enjoyed by the staff on May 5th, and a coffee and donut station greeted teachers one morning in April! We are looking forward to several more events before the end of the school year. We are so grateful to our parent community for their support!

OPT



Father Joe Cwik, Seminarian Sean Skahen, Msgr. Charles Antonicelli and Maria Guadalupe get ready to enjoy a Cinco de Mayo lunch compliments of the Mercy PTO!



Mercy's Student Council and NJHS members organized an Easter egg hunt for the younger students.

Congratulations



2021 Graduates



Isabella Amador
St. John's



Ivy Ho
Holy Cross



Kelsey Bacariss
Holy Cross



Emmy Mancino
Stone Ridge



Katelyn Switzer
Stone Ridge



Jude Bueno
Montgomery Blair
STEM Academy



Nnedimma Nwosu
Sidwell Friends



Sebastian Thomas
Wootton High School



John Chapman
St. John's



Riya Osuri
British International School
of Washington



Annetta Uduebo
Georgetown Visitation



Paris Etchu
National Cathedral School



Andrew Palumbo
St. John's



Audrey Wilkerson
St. John's



James Harris
St. John's



Amira Parra
Undecided

Freed



Head of School Joe Powers at the AM carpool.

Head of School Joe Powers Celebrates 10 Years at The Woods Academy

On Friday, May 28, The Woods Academy community will gather virtually for a Prayer Service to recognize Head of School Joe Powers and his 10 years of leadership. Mr. Powers came to The Woods in 2011 after serving as Headmaster at Washington Jesuit Academy. Mr. Powers has been a strong and patient leader of the approximately 65 faculty and staff members and 300 students at the school. During his tenure, he has been known to throw a football around at recess, shake hands (pre-pandemic) or take temperatures (during the pandemic) at morning carpool, read books to the Montessori preschool and kinder-

garten students, teach the principles of investment and entrepreneurship to fifth graders, make chicken pot pies with Woods families on MLK Jr. Day of Service, and even pick up a brush to paint a still life. Most importantly, Mr. Powers serves as a strong voice and advocate for The Woods Academy, promoting our mission and Catholic identity.

In honor of Mr. Powers' Anniversary, the Eighth Grade Leadership Network also organized a can food drive. A strong call to service is one of the ways that The Woods, an inclusive Catholic community, prepares boys and girls to lead lives of significance.

OPT

Don "Coach" Clubbs Retires after 24 Years of Service

In addition to celebrating these outstanding faculty and staff members, we also wish the legendary Mr. Don "Coach" Clubbs a very happy retirement. Coach joined The Woods community in 1997 as physical education teacher and coach of various after school sports teams. He later became Facilities Director, all along wearing many hats at the school. For the last 24 years, Coach has taken care of The Woods community during morning and afternoon carpool, at lunch, and on the playing fields and courts. He has also led a tremendous maintenance staff that cares for the school



Don Stubbs

building as if it is their home.

While we wish him a fond farewell for now, we hope he will return to play Santa Claus in our annual Christmas concert because no one can elicit such screams of joy from our students quite like Coach in a red and white Santa suit.

On the heels of Teacher Appreciation Week (May 3-7, 2021), we are honored to celebrate such an outstanding and dedicated faculty and staff. They truly are the heart and soul of The Woods Academy.

OPT

Other Faculty & Staff Anniversaries



Lori Camalier



Kathryn Fogarty



Robert Kalas



Tom Parker



Joseph Powers



Maria Saucedo

Several other members of The Woods community will celebrate milestone anniversaries at the completion of the 2020-2021 school year. Please join us in saluting Mr. Powers and the following devoted faculty and staff members of The Woods Academy.

5 Years

Lori Camalier, Second-Grade Teacher

Kate Fogarty, First-Grade Teacher

Bob Kalas, Fifth and Sixth-Grade Social Studies Teacher

10 Years

Joe Powers, Head of School



Nancy Talbot

15 Years

Tom Parker, Physical Education Teacher

Nancy Talbot, Fourth-Grade Teacher



Suzie Tomlinson

20 Years

Maria Saucedo, Maintenance Staff

30 Years

Suzie Tomlinson, Special Events Coordinator

National Catholic Pledge to End the Death Penalty

In response to our Church's call, I pledge to educate, advocate, and pray for an end to the death penalty.

- I will **educate** myself and my community about the injustices of the death penalty, including the ways it risks innocent life, fails victims' families, and contradicts the Catholic Church's pro-life teaching.
- I will **advocate** for the dignity of all life, including those who are on death row and awaiting execution, and actively work to end the death penalty in my state and my country.

- I will **pray** for mercy and healing for all who are involved in the criminal justice system: victims of crime and their families, those in prison and on death row, communities where crimes are committed, and all who work in the legislative system.

ilies, those in prison and on death row, communities where crimes are committed, and all who work in the legislative system.

Sign the Pledge! Visit: <https://catholicismobilizing.org/action/pledge>

God of mercy, help me to remember your loving compassion as I go forward to work for an end to the death penalty. Allow me to be a vessel for your mercy, so as to heal the broken and welcome the outcast. Amen.

OPT

The Woods Academy

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Head of School
Joseph E. Powers

OPT Editor
Jodie Shoemaker
Director of Marketing,
Communications, & Alumni
Relations
www.woodsacademy.org



The National Catholic
Pledge to End the Death
Penalty is made possible
through the support of:



Congratulations, St. John's Graduates!

The Class of 2021
collectively earned more than
\$34 million in scholarships.

Juan Antonio Francisco Abreu
Jacqueline Quinn Albero*
Samara Elizabeth Albert*
Zachary Jackson Alexander
Quinn Joshua Irving Allen
Parker Richard Amero
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Lessons from Vacation Bible Camp influence high school student to support global solidarity

By Melissa Montealegre Egan

During summers spent sketching Biblical scenes that transformed the St. Francis of Assisi Parish Center into Vacation Bible Camp, Archer Romelli had time to reflect on how much he enjoyed giving to people in need. This past Lent, when given the opportunity to donate from his largesse, the 16-year-old sophomore did not hesitate to demonstrate his Christian values in action.

A student at Sherwood High School, Romelli decided to forego the coins he would typically push through the slot of the Catholic Relief Services' Rice Bowl and donated a sum that would considerably lighten his wallet – approximately \$250 of his own money he had received as birthday gifts.

"Once I knew the money had been dropped off, I felt like I had



High school sophomore Archer Romelli offers some tips on making an art project during the 2020 Vacation Bible Camp, which was an all-virtual program.

done something, not only beneficial, but significant," Romelli said.

Having participated in the parish's Vacation Bible Camp both

as a camper and a teen volunteer, Romelli gravitates toward the Art

Station during the week-long summer intensive in faith formation. The Rice Bowl Program, which invites participants to offer Lenten alms that help alleviate hunger and malnutrition around the globe, is a key social justice project that Vacation Bible Camp participants learn about every year.

This Lent, Romelli said he decided to give to the program because he felt confident his donation would benefit the charity's mission and he trusted the Church to spend the money on people who needed it.

"When it comes down to what I want, it's a bunch of stuff I don't need," Romelli said. "With this money, it would go to things that people actually need."

Social Concerns Director Tony Bosnick said he was very happy when he learned of Romelli's donation.

"Archer's enthusiastic support for CRS Rice Bowl reflects an embrace of the Church's mission of global solidarity," Bosnick said. "This is what the recent popes have been teaching us as they reflect on the Gospel and have written about in the social encyclicals. We are called to care for others, including the needy overseas."

When asked how the Church could better engage his peers, this gamer pointed to two hands-on ways teens can get active: getting involved with the church through ministries such as Vacation Bible Camp and defending their faith in school.

"There are lots of high school kids who don't believe in God," Romelli said. "Educating them as to your beliefs and educating them on what the Church's beliefs are can be very beneficial."

OPT

Pandemic offers the right environment for Liturgy of the Hours to flourish

By Melissa Montealegre Egan

During his seven years as the pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Church, Fr. John Dillon had searched for a way to seed the Liturgy of the Hours – an ancient prayer form among Christians since the Fourth century – into the parish's prayer life. The COVID-19 pandemic provided just the environment for this practice to take root – and it is largely parishioners tending the soil.

Less than two weeks after COVID-19 shut down the public worship of Mass in the Archdiocese of Washington last spring, Deacon Jim Datovech began hosting virtual Morning and Evening Prayer on March 27, 2020, through his private Zoom account. His motivation stemmed from the need to connect people with one another through prayer during a challenging time.

Initially, less than 10 people joined those viewing the eBreviary on Deacon Jim's shared screen over the Zoom platform. But after two weeks, those numbers had grown to 20-25 people. The virtual prayer community took a two-month break



Deacon Jim Datovech, one of St. Francis of Assisi Parish's three permanent deacons.

over July and August, when COVID cases appeared to be waning, but restarted at the end of August, when it became apparent the pandemic was not over.

Parishioner Lois James joined Evening Prayer one day after seeing it listed in one of Fr. Dillon's Flocknote messages. She came to appreciate the cadence of the psalms, which make up the prayers, the call and response between the prayer leader and the participants and the flow of the prayer form.

"It gives me a way not to leave my home and still be with a beautiful church – and I don't mean the building," James said.

The prayer community that has developed from the Liturgy of the Hours has strengthened in the group's nearly 12 months of praying together. Deacon Jim estimates that 35-40 people have participated at the height of attendance, with

some new people joining from outside the parish. Participants are also offering heartfelt prayer intentions, a sign that they feel comfortable with one another and safe in each other's confidence.

Deacon Jim recently informed the group that he would need to step away from full-time hosting duties because of his professional work commitments. After more than 650 sessions, Deacon Jim needed to step back and let others step up.

This became the impetus for the participants to host. Before Deacon Jim relinquished daily hosting duties on April 11, five lay parishioners, a parish staff member and another deacon committed to hosting Liturgy of the Hours for at least three months.

James, who credits the Liturgy of the Hours for kickstarting her regular prayer life, volunteered to become one of the hosts and committed to do whatever she could to keep it going.

"We all struggled the first time or two hosting," James said. "But that's another way where the group can be so accepting – it's no big deal. And it makes it so much more fulfilling."

Deacon Jim said he believes the prayers marking the hours of the day fill a void in people's hearts that existed when the lockdown occurred.

"It's good that the mystery has been taken off Liturgy of the Hours and made understandable for people to know and love," Deacon Jim. "The light has been shined on it and people understand how beautiful a prayer it is."

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Sylvia Jones, ministry coordinator of the Special Events Ministry and co-chair of the Planning Committee for the parish's 50th Anniversary, kneels behind a wagon full of herb plants that were sold at the parish's Annual Plant and Flower Sale held May 7-9 at the church. The proceeds from the sale will benefit the parish's upcoming 50th Anniversary celebration, which will kick off in October on the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi.

POET

Con't from page 2

English teacher, in addition to Mrs. Walsh and Mr. Tobin. Entries were judged on both the quality of the poem itself but also on the skill of the recitation in determining the winner.

Although the competition was open to all students in grades nine through twelve, the finalists were comprised of young women from private, parochial, and public high schools. First place and a cash award of \$1,000 went to Ms. Lara Alarapon, a freshman at St. Andrew's Episcopal School, Bethesda, for her poem entitled, "Those Sunny Saturdays." Sofia Ghosh, a junior at Brookewood

School and her "Sonnet 18 -B-Side" took second place honors, and Brookewood freshmen Ana Pantoja Alfaro's "One Day I Will Run Across the Universe" placed third.

Sponsored by the McPherson family, the Joseph Warren McPherson Memorial Poetry Contest was established to honor the life and work of Joseph McPherson (1948-2018) who loved poetry, especially its usefulness in revealing the true, the good, and the beautiful. He wrote several thousand sonnets during his life on themes including history, religion, art, and natural history. He continues to inspire the mission and culture of Brookewood School and The Avalon School, including their commitment to the study and recitation of poetry.

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Easter Vigil brings dozens of new Catholics to St. John Neumann Catholic Church

By Rodney Harris

Amid coronavirus restrictions, St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Gaithersburg, Maryland welcomed new Catholics into the Church on Saturday, April 3rd at the Easter Vigil Mass.

"What a beautiful, beautiful celebration and so beautiful to welcome so many into the Church," said Msgr. Robert Panke, Pastor of St. John Neumann Parish, at the conclusion of the most important liturgy on the Church calendar. Msgr. Panke was assisted by Parochial Vicar Fr. Stefan Yap, Priest-in-Residence Fr. Peter Sweeney, Deacons Barry Levy and Michael Davy, altar servers and seminarians from the Archdiocese of Washington.

Twenty-five candidates and catechumens took part in the RCIA process at St. John Neumann Parish. Nineteen from the Spanish-speaking section and six from the English-speaking section.

Paul Durbin is the coordinator for the RCIA English group.



Easter Vigil at St. John Neumann Catholic Church on Saturday, April 3, 2021.

"It has been such a privilege for me to be a part of the process" Durbin said. "Watching everyone receive their sacraments at the Easter Vigil was very moving for me. Sins washed away in the waters of baptism. The Holy Spirit

filling His children. Receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. How simple and ordinary the actions - how magnificent and awesome the work of God occurring at the same time. Invisible to our eyes but more real than we could possibly

imagine."

Colleen Harris is one of the new Catholics. "My husband is a convert... and when I started going to Mass every weekend... I started to learn what God really meant to me. I wanted to continue that journey

and faith."

RCIA classes took place on Zoom, due to the coronavirus pandemic. "COVID made RCIA much more challenging," Durbin said. "... I was really wishing we could meet in person. But God is good and does his work whether it's through Zoom or in person."

Peggy Averill, Kimberley Rice and Nick Baker were team members who helped Durbin Wednesday evenings with RCIA. "I was fearful that it wouldn't be as personal as it could be," Baker said. "But, after that initial first session everybody became comfortable with the journey and each other." Rice, a 2019 convert herself, said "Watching the RCIA students come into the Church is rewarding to see their commitment to follow Christ over the last seven months and to see them receive the Holy Eucharist at the Easter Vigil!" Rice added, "I recalled the moment I received my first Holy Eucharist; it has been a life-changing experience."

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Celebrating the Gift of Motherhood

By Larissa York

"The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother." -St. Thérèse of Lisieux

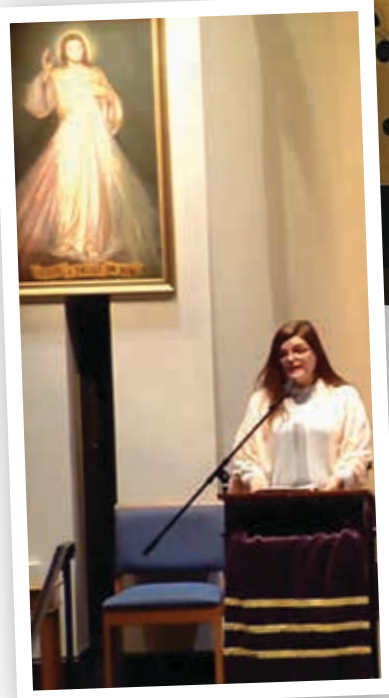
On May 14th at 7 p.m., St. John Neumann's will be hosting the Missionary Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe during the "The Triumph of Mary Tour." The evening will include adoration, a reflection by Fr. Stefan Yap, and a rosary for the pro-life cause.

In March, SJN and Defend Life hosted Kathleen Folan.

She shared her powerful pro-life testimony about the placement of her baby, conceived in rape, through open adoption. While pregnant with Nathan, God's ability to bring good out of evil became abundantly apparent. Kathy said, "When people say they are against abortion except in certain circumstances, I am offended that my child's life is devalued." God's plan for Nathan's cross-country adoption featured sweet and subtle miracles.

30 years later, God continues blessing Kathy, Nathan, and their families. As Kathy remarked, "The story just keeps getting better!" Watch on the St. John Neumann Parish - Gaithersburg YouTube channel.

On the Annunciation, several women echoed Mary's fiat as they joined the Spiritual



Above: L to R: Angela Ray, Deb Tyler, Cindy Zelaya, Msgr. Robert Panke, Valeria Conde, Maria Elena Crespo, and Leah Levy (not pictured) helped organize the Mass and commitment ceremony.

At left: Kathy Folan speaking at SJN on March 18th.

Motherhood of Priests (DMV). Each made lifelong promises to pray for their priest-son daily, offer a weekly Holy Hour, frequent the sacrament of reconciliation, and keep his identity confidential.

St. John Neumann Catholic Parish hosted the program's second Mass and commitment ceremony. In his heartfelt homily, Msgr. Robert Panke shared that "[Mary] loves what the priest does...he brings Jesus to the world through His Body and His Blood, through His Mercy, and through His healing and anointing." Msgr. Panke continued, "God calls these broken, wounded

men to do something really miraculous and extraordinary every day. To do something that is so awe-inspiring and ridiculously awesome, they need intercessors."

Cindy Zelaya felt the Lord calling to help cultivate and steward the Spiritual Motherhood for Priest (DMV) program. Inspired by Regnum Christi's Spiritual Mother of Priests program in Ohio Valley and through prayer and discernment, the hidden ministry was born. Cindy's aware that "our Blessed Mother is at work and the Holy Spirit is at work" and that she is "just an instrument."

Together with Mary, these women intercede for priests with the hope of fostering renewal and restoration in the Church because, as



Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patroness of Spiritual Motherhood of Priests (DMV). Each rose was placed by a newly committed spiritual mother at St. John Neumann.

Msgr. Panke eloquently said, "[t]he world needs not just priests but holy priests."

Learn about Spiritual Motherhood of Priests (DMV) at: www.dmvspiritualmotherhoodofpriests.com.

OPT

St. John Neumann Parish
9000 Warfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20882
Msgr. Robert Panke, Pastor
Kimberley Rice, OPT Editor

On a beautiful May morning our children received their First Holy Communion.



First Communion at St Mary's



Above: The Jamison Family has been a vital and active part of St. Mary's for many generations. Three cousins from the youngest generation received their First Holy Communion together.

At left: Parents assisted their children in making their First Holy Communion Banners and Hosts at Retreat.



Families joined together outside on our beautiful grounds for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Confirmation at St. Mary's in Barnesville

St. Mary's Parish candidates for Confirmation attended class this year either in person or virtually. They participated in a virtual Retreat with 60 stu-

dents from other parishes. Receiving their Confirmation was the culmination of years of preparation, participation in the Sacraments,

Continued on page 62

Our Year of Triumph

The dedication of our pastor and a strong group of volunteers met the challenges of this past fifteen months head on and our parish is thriving in faith!

Our virtual masses which began by the end of March 2020, continue today for those not comfortable attending in person with the same dedicated group of volunteers filming.

We have gathered to celebrate weekend mass and sacraments outside on our spectacular grounds, at our outdoor altar. Snow was the only deterrent during the winter

months. Every week, Diane Yendrey, our Music Director, sets up the sound system for

Continued on page 55

St. Mary's Parish
18230 Barnesville Road
Barnesville, MD 20838
Rev. Kevin O'Reilly, Pastor
(301) 972-8660
www.stmaryonline.com

EASTER AT ST MARY'S



Fr. Kevin blesses the Easter food presented by parishioners.

The fire begins to blaze as our Easter Vigil mass begins. Fr. Kevin and altar servers lit the Paschal Candle.



RCIA Candidates come forth to be Confirmed.

In the stillness of the morning Fr. Kevin celebrates Easter Sunrise Mass. The fire still burns from the Vigil Mass.



St. Mary's Catholic Church
18230 Barnesville Road
Barnesville, MD
www.stmaryonline.com
301-972-8660



Mass Schedule

Saturday
July 31
4:00 pm



Saturday, July 31
146th Annual Chicken Dinner
Noon - 6 pm (or until sold out)
Jousting Tournament 1 pm - 4 pm
Maryland's State Sport
Delicious Barbequed Chicken Dinner
Only Carry-Outs available for \$16

Country Store, White Elephant, Crafts, Baked Goods, Snack Bar
Live Music of "Sookey Jump"

Social Distancing, Sanitizer encouraged
Carry-Outs only. No indoor Dining.
Tent with outdoor seating available

All are Welcome!



Knights of Columbus Mother's Day Marigold Distribution

Happy Mother's Day from the Fr. Horace B. McKenna Council of the Knights of Columbus to all mothers and mothers-to-be! Marigolds were distributed at Mother Seton Parish after each Mass on Saturday, May 8, and Sunday, May 9. Thank you, ladies, for all you do and who you are. God bless you all.

OPT

Grand Knight Don Kinler and Mary Kinler at the Knights' Mother's Day Marigold Distribution



The St. Joseph Altar piled high with non-perishable donations for the local food bank.

Knights of Columbus Celebrate St. Joseph's Table

The Fr. Horace B. McKenna Council of the Knights of Columbus sponsored a St. Joseph Altar on Friday, March 19, 2021 at the Mother Seton Parish Center.

St. Joseph is the patron saint of immigrants, workers, unborn

children, refugees, fathers, and craftspeople, among others. According to tradition, the practice of creating large food altars, or St. Joseph's Tables, dates to the Middle Ages, when there was a severe drought and famine in Sicily. The peasants prayed to

St. Joseph, and when the rains arrived, they organized a celebration in his honor.

The Knights of Columbus wish to thank everyone involved, especially all who brought non-perishable items which were donated to the local food bank.

OPT



Fr. Lee and family members

Happy 60th Birthday Fr. Lee!

Parishioners at Mother Seton celebrated the 60th birthday of our dear pastor Fr. Lee Fangmeyer.

Many well-wishers gathered at the parish center to congratulate and bring gifts to the birthday boy. There was music, cakes, food, wonderful friends, and family. Great fun was had by all!

Fr. Lee sent out this message to

the parish: "Thank you to all who made my birthday celebration so beautiful. I am humbled and grateful. My wish is that this occasion gave us all a reason to celebrate each other and enjoy our company. It was really wonderful to see the children, and those young at heart, able to run and play and dance. Thank you all."

OPT



May Crowning at Mother Seton Parish

On a beautiful Sunday morning, at Mother Seton Parish, First Communicants helped Fr. Lee Fangmeyer and Fr. Phil Ilg, crown Our Lady on Mother's Day after the 10:45 am Mass.

The children were dressed in their First Communion outfits, they processed out to the courtyard along with the rest of the parishioners. Everyone prayed a decade of the rosary and sang to Our Lady. O Mary, we crown thee with blossoms today, queen of the angels, queen of the May!

Virtual Baby Bottle Campaign for Shady Grove Pregnancy Center

The Fr. Horace B. McKenna Council of the Knights of Columbus has started their Annual Baby Bottle Campaign. By filling a "virtual bottle", we help SGPC in the fight to help save the lives of precious babies. Desperate women can come to the center

and make a life-affirming choice, thanks to our support.

Giving Options:

1. Write a check: to: "Shady Grove Pregnancy Center".

*Add memo: "Mother Seton BBC"

2. Text "GIVE" to 4848BOTTLE. You will receive a text back with a link. Scroll & select your church. Fill out your donation information and submit. Thank you all for your generosity!

Thank you so much for your critical support of our life-saving ministry.

For more information go to, <https://donate.givedirect.org/?cid=14945&n=734882>.

OPT

Mother Seton Parish

19951 Fr. Hurley Boulevard
Germantown, MD

Fr. Lee Fangmeyer, Pastor
301-924-3838

Brenda Rosado
OPT Editor

Bulletin@Mothersetonparish.org



Fr. Phil Ilg with First Communicants.

Resurrection Parishioners at Riderwood Invite Residents to Join a Prayer Ministry

Resurrection Pastor, Father Barry has approved that under the guidance of Riderwood resident and Resurrection Parish Council member, Carman Gonnotti, that all of Riderwood residents (of any faith) are invited to join the Riderwood Catholic Community in a Prayer Ministry for the benefit of the volunteers and clients of the Columbia Pregnancy Center. For forty years, the Columbia Pregnancy Center (CPC) has been a pro-life resource for those facing the difficulties brought about by a pregnancy. Services include information on options, about parenting, good health, and post-birth support.

In 2019, the CPC had 56 volunteers who provided 7,500 hours of counsel with love and services to help parents as they prepare for

the long-term care of their babies. CPC performed 288 sonograms, delivered 963 hours of classes and launched Mom-to-Mom support groups in English and Spanish serving 84 women. CPC also welcomed their first male staff member since their beginnings in 1981. In knowing the power of prayer, the Riderwood Catholic Community invited all Riderwood residents to pray for the volunteers of the CPS and their clients; that together they will lift up in prayer the volunteers of the Columbia Pregnancy Center and the parents and babies they serve, that God will bless the volunteers in their service of providing comfort and guidance and bless their clients with the strength and courage to make the right decisions for themselves and their babies.

Resurrection Parishioners Make Lunches for Participants in the Laurel Winter Shelter Program

Starting in 2018, with the leadership of the Parish Council's Homeless Shelter Committee, Resurrection has hosted participants in the Laurel Winter Shelter, a Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services program. In the early decade of 1990, area churches began to work with Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services to provide shelter and food to over 100 homeless men and women annually from November to mid-March every year.

The pandemic did not allow this in 2020 and changed the way Resurrection participated in 2021. Members of the Resurrection

Homeless Shelter Committee organized parishioners and as a result, on the weekend of March 13 and 14, Resurrection donated: 430 lunches, 2 cases of soda, 1 pack of juice boxes, plastic forks & spoons, \$270 worth of grocery gift cards, 6 cases of diapers and 9 bags of wipes, 14 snack multipacks, 8 boxes of dryer sheets, 6 tubs of laundry pods, 6 bottles of disinfectant wipes, 4 Clorox, 4 fabric softeners, 5 backpacks, 8 duffle bags, and puzzles. The 430 lunches included 250 personalized inspirational cards made by religious education students.

OPT

Church of the Resurrection Parish
3315 Greencastle Road
Burtonsville, MD

Rev. John M. Barry,
Pastor
301-288-4662

TRIUMPH

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three outdoor masses. Parishioners bring their chairs, their umbrellas, their masks, and they are celebrating the Eucharist in person. It is a joyful sight!

The beauty of all the seasons enhances our Eucharistic celebrations. Our flowering trees began to bloom as Easter Masses were offered and Confirmation conferred. The azaleas appeared right on cue for First Holy Communion.

Our Faith Formation Classes, Youth Group, Sacraments' Retreats, and Bible Study Groups, began meeting in person and virtually in September. Our classes just concluded a successful year. Teams

now began preparation for in person Vacation Bible School in July.

The life of a parish is its people. Volunteers have already begun preparation for our 146th Barbequed Chicken Dinner, July 31 from Noon-6 pm. Jousting Tournament, Maryland's State Sport, from 1 pm- 4 pm. Delicious Barbequed Chicken Dinner Carry-Outs available for \$16. General Store, Bake Sale, Crafts, Snack Bar, and huge White Elephant sale. There will also be the Live Music of "Sookey Jump."

Social Distancing, Sanitizer, Carry-Outs only. No indoor Dining. Tent with outdoor seating available. Please join our Parish Family as we continue to thrive!

OPT

Knights of Columbus State Awards



On Sunday April 25, at the 10 am Mass, Father Barry, Resurrection Pastor, welcomed Knight of Columbus District Deputy Mike Webster and District Warden Jimmy Williams for their presentation of the Knights of Columbus State awards to the Msgr. Pennington Council 9808 for the Fraternal Year ending June 2020. Of these, the most prestigious was the STAR Council award, won consecutively for 2 years and which, as stated by DD Mike Webster, is analogous to winning an Olympic decathlon. Congratulations to 2018 - 2019 Grand Knight Scott Ford, Deputy Grand Knight Basil Allison and the entire Council for their hard work and dedication to our Order, to Father Barry and the entire Resurrection community.



Community Helpers

Officer Beverly of the Montgomery Council Police Department visited the Resurrection Preschool for Community Helpers Week. The kids loved hearing all about what she does to help people and seeing the tools she uses to carry out her job. Officer Beverly even surprised the kids with good bags!

Resurrection Women's Ministry holds 'Virtual' Baby Shower for Laurel Pregnancy Center

Many readers of the *Parish Times* will have heard of the Laurel Pregnancy Center which has been serving the community since 1987. It was no surprise that the Resurrection Women's Ministry (RWM) decided their Lenten Service would be to help the Center, who has helped so many! During Lent, until Palm Sunday weekend, the RWM held a virtual baby shower. Parishioners were invited to drop off baby items to the parish or donate monetarily. Resurrection Parish has an extremely generous spirit and collectively gave: an excess of 2,300

diapers and 800 wipes; a dozen hand knitted/ crocheted blankets and 20 other soft blankets; several bath towels; several dozen wash cloths; 25 bottles of baby wash; 60 pacifiers; 100 onesies; a Tiger and bunny jump suit; in excess of 20 bibs; several dozen baby socks; beautiful jackets and \$575 in monetary gifts. The items that Resurrection Parish and the RWM donated were delivered in three separate car trips!

In a letter of thanks, to the RWM, from Sue Sneeringer, Assistant to Director of Donor Relations at the Laurel Pregnancy Center said, "I

wanted to let you know that we do provide a gift bag of items to all of the new moms that come through the LPC. These items help get them started off on the right foot. We then offer them the opportunity to come back three times during the year to get more items. This helps them as the baby grows and the seasons change. The items you have provided will truly be a blessing to the new moms and babies. Thank you for helping us serve others with the love of Christ. Without people like you, we couldn't do what we do."

OPT

Saint Peter's Youth Ministry Reflects on Spring Service Projects

By Gabby Georges, Good Counsel '24

The Saint Peter's Youth Ministry doesn't just work within themselves to help those in our community. Sometimes, we team up with other organizations outside of the church to try and increase the impact we have on those around us. This time, we teamed up with Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit organization that helps build brand new homes for families in need. In order to help them raise money for these incredible projects, we got into teams of 2-3, put together, and then painted Adirondack chairs. Then, we sold raffle tickets to make sure these chairs found a home, but the money we raised was sent back to Habitat of Humanity as a donation. We not only learned how to put together some gorgeous outdoor pieces of furniture, but we also learned about some of the families that Habitat of Humanity has helped, and how these homes have changed their lives for the better. We always talk about community at Saint Peter's, but this was one of those moments where you could sense it a little more. Knowing that we were all congregating as a community to help others through such



Above left: Students built Adirondack chairs as part of a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity.



Above right: Saint Peter's Youth Ministry created birthday boxes for children in foster care.

a simple act really made me realize how important the idea of community is in our everyday lives. Everyone in this world has a

birthday and for most of us, we know it to be a day full of family, celebration, gifts, and cake. SPY (Saint Peter's Youth Ministry)

learned that not all children have the same experiences when it comes to birthday celebrations. Children in foster care aren't always lucky

enough to have a party of any kind, or even something as simple as a cake on their birthday, so this past week we made "birthday boxes." We took shoe boxes and wrapped them up in wrapping paper filled with happy and exciting colors before filling them up with treats. The boxes consisted of a box of cake batter, frosting, a Dunkin Donut's gift card, some balloons, a "Happy Birthday" banner, and a card from us. My friends and I both agree that while partaking in this project, we became more aware to the things we take for granted. To us, we see birthday parties as so simple, and almost as a given, but when creating these boxes, we realized that we have so much to thank God for. I realized that when you look at all the things you don't have, you will never have enough, but when you realize all the blessings God has given you, there will always be more than enough. The greatest part about this wasn't just my own personal reflection, but the joy that I received within myself knowing that I would make at least one person's birthday better. We should strive every day to try and bring joy to others while also stepping back and thanking God for all that he's given us in this beautiful life.

OPT



May the Holy Spirit Light Your Way

Saint Peter's was honored to welcome Cardinal Wilton Gregory to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation to 90 young people on March 21, 2021.

It pays to advertise in Our Parish Times

“Unbound” Visits Christ the King

By Liz Weiss and Suzanne Siguenza,
parishioners of Christ the King

On April 18, Msgr. Adolfo Valdivia-Aguirre spoke to Christ the King parishioners about Unbound, a lay Catholic sponsorship ministry. This organization helps children, families, and elderly in 19 developing countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Unbound work is “grounded in the Gospel call to put the needs of the marginalized and vulnerable first.” (Unbound brochure.)

A number of parishioners currently sponsor individuals. You learn about your friend through letters and photos, and you can write and also send photos. The \$40 monthly contribution supports fam-

ilies who are working towards goals of education, housing, and better nutrition. In many cases, mothers lead the way and are helping to create a path to self-sufficiency for the family.

Suzanne Siguenza, a Christ the King parishioner shared her experience of watching a child grow and learn over the last few years. Here is how she explains her experience: “Sponsoring a child through Unbound has been a very enriching experience for me, Suzanne Siguenza. I have been sponsoring a beautiful little girl named Soniya, who is in India, for several years now. I have seen her grow from a little girl into a young, almost teenage girl. It has been a most personal experience, as we exchange letters and photographs that keep us updated. As I have seen Soniya’s development, I have learned about her family and have come to realize that helping her helps her family overall. She is being educated and has been celebrated on her birthday and she can receive a little cheer at Christmas too!

Before I signed up to sponsor Soniya, I was concerned about taking on a financial commitment that

would last many years, but truly, God led my heart and literally got me off the pew to go and select someone to sponsor! I let Him do it, let Him guide my hand and He has provided the means for her support all these years. I had been to India several times in the past, before I became an Unbound sponsor. God led me to this rewarding sponsorship, and perhaps if it is His will, He will grant me one day the opportunity to meet this growing young girl in person.

As I mentioned at Mass when Father Adolfo came to speak about Unbound, it has been a selfish experience for me for I reap so much personal joy from helping in this ministry and there are so many people in need that when I go to the Unbound website all it takes is one look into the child’s or elderly person’s eyes ... and I want to sponsor them all! “(Lord? What do you think?”).”

Thank you, Msgr. Valdivia-Aguirre, for spending the word about this chance to help others in the global community. For more information about the program, check the website unbound.org or call (800) 875-6564.

OPT



Easter at Christ the King

Celebration of Easter at Christ The King

By Liz Weiss, CTK parishioner

The Easter Sunday celebration at Christ the King Church is always very festive. This year parishioners had even more to celebrate. We are so thankful to be looking forward, as more people are vaccinated, and the Covid 19 infection rates have gone down in the community. Christ the King Church looked beauti-

fully decorated. The Mass was extra special, as a new baby became part of the church community through the sacrament of Baptism. Traditionally, there is an Easter Egg hunt after Mass. This year it happened. We all pray that normalcy will return more fully in the coming weeks. We look forward to the time when all members can enjoy participating at Mass in person.

OPT

Christ the King

2301 Colston Drive
Silver Spring, MD
301-495-2306

Fr. Stephen J. Carter,
Pastor

Paul Lamoreaux,
OPT Editor

WOMEN DESERVE BETTER THAN ABORTION.

Abortion is a reflection that we have not met the needs of women.

refuse to choose®
Women Deserve Better®
than Abortion
FEMINISTS FOR LIFE.ORG



A view of the newly blessed flags at OLQP in Silver Spring for the May 3rd Commemoration. Standing in front (r-l) are Hanna Raczyńska, Dr. Edwarda Buda-Okreglak, SK and PACWMAD Treasurer Karol Klonowski, PSO-ZHP and PACWMAD Dir. Bozenna Buda.

Knights of Columbus Council #16634 Flag Initiative

By Bozenna Buda ED

"[One] day after Mass in April ... I looked up at the U.S. and Polish flags [outside] and noticed how faded and tattered they were," recalled Council #16634 GK David Birely. Thus, the seeds were sown for the next initiative of the Knights of Columbus St. Maximilian Kolbe Council #16634 at the Parish of Our Lady Queen of Poland in Silver Spring.

After discussing this with their Brothers Knights, the St. Maximilian Kolbe Council decided to replace the worn flags with new ones. This became more involved when they noticed that the paint on the flag post was chipped and rusty. The post needed to be restored and the lanyard had to be replaced. The Brother Knights hastened to get everything ready for the upcoming dual commemorations of our parish Patroness and May 3rd Constitution Day.

Everything was ready on time. OLQP Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych, who is also Chaplain of the St. Maximilian Kolbe Council #16634, celebrated the special Mass, requested by the Polish American Congress Washington Metro Area Division, on May 2. The Mass commemorated the feast of Our Lady Queen of Poland and the 230th anniversary of the Polish Constitution of May 3rd.

In addition to the St. Maximilian

Kolbe Knights of Columbus Council #16634, representatives present included the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Polish American Congress Washington Metro Area Division (PACWMAD), Polish Legion of American Veterans (PLAV), Polish Scouting Organization-Zwiazek Harcerstwa Polskiego (PSO-ZHP) and Polish Drama Club.

Immediately after Mass, Fr. Frydrych blessed the two flags in a special ceremony. Then, everyone began processing outside. GK David Birely and Deputy GK Franklin Morton carried the newly blessed flags as Deputy Attaché Col. Pawel Marzeda, from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, led the honor guard procession.

After singing the Polish and American National Anthems, the new flags were raised up the flag post and waved in the sunny breeze. Parishioners and friends admired the flags and celebrated the festivities.

Congratulations to K of C Council #16634 for another accomplishment!

St. Maximilian Kolbe Council #16634 wishes to inform that you can still become a Knights of Columbus Online Member for free through June 30. For 12 months of free online membership the Promo Code is "MCGIVNEY2020" and the link is: www.kofc.org/secure/en/join/join-the-knights.html

OPT

Scenes of Holy Saturday at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish



Above left: Our Lady Queen of Poland Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych blesses the traditional food baskets for Easter 2021 on Holy Saturday on the parish grounds in Silver Spring, Md.

Above right: A couple, who made a special trip to OLQP in Silver Spring, Md., to have their Easter food baskets blessed, visits the bust of St. John Paul II on their way home on April 3, 2021.

At left: Our young parishioner and altar server, Jas Bacza, dressed in his Krakowiak traditional outfit to stand watch at the tomb of Jesus on Holy Saturday, 2021, along with Knights of Columbus St. Maximilian Kolbe Council #16634 Deputy GK Franklin Morton, at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish.

Commemoration of Katyn-Smolensk and Divine Mercy Sunday



Representatives and parishioners stand as we commemorate Divine Mercy Sunday and the Katyn Massacre and the Smolensk catastrophe on April 11, 2021, at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish, Silver Spring. Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych celebrated the Mass which was requested by the Polish American Congress Washington Metro Area Division (PACWMAD) with representation from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, K of C Council #16634, Polish Legion of American Veteran, Polish Scouting Organization-ZHP and PACWMAD.

Some of the representatives who were present at the Katyn-Smolensk Commemorative Mass (l-r): GK David Birely, Malgorzata Rogoyski, Bozenna Buda, Col. Pawel Marzeda, Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych, Gen. Cezary Wisniewski, Jacek Marczyński, Dr. Richard Okreglak, Dr. Edwarda Buda-Okreglak, Karol Klonowski.



Parishioners, friends, and representatives gather by the new hoisted flags on May 2 at OLQP in Silver Spring.



Pastor Fr. Jerzy Frydrych with the 2021 class that he is preparing to receive First Holy Communion at Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish, Silver Spring.

**Our Lady
Queen of Poland**

9700 Rosensteel Avenue
Silver Spring, MD

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

Bozenna Buda, OPT Editor
301-495-3377
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A Diverse Family under the Watch of its Loving Mother

At the St. Camillus Parish Festival on Mother's Day weekend in 2018, the "Remember, Renew, Rebuild" campaign was launched to celebrate multiple major anniversaries. The 2019-2020 school year would mark the 65th year that St. Camillus Church had the sound of Catholic school children filling the halls of its Parish Life and Education Center (originally known simply as St. Camillus School and the St. Camillus Convent). 2020 would mark the 50th anniversary of construction of the parish church building. And, 2021 marks the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the parish itself.

One of the first major aspects of the Remember, Renew, Rebuild campaign was an effort



Above: The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who founded St. Camillus School, gather around the original statue of Our Lady of Grace from 1954.

At left: The shrine area as it looked in 2018.

At right: A photo of Br. Chris Posch and Dr. Kirk Gaddy from May 2019 looks over the new shrine.



to restore and renovate the statue of Our Lady of Grace that had stood outside the Parish Life and Education Center since 1954. Over the decades, the statue had been battered by the weather and fingers had even broken off. The flower garden around the statue had overgrown with rose bushes so high that only Mary's face was visible. On that Saturday in May, 2018,

the proposal was made to not only repair and preserve the statue but to embark on turning the space it inhabited into a shrine.

Parishioners formed a committee and came up with a simple design that would reflect the past while making the space far more useful and

beautiful than it had ever been before. The planning brought together volunteers from the vastly diverse linguistic and cultural groups that make up St. Camillus as well as included members who were there at the founding of the parish as well as teens who are the future of the parish.

Donations and memorial bricks served to fund the project and by the parish festival on Mother's Day weekend in 2019, the original 65-year-old statue was restored and moved indoors to the church and the new statue was lovingly cemented in place by parishioners who work in the trades. Bishop Mario Dorsonville rededicated the Parish Life and Education Center and blessed the new statue after the parish festival mass and the following week the students of Saint Francis International School held a May Crowning with the restored statue in the church and prayed a multi-lingual rosary. Br. Chris Posch, pastor of St. Camillus, joyfully presided over these activities and Dr. Kirk Gaddy, longtime religion teacher at SFIS, organized the international rosary.

The plan had been to finish construction of the shrine, including a beautiful garden, and to hold 2020's May Crowning outdoors with the new statue.

Unfortunately, the world radically changed in 2020 and the plans were interrupted. The parish and school communities faced significant loss in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Br. Chris and Dr. Gaddy both tragically died last summer, three fathers of school students died, and many other grandparents, aunts and uncles, elders, and even young adults suffered from the virus and died.

Nonetheless, Saint Francis

International School and St. Camillus parish persisted in mission and ministry. It was with great joy that as soon as the weather improved this spring, volunteers returned to the shrine to complete the project. On May 8, 2021, while there was still no resumption of the annual parish festival, a mass was held as on so many Mother's Day weekends for over 30 years to celebrate our Blessed Mother. After that mass, God provided a brief rain shower as part of the blessing of the shrine, which was formally dedicated to Br. Chris' memory.

On Wednesday, May 12, the students of Saint Francis International



At right: This year's group of SFIS first communicants included the daughters and granddaughter of St. Camillus School alumni.



SFIS students gather around the Blessed Mother for May Crowning.

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

OPT

A Tribute to Our Lady of Guadalupe during COVID

By Cynthia Lewis

A year ago, difficult decisions were made to cancel events and programs throughout our Archdiocese. One of those was an event dedicated to Our Blessed Mother, Mary, at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church. After much prayer and deliberation, the Sodality announced that the Annual Communion Brunch to honor Mary in her month of May was not going to occur in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On May 2, 2021, the Sodality hosted the 72nd Annual Sodality Communion Brunch *virtually*.

In response to the request of Pastor and Sodality Moderator, Monsignor Eddie Tolentino, Cardinal Wilton Gregory shared a videotaped message and blessing for the occasion. Many guests commented that they deeply appreciated hearing words of encouragement from His Eminence at this Marian gathering. Monsignor Tolentino provided reflections and a prayer. The guest speaker was Father Philip-Michael Tangorra from the Diocese of Paterson, New Jersey, previously a visiting Mass celebrant. Father Phil spoke on "Our Lady of Guadalupe



Pastor and Moderator of St. Michael's Sodality, Monsignor Eddie Tolentino; Guest Speaker, Father Philip-Michael Tangorra; and Moderator, Cynthia Lewis

– A Message Amidst COVID." He told listeners that in the difficult period of the pandemic, Mary is giving us a clarion call to overcome doubts, discouragement, and fears, instead to trust in her Son in an uncompromising way. Father Phil exhorted the gathering that this is a time to "go deeper in your faith."

Artistic presentations in the program included videos of Kiara Tate performing a liturgical dance, Edwin Mendez and Michael Bunce, performing solo hymns to Mary, and a Marian duet by Jesse Mashburn and Veronica Williams. Invaluable technical support was provided by Oscar Mendez, who will be ordained a Deacon for the Archdiocese of Washington this June. The Sodality acknowledged twelve parishioners for their devotion prior to and during the pandemic to help sustain our parish. Over 60 people were in attendance, and the messages of gratitude and praises began to flow in before the program ended and continues. The Sodality is under the leadership of Prefect Ingrid Denis. The Sodalists continue to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe for her tender care and powerful intercession.

OPT



Couples who renewed their vows celebrating in the Williamsburg room at St. Michael's joined by Monsignor Mariano Balbago Jr., with friends and members of the Fil-Am Ministry.

CELEBRATIONS

Con't from page 1

Director, Monsignor Mariano Bilbao, Jr. presided and led the couples through a very meaningful and beautiful ceremony affirming

their commitments to each other in marriage.

For more than two decades, the Filipino American Ministry of St. Michael's has met every third Sunday of the month for the celebration of their themed Filipino Mass. Among their most significant themed celebrations are the Santo Nino Festival in January, Flores de Mayo/ Santacruzán in May and the Pabasa (reading and chanting of the Passion of Christ during the Season of Lent). These popular religious traditions in the Philippines are attended by many at St. Michael's.

St. Michael's FIL AM Ministry is committed to remaining an advocate to uphold and promote the Filipino culture through their unique and sacred religious traditions.

OPT

A Beautiful Easter Vigil

By Nicole Calaro

St. Michael the Archangel parish was blessed to celebrate the Easter Vigil Mass on April 3 by fully initiating 3 children and 23 adults into the Catholic

Faith. Of the 26 people, 10 were baptized, 2 professed their faith, 25 were confirmed and 25 received the Eucharist.

We thank our catechists who continued to teach and lead the RCIA program for adults and children in

both English and Spanish virtually. We give thanks and praise to God for allowing so many people to receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist during the pandemic.

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Shrine of St. Jude

Helping Those in Need While Having Fun

Mrs. Katharine Balog (pictured at right), fourth-grade teacher at St. Jude Regional Catholic School (SJRCs), organized a unique way to serve others and have fun at the same time – Cereal Box Dominoes! SJRCs students donated 668 boxes of cereal to the St. Stephens Food Pantry at the Shrine of St. Jude. The eighth-grade students then strategically lined them up, starting from the Principal's Office to the St. Stephens Food Pantry door, and Mrs. Balog started the boxes in motion. It was a great sight to see, especially knowing that the cereal was going to help those in need.

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St. Raphael

RECOGNITION

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Raphael is all about!

Our marketing and communications director and spirit captain, MJ Zafis-Garcia, is relocating to California after 17 years at St. Raphael. She has been a trendsetter in sharing the good news of SRS. Her videos, bulletin center pages, and social media posts helped us to celebrate milestones and promote the great things happening at the school. MJ's attention to detail challenged us to be our best. Her commitment to St. Raphael had her popping in to photograph at all times of the day, and climbing into a cherry picker was not outside the realm of possible in her quest for the perfect picture!

Join us in thanking Mary Ellen and MJ for their service and dedication to St. Raphael School and Nursery School.

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Proud Diversity: A Word from Our Police

St. Paul has a lot of cops. That is because the county encourages its police to reside within the county, and offers serious incentives, but it's still expensive to live here, except maybe in Damascus where the price of housing is a little lower than it is downcounty. So, during National Police Week, May 9-16, we do want to say thanks to our neighbors – the police in our midst – for their service and professionalism.

Parish Times invited Phil Raum, who was a lieutenant in the county police department before he retired, to share a reflection. He commented on diversity in a faith community.

We are all familiar with Gospel account of the last judgment in which Jesus says that whatever we do to the least of our brethren, that we do unto Him (Mt 25). Mankind has demonstrated throughout history a propensity to denigrate groups of people for a wide range of reasons – the list is practically endless. It seems like the only things that change are the geography, date,



Phil and Melanie Raum, with Sherrie Wade

and whose ox is goring or being gored. This should come as no surprise to us. It's part of human nature, without God – and that's the bad news.

The Catholic Church has a global footprint whose members hail from all countries and all walks of life. At any Sunday Mass, we encounter parishioners whose family origins derive from Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, and the Pacific Islands. Our parish proudly reflects the diversity of the universal Church.

A Catholic culture should create an environment in which it is easier for people to be good – and our unity amidst diversity is one dimension of that.

One example: a longtime leader at St. Paul is Sherrie Wade, a descendent of free blacks from Dickerson. For 30+ years, she has piloted projects that serve the marginalized, organizing health fairs and blood drives and dozens of other services. She coordinates the support for the St. Paul Clinic in Honduras, which provides medical service for the poor who otherwise would never receive medical care. Dozens of parish-

ioners (and others) have made the biannual service treks to Honduras with her, and many more have contributed financially.

St. Paul has created a Catholic culture which helps us to prepare to stand before Christ and hear those words, "Enter into My Kingdom ... because what you did for the least of my brethren, you did for Me." And that's the good news.

OPT

"That's Who We Are"

Religious Education in the Pandemic Year

by John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe

The pandemic interrupted educational programs around the world, including religious education at St. Paul. But for Lisa Nueslein, the parish Director of Religious Education, the pandemic year was also a time of inspiration and success, because so many primary educators – that is, parents – stepped forward to meet the new challenges.

Lisa embraces wholeheartedly the words of St. John Paul II. Writing about catechesis in our time, he said that "we have but one teacher, Jesus Christ," and that "the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity."

Throughout her time working at St. Paul, Lisa has run a program with flexibility. We have had standard familiar classroom education for all grades, but there have also been other options. The parish supports the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, the "Atrium," a Montessori approach developed by Sofia Cavaletti that focuses on a child's relationship with the Good Shepherd; we have a team

of trained catechists for it, and a collection of material. The parish is proud of the outreach to children with disabilities, at each grade level and in sacramental preparation. And the parish supports a home-school approach, offering lesson plans and material for parents who choose that approach. Lisa's focus has always been on meeting the needs of individuals and families, not running a cookie-cutter.

The pandemic shut down the classrooms, which had been, by far, the largest part of the whole parish effort. But the shutdown did not kill the whole program; it required a shift. It was a change, not an end. Lisa provided material for parents, and parents stepped up to the task. To be sure, some parents simply could not juggle their schedules to accommodate the new demands. For example, some had full-time work, with two or three or four jobs, plus a new load of regular schoolwork to oversee, and they could not take on another large and complex task. That is completely understandable: judge not that you be not judged. But many parents were able to take it on, joyfully. One father spoke for many when he said that of course he would accept the responsibility, because "that's who we are."

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Catholic Daughters Support Small Business Overseas

The life of an American shoe is often short and smelly, starting with carbon emissions and ending in a landfill. In between, you wear them a hundred times. But you can extend their lives, cut the waste, help the poor, and support small business – by cleaning and donating them.

Catholic Daughters (CDA) Court St Paul collected and prepared about 6,000 shoes – 127 bags each containing 25 pairs of gently used or new shoes – to be sent to people in developing countries for use by micro-entrepreneurs to support their families and neighbors. JoAnn Zucofski organized the collection, supported by her family, friends, neighbors, other CDA groups, and



an American Heritage Troop in the area. CDA members (above) Barbara Zellers, Joann Zucofski,

Kathy Grapski, and Patricia Stack loaded up the bags for shipment.

OPT

PONZIO

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program for educational technology – an essential foundation for the school this past year as we pivoted to virtual and then hybrid learning.

While working at Visitation, Ms. Ponzio obtained her Master of Science degree at Johns Hopkins

in Educational Studies with dual certification in Technology for Educators and Administration and Supervision. During her tenure, she has directed Visitation's Saturday School program, coached its championship soccer team, served on the Admissions Committee, helped update the schedule and handbook, and served as senior class moderator.

Dr. Edmondson noted enthusiastically that, "Nori brings her expertise, faith, and passion to all that she does here at Visitation. I am confident that her deep knowledge of Visitation's operations, her devotion to our students, and her strong connection to the Sisters prepare her well to step into this new role."

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Thirty young people received First Communion this spring. It was a day of great blessings for the children, and for their families, and for the parish. On May Day, after Mass, some children took time to recall that Mary, the mother of Jesus, helps us to grow in faith, and Sophie Klimek put a crown on the statue of Mary in the narthex. Photo by John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe

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Author Party!

Students in Marianne Bonanno's fourth-grade class celebrate the publishing of their class book, *Magnificent Maryland*. The book features a collection of state symbols, events, and historical figures that are researched and illustrated by the students. It is an annual tradition in fourth grade and the students are always proud to be published authors. This year, they dedicated their book to "Frontline Workers" and feted their book success with a Smith Island Cake, the state dessert of Maryland.



Filled with the Holy Spirit

St. Patrick's Parish celebrated the confirmation of its young people in two socially distanced Masses. Bishop Mario Dorsonville joined the confirmands as the main celebrant for the Mass on Sunday, April 18. Msgr. Charles Parry, St. Patrick's pastor, confirmed the eighth graders in a Mass held on Thursday, April 15. Photo by Allan's Fine Portraits



Buddy Fun!

In April, eighth graders at St. Patrick's School and their second-grade "buddies" enjoyed a day of fun. They met at a local park for a picnic lunch and some playground bonding. The eighth graders organized an Easter egg hunt for the smaller children and the second graders shared treats with their older buddies. Many of these pairs of students have been buddies for the last four years.

The buddy program is a highlight of student life at the school. Buddies sit in Mass together, participate in special social and academic activities throughout the year, and are prayer partners. *Buddy Fun!* is both a great occasion for the older students to practice mentoring and a good opportunity for the younger students to get to know the older students in the school. Great friendships are formed!

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Member St. Jude's Parish

CONFIRMATION

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and service to St. Mary's. Members of this class played instruments or sang in the choir, led Stations of the Cross, read The Word during Mass, laid wreaths on the graves at a National Cemetery, and cleaned the Church grounds. They have been an exemplary group of Candidates. They were confirmed by Fr. Kevin O'Reilly, on Saturday, April 17, at a beautiful outdoor Mass. We pray the Holy Spirit will inspire and guide them in their faith.



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Caleb Bodmer is supported by his brother and sponsor Sam Bodmer as Confirmation is conferred.

Excerpted from:

ENCYCLICAL LETTER FRATELLI TUTTI OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP

CHAPTER FIVE

A Better Kind Of Politics

154. The development of a global community of fraternity based on the practice of social friendship on the part of peoples and nations calls for a better kind of politics, one truly at the service of the common good. Sadly, politics today often takes forms that hinder progress towards a different world.

Forms Of Populism And Liberalism

155. Lack of concern for the vulnerable can hide behind a populism that exploits them demagogically for its own purposes, or a liberalism that serves the economic interests of the powerful. In both cases, it becomes difficult to envisage an open world that makes room for everyone, including the most vulnerable, and shows respect for different cultures.

Popular vs. populist

156. In recent years, the words “populism” and “populist” have invaded the communications media and everyday conversation. As a result, they have lost whatever value they might have had, and have become another source of polarization in an already divided society. Efforts are made to classify entire peoples, groups, societies and governments as “populist” or not. Nowadays it has become impossible for someone to express a view on any subject without being categorized one way or the other, either to be unfairly discredited or to be praised to the skies.

157. The attempt to see populism as a key for interpreting social reality is problematic in another way: it disregards the legitimate meaning of the word “people”. Any effort to remove this concept from common parlance could lead to the elimination of the very notion of democracy as “government by the people”. If we wish to maintain that society is more than a mere aggregate of individuals, the term “people” proves necessary. There are social phenomena that create majorities, as well as megatrends and communitarian aspirations. Men and women are capable of coming up with shared goals that transcend their differences and can thus engage in a common endeavor. Then too,

it is extremely difficult to carry out a long-term project unless it becomes a collective aspiration. All these factors lie behind our use of the words “people” and “popular”. Unless they are taken into account – together with a sound critique of demagoguery – a fundamental aspect of social reality would be overlooked.

158. Here, there can be a misunderstanding. “‘People’ is not a logical category, nor is it a mystical category, if by that we mean that everything the people does is good, or that the people is an ‘angelic’ reality. Rather, it is a mythic category... When you have to explain what you mean by people, you use logical categories for the sake of explanation, and necessarily so. Yet in that way you cannot explain what it means to belong to a people. The word ‘people’ has a deeper meaning that cannot be set forth in purely logical terms. To be part of a people is to be part of a shared identity arising from social and cultural bonds. And that is not something automatic, but rather a slow, difficult process... of advancing towards a common project”.[132]

159. “Popular” leaders, those capable of interpreting the feelings and cultural dynamics of a people, and significant trends in society, do exist. The service they provide by their efforts to unite and lead can become the basis of an enduring vision of transformation and growth that would also include making room for others in the pursuit of the common good. But this can degenerate into an unhealthy “populism” when individuals are able to exploit politically a people’s culture, under whatever ideological banner, for their own personal advantage or continuing grip on power. Or when, at other times, they seek popularity by appealing to the basest and most selfish inclinations of certain sectors of the population. This becomes all the more serious when, whether in cruder or more subtle forms, it leads to the usurpation of institutions and laws.

160. Closed populist groups distort the word “people”, since they are not talking about a true people. The concept of “people” is in fact open-ended. A living and dynamic people, a people with a future, is one constantly open to a new synthesis through its ability to welcome differences. In this way, it does not deny its proper identity, but is open

to being mobilized, challenged, broadened and enriched by others, and thus to further growth and development.

161. Another sign of the decline of popular leadership is concern for short-term advantage. One meets popular demands for the sake of gaining votes or support, but without advancing in an arduous and constant effort to generate the resources people need to develop and earn a living by their own efforts and creativity. In this regard, I have made it clear that “I have no intention of proposing an irresponsible populism”.[133] Eliminating inequality requires an economic growth that can help to tap each region’s potential and thus guarantee a sustainable equality.[134] At the same time, it follows that “welfare projects, which meet certain urgent needs, should be considered merely temporary responses”.[135]

162. The biggest issue is employment. The truly “popular” thing – since it promotes the good of the people – is to provide everyone with the opportunity to nurture the seeds that God has planted in each of us: our talents, our initiative and our innate resources. This is the finest help we can give to the poor, the best path to a life of dignity. Hence my insistence that, “helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work”.[136] Since production systems may change, political systems must keep working to structure society in such a way that everyone has a chance to contribute his or her own talents and efforts. For “there is no poverty worse than that which takes away work and the dignity of work”.[137] In a genuinely developed society, work is an essential dimension of social life, for it is not only a means of earning one’s daily bread, but also of personal growth, the building of healthy relationships, self-expression and the exchange of gifts. Work gives us a sense of shared responsibility for the development of the world, and ultimately, for our life as a people.

The benefits and limits of liberal approaches

163. The concept of a “people”, which naturally entails a positive view of community and cul-

tural bonds, is usually rejected by individualistic liberal approaches, which view society as merely the sum of coexisting interests. One speaks of respect for freedom, but without roots in a shared narrative; in certain contexts, those who defend the rights of the most vulnerable members of society tend to be criticized as populists. The notion of a people is considered an abstract construct, something that does not really exist. But this is to create a needless dichotomy. Neither the notion of “people” nor that of “neighbor” can be considered purely abstract or romantic, in such a way that social organization, science and civic institutions can be rejected or treated with contempt.[138]

164. Charity, on the other hand, unites both dimensions – the abstract and the institutional – since it calls for an effective process of historical change that embraces everything: institutions, law, technology, experience, professional expertise, scientific analysis, administrative procedures, and so forth. For that matter, “private life cannot exist unless it is protected by public order. A domestic hearth has no real warmth unless it is safeguarded by law, by a state of tranquility founded on law, and enjoys a minimum of wellbeing ensured by the division of labor, commercial exchange, social justice and political citizenship”.[139]

Fruitfulness Over Results

194. Politics too must make room for a tender love of others. “What is tenderness? It is love that draws near and becomes real. A movement that starts from our heart and reaches the eyes, the ears and the hands... Tenderness is the path of choice for the strongest, most courageous men and women”.[191] Amid the daily concerns of political life, “the smallest, the weakest, the poorest should touch our hearts: indeed, they have a ‘right’ to appeal to our heart and soul. They are our brothers and sisters, and as such we must love and care for them”.[192]

195. All this can help us realize that what is important is not constantly achieving great results, since these are not always possible. In political activity, we should remember that “appearances notwithstanding, every person is immensely holy and deserves our love. Consequently, if I can help at least one person

to have a better life, that already justifies the offering of my life. It is a wonderful thing to be God’s faithful people. We achieve fulfillment when we break down walls and our hearts are filled with faces and names!” [193] The great goals of our dreams and plans may only be achieved in part. Yet beyond this, those who love, and who no longer view politics merely as a quest for power, “may be sure that none of our acts of love will be lost, nor any of our acts of sincere concern for others. No single act of love for God will be lost, no generous effort is meaningless, no painful endurance is wasted. All of these encircle our world like a vital force”.[194]

196. For this reason, it is truly noble to place our hope in the hidden power of the seeds of goodness we sow, and thus to initiate processes whose fruits will be reaped by others. Good politics combines love with hope and with confidence in the reserves of goodness present in human hearts. Indeed, “authentic political life, built upon respect for law and frank dialogue between individuals, is constantly renewed whenever there is a realization that every woman and man, and every new generation, brings the promise of new relational, intellectual, cultural and spiritual energies”.[195]

197. Viewed in this way, politics is something more noble than posturing, marketing and media spin. These sow nothing but division, conflict and a bleak cynicism incapable of mobilizing people to pursue a common goal. At times, in thinking of the future, we do well to ask ourselves, “Why I am doing this?”, “What is my real aim?” For as time goes on, reflecting on the past, the questions will not be: “How many people endorsed me?”, “How many voted for me?”, “How many had a positive image of me?” The real, and potentially painful, questions will be, “How much love did I put into my work?”, “What did I do for the progress of our people?”, “What mark did I leave on the life of society?”, “What real bonds did I create?”, “What positive forces did I unleash?”, “How much social peace did I sow?”, “What good did I achieve in the position that was entrusted to me?”

The full text of FRATELLI TUTTI is available at: <http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals.html>

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