

the Messenger

the Messenger



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Roman Catholic Churches
of the Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
(Fairfield, PA) and St. Rita
(Blue Ridge Summit, PA)

PASTOR

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PAROCHIAL VICAR

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The goal of this publication is to provide a link between the parishioners of St. Mary's and St. Rita's, to their church, and to each other. It contains articles and information that can help us to progress spiritually, enrich our faith, inform us of parish activities, and to share our love of God.

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PASTOR'S PAGE

BY FR. ROBERT MALAGESI, MSSCC



I am writing this shortly after the conclusion of a three week Canonical visit of both the Superior General and Vicar General of the Missionaries. The Superior General, in speaking with some members of the Lay Missionaries, saw that they had a profound interest in the charism, or gift, that God gave to St. Gaetano. I would like to try to convey this gift in the hope that those who read this will be drawn into this gift and grow in holiness. From reading about St. Gaetano Errico's life, I strongly believe that he was inspired in his zeal for the salvation of souls to provide a way for them to come to God through an act of love. He could see and feel the plight of the people caused in one sense by the living of immoral lives and, in another sense, by the oppression of governments. He knew that he must help them.

In the Constitutions of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, two specific sections exhibit St. Gaetano's zeal. The first establishes the identity of the Congregation. It is by God's Will that the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary was established, so mankind may know the great love of these Divine Hearts. The second section sets forth the aim of the Congregation among God's people. The Eternal Father, when bestowing His Divine Love in the hearts of humanity, chose among all creatures the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Offering themselves to the service of God the Father as co-workers in His Divine Plan, the Sacred Hearts in our times have called us

to share His holy love with the poor in spirit. The primary goal of our Institute is to work tirelessly, no matter what the cost, to make known to all peoples the most ardent Love these Hearts have for them and to enflame in their hearts this Divine Love.

As a member of the Congregation, I am humbled to share in so great a calling as to be asked to work in union with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary for the salvation of souls. St. Gaetano was chosen by God for the express purpose of founding a religious community for making known to God's children His love for them. I see in this choice the words written by Theodoret of Cyr, "When a shepherd sees that his sheep have scattered, he keeps one of them under his control and leads it to the pastures he chooses, and thus he draws the other sheep back to him by means of this one."

While Theodoret is speaking of Our Lord, I can see these words also being applied to one whom God has chosen in a special way to be His vessel. While founders of religious communities certainly fill this role, I believe this call, after Our Lord, is most perfectly fulfilled in our Blessed Mother. She has been graced by God to share most profoundly with Jesus in the salvation of mankind. Jesus entrusted her to us as our Mother who longs to hold us in her heart: a heart that is human; a heart that is sacred; and a heart that has been pierced. Our Blessed Mother cooperates perfectly with Her Divine Son to help draw us to the Father's merciful love. Come, share in the life of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary!

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YEAR OF THE FAMILY

BY PAULETTE NIDEL



Did you know this is the Year of the Family as declared by Pope Francis in the fall of 2013? The topic of the family flows logically from the focus on the Year of Faith and then the New Evangelization. The family is the basic unit of society and of course the greatest source of faith and the root place for evangelization to begin. In October 2013 the Pope asked that bishops throughout the world distribute a thirty-nine question survey to all priests. For the first time, the Vatican asked for parishioners' responses to a questionnaire. The survey addressed

nine topics including themes such as how Catholic teaching on the value of the family has been received and understood, marriage according to natural law, local efforts to support and promote family life, the Church's ministry and care for people in irregular marriage situations, including the religious education of the children of these marriages, as well as the openness of married couples to life and the Sacraments of the Church.

By the end of 2013, the findings were compiled to help discover solutions to difficult pastoral situations in light of the existing doctrines of faith. The resulting document will be used at the Synod In October 2014. This Synod, or gathering of Bishops, called the Third Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, will be in Rome from October 5 – 12, 2014,

with the topic: "The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization." Pope Paul VI established the Synod of Bishops in 1965. It is a general assembly gathering created as part of the Vatican II reforms. Regular synods meet every couple of years to bring about greater unity and cooperation of bishops the world over with each other and with the Holy See. Calling an *Extraordinary Synod* versus a regular Synod means that the issues are even more urgent. The participants are more select, and the heads of the Eastern Churches attend as well as presidents of bishops' conferences and heads of curia offices. The First Extraordinary Synod was held in 1969 The second, called by Pope John Paul II, was called the Second Extraordinary Synod of 1985 around the theme "The Twentieth Anniversary of the Conclusion



FAMILY... IS WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE ARE, WHY WE ARE

BY DENISE JACKSON

Just imagine if the Bible was entitled ***God's Little Instruction Book for Families***. It would be on the list of best sellers, and people would flock to the book stores to buy it! Between the bound leather covers, the pages would lay in waiting to deliver knowledge for the sages, directions for raising children, instructions for growing up, and how to live the 'good life.' There would be no need for dear old Eloise or dear Abby. Tarot cards would flap in the winds of astrology, and Emily Post would have needed a new career.

The books of the Bible could be divided into chapters listed as *Genealogy, Family, Marriage, Wives, Hus-*

bands, Parenting, Forgiving, Surviving the Past, Seeking the Future, and Life in the Present. The longest chapter would be Love. According to the scriptures, we are made in the image and likeness of God. God is love. We are also love.

We are instructed to "Love one another as I have loved you." To do that, God has given us, each to the other, to be His love personified in the world. We are called to live in the structure of family and to love one another so we may understand the love of our Father. In turn, each family is to reach beyond their immediate members to extend God's perfect love to an imperfect world. That same love allows us to embrace others beyond the boundary of blood ties, to extend

of the Second Vatican Council.” This Third Extraordinary Synod is a result of Pope Francis’ meeting with the “G8” Council of Cardinals.

For Francis, issues of family and marriage are the ones that require deeper interpretation given the signs of the times, and dedicating a synod to the topic suggests he wants to unify church teaching about them. When local church offices around the world make their own decisions about marriage and family, especially about serving communion to divorced and remarried Catholics, the global church becomes divided. Vatican spokesperson Fr. Federico Lombardi said, “It is very important that an extraordinary Synod has been convoked on the theme of the pastoral of the family. This is the way in which the Pope intends to promote reflection and to guide the path of the community of the Church, with the responsible participation of the episcopate from different parts of the world.”

With the special focus on the Year of the Family, Father Robert thought it would be enriching for families to have this statue as a reminder to pray and seek holiness of life. This was another response to inspiration on his part after the large Holy Family statue was installed on the grounds by the Church entrance. The intent is for the statue to travel for weekly visits among parishioners. The Statue was blessed in January, and so far about ten families both from St. Rita’s and other parishes have hosted the statue.

Did you know you can sign up in the vestibule to be a home for St. Rita’s Holy Family statue? Father will be in touch with you to make arrangements. He will meet with you during the week and pray the Rosary for married couples, which he developed during his years in the seminary. Individuals as well as families are welcome to sign up. All of us benefit by praying for families! You and your family will be happy you did!

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/documentazione/documents/sinodo_indice_en.html



The Notto family receives the Holy Family Statue at the Sunday Mass. Father will join them to pray the Rosary for Married Couples at the end of the week.



The Bakers and Barb Harris (Tina Baker's's Mom) receive the Holy Family Statue for their week in February .

the heart of God to others. As such, we enlarge the circle of immediate family to our church family, and that to the body of Christ.

When I met my future in-laws, I was drawn to their strong family life, how they treated each other, and how they lived their faith every day at home and within the community. They even prayed together. I remember thinking that when I grew up I wanted to have a family just like that. They were a family that relied on God in good times and bad times. They accepted his unconditional love and loved others unconditionally. I eventually married the oldest son in that family.

For forty-three years I have been grateful to the parents who raised such a beautiful, faith filled man, my husband. As a young couple, we welcomed the birth of our children, and early in their lives we began praying for the children who would become their future spouses. I should not be surprised then, that our son and daughter have also been

blessed with wonderful, faith filled spouses. We prayed for and with our children. Now they pray with their children. We taught by example, celebrated the sacraments, and practiced the tenets of our faith with them. Now, we watch them share the joys of our faith with their children.

Of all the blessings in our lives, we are proud of and grateful for the young adults our children have become. Our joy is most complete when we enter the church, and four generations of our family fill the pews of St. Mary’s. My heart nearly burst when our son-in-law entered the church, and when our daughter-in-law signed up for RCIA. Through example, by simply living our faith, we have mirrored the family life of our past generation, and it now reflects in the lives of our children. We welcomed two new members and nine grandchildren into our family, and to our faith. Family... is who we are, what we are, and why we are. We are the body of Christ. We are family.

Denise Jackson, © 2014

ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

BY JOHN BUTCHER AND TOM KINIRY

Many of you know Tom Kiniry. He is an active member of St. Mary's Men's Club and is always willing to help with the myriad projects the club sponsors. However, during casual conversations, I discovered that Tom has a remarkable family background.

Growing up, I had an extended family with many religious vocations. Two of my father's aunts were sisters (Franciscan and Mercy), my mother's cousin was a Passionist priest, and my aunt was a sister of the Good Shepherd. However, this pales by comparison with Tom Kiniry's immediate family.

As Tom describes his family, out of the ten children, six went into religious life. There were two diocesan priests, two Holy Cross Brothers, and two nuns (Dominican and Sister of St. Joseph).

Tom provided this amazing story about his family.

Upon hearing of the six vocations in our family, people often assume that we must have been a very religious family. In truth, I never felt that we were any different from any of our neighbors.

Terri Gelles, who belongs to St. Francis Church in Gettysburg, was my neighbor. She once told me that her mother prayed daily for a vocation in their family, and she could not understand why the Kinirys had all the vocations. We still laugh about that.

My father was an Irish rail-roader. My mother was a German/

Irish housewife. They raised their family in the lower middle west end section of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. My brothers and sisters and I grew up in the 30's, 40's, and 50's, the peak years of Catholic education. It was through the Baltimore Catechism, taught by the Sisters of Mercy, that we learned our religion. It was the discipline at home, the adherence to the faith, that put it in motion, but this way of life was common at the time. We were no exception.

Our neighborhood was blue collar, predominantly Catholic. I never knew an African American, and I hardly knew a protestant. Every nationality had its own church and school. On Sunday mornings, to the strings of polka music coming out of kitchen widows we all went off to Mass: the Irish to St. Columba, the Germans to Immaculate Conception, the Slovaks to St. Francis or St. Stevens, the Polish to St. Casimir, and Croatians to St. Rochus.

We never owned a car and never missed one. Everything we needed was in the neighborhood or a streetcar ride away. No one went on vacations. Life was so simple. Focus was on home and family.

Religious activities were daily, weekly, and annual events. They gave purpose and structure to our lives. In this environment, my brothers and sisters and I were prepared for the world.

My brother Joe, the first born, was ordained a priest in 1950 when I was in second grade. I grew

up knowing him only as a priest. As the years went by, Joe became the pillar of our family, and in many ways, also of the diocese. If someone needed work, if a son or daughter was in trouble, if a marriage was failing you went to Monsignor Kiniry. He was pastor for twenty-five years of the largest parish in the diocese. During that time, he was appointed Director of the Diocesan Bureau of Information and had his own weekly TV show. He was President of the Priests' Council and twice received special honors from Pope John Paul II: Prelate of Honor with title Monsignor, and Prothonotary Apostolic. Joe died in 2008.

Marianne chose the single life vocation. As such she was our mother's right arm and a stabilizer for the family. She is eighty-six years old and still sends me \$15 on my birthday!

Jimmy was the quiet one of the family. He entered the Holy Cross Brothers right out of high school. He taught high school math for years in several private all male Holy Cross high schools, including a number of years at the American School in Rome. Jimmy left the order after twenty-eight years. He continued to teach and died while living in Pittsburgh in 2009.

Bridget (Jetty) entered the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill, New York, after high school. Jetty was and remains the family cheerleader. There is seldom a dark day in her life. She spent her entire career teaching in the Manhattan girls'

schools run by the Dominicans. She was a small town girl who made it big in the city. When she retired from teaching she was appointed Administrator by the city of New York of Incarnation Center, a home for children with AIDs. Jetty was awarded the University of Mount St. Mary's Founders Medal in recognition of her work. I enjoyed many a free meal, free room, and place to park in New York while visiting my sister Jetty.

Dick also joined the Holy Cross Brothers, but not until after a stint in the United States Navy. Dick is the J (Judging on the Meyers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator) of the family. He is "order personified." Like Jimmy, Dick taught in the Holy Cross high schools and was extremely active in social programs in Washington, D.C. For years right up to his recent (second) retirement, he administered in various nursing homes in the district. He received several dinners and other venues of recognition from those organizations upon leaving for his provincialate near Albany, New York, this past fall. I always worried when I heard Dick was coming home because he never failed to bring lists of jobs to be done around the house!

Peggy was the first to marry and, as you might imagine, was married by Joe. She and her husband, Ray, raised five children, who have rewarded them with grandchildren, and now great grandchildren.

Michael entered the Marines while in high school. He fell in love with Florida while stationed there. Upon discharge he came home, got married, and returned to Florida where he raised a family of seven

children. Thanks to Michael, my father's family name continues.

The characteristic that best describes my brother Larry is Love. Like Jetty, life is pure joy to Larry and he brings that love of life and compassion to everyone he meets, especially those he is serving as a parish priest. You would be hard



*Photo taken in 1966 on the day of
Tom's brother, Larry's, first mass*

*Left to right: Front row
Tom's mother, Larry, Tom's dad*

*Back row
Patty, Joe, Marianne, Jimmy,
Jetty, Dick, Peggy, Tom
(Michael was missing)*

pressed to hear an unkind word spoken of Larry. He has touched, and continues to touch so many lives with the true spirit of our Catholic faith. My brothers, Joe and Larry, along with two cousins who are priests, and Joe's two assistants, married Carol and me in 1983. Carol tells people we had more priests on the altar than we had people in the pews.

Patty, the youngest of the family, entered the Sisters of St. Joseph upon high school graduation. She taught elementary school in

Pittsburgh for a few years before leaving the community. She married, had three beautiful children, and then sadly died of cancer at the age of thirty-five. The youngest in the family was the first to pass on. Both Joe and Larry were on the altar for her funeral. Only a little over a year separates Patty and me. Although we come from a family of ten, she and I sort of grew up alone.

Being born the ninth of ten children certainly had its advantages: lots of in house baby sitters, lots of hand me downs, lots of free advice, and most important, lots of love and support along the way.

When I reflect on looking for an answer to the question, "why so many vocations in one family," I focus on their internal drive to want to serve humanity in some compassionate role. They all possess a very fond love of their faith and a commitment to it, but their emphasis seems to be allowing that to play out in relationships with other human beings. Of the six vocations, perhaps Joe exemplified the role of a preacher. He was well known for his masterly skill of combining sacred scripture with everyday occurrences which the people could identify with and relate to. People of all faiths tuned into his TV show to listen to his homily. He loved this role, and by such, he, like Jimmy, Jetty, Dick, Larry, and Patty gave so much of themselves to make the world a better place.

I wish I had a dime for every time I was asked, "What happened to you"? My pat answer has always been, "God called six, and the Marines called two."

LIGHTHOUSE LESSONS - PURITY ON A POSITIVE NOTE

BY PAULETTE NIDEL

Did you know the average teen is exposed to eleven hours of media per day?

Jason Evert is a noted speaker and publisher of CDs and at least twelve books on the subject of chastity and other aspects of Catholicism. Some of his titles include What's so Great About Being Catholic, How to Find Your Soulmate Without Losing Your Soul, and Raising Pure Teens. He includes lots of humor in his CD presentations so you don't lose interest while listening!

In Parenting for Purity, Jason makes it quite clear that the parents are the #1 influence on their teens sexual behavior! The virtue of chastity must be linked with the virtue of love and focused on in positive terms as opposed to negatives, for example focusing on love for the other's good versus abstaining to avoid negative consequences such as pregnancy or STDs.

He gives ten strategies to help teach families purity and communicate the message of chastity. First: pray, fast, and offer sufferings for your children. Prayer is the first thing we should turn to, and it should be done as a couple and as a family. Praying together happens with grace, Mass, and Confession when parents and children receive the sacrament together. There is no greater lesson in humility than for children to see their mom or dad going to confession and recognizing their own weaknesses.

Prayer is the most powerful tool.

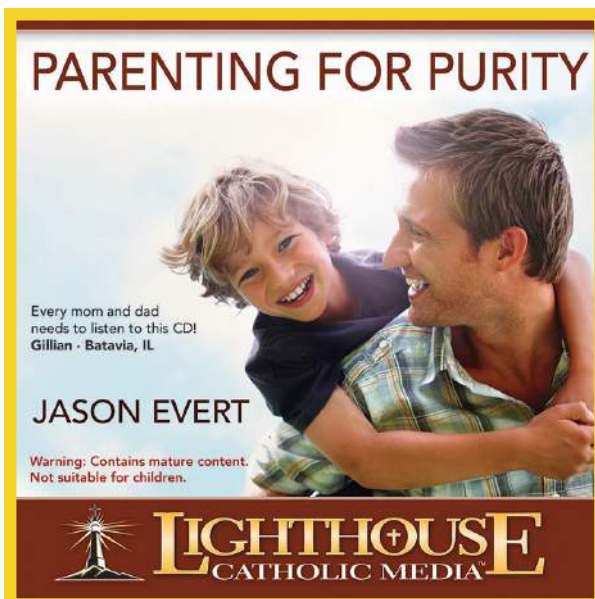
The second tip is: Set the standard high and make it clear: i.e., *abstinence until marriage*. You don't tell a child, "Don't play in a street, but if you *happen* to, please wear a helmet to protect yourself," or "In case you have a strong urge to smoke, here is a weaker pack of cigarettes which is not so dangerous." These alternatives give another option and show an expectation of failure. Evert points out the term "safe sex" degrades a woman reducing her to an object of pleasure.

parenting may be currently a thankless job, they will come back asking for your guidance years later.

Fourth: Delay the onset of dating until at least sixteen years old. Recognize the purpose of dating and encourage group friendships. Introduce your teens to the ideas of courtship. If someone is not worth marrying, they are not worth dating! Kids need specifics. To avoid a potentially bad situation, keep girls away from older guys. Encourage her to ask herself, "Would I date a guy this much younger than I am?"

Fifth: Network with other parents. It is great for kids to have friends whose parents have the same values as you do! Form networks so parents are aware of what is going on in the teens' lives. Parents can pick up many ideas from other parents too.

Sixth: Be aware of internet and media safety, a challenging frontier. Recognize that if your child has email, he or she may receive pornography. Become educated in this area recognizing the dangers to the kids as well as to the marriage! Remember what fidelity in marriage means, and let your kids know of your faithfulness to your own vows! There are internet safety filters and accountability software available such as covenanteyes.com and keyboard logger. It is essential to become computer literate. Keep the computer in a high traffic area so that both the teen and the screen are always visible. You can also track on their



The third tip: Be a parent first, then a buddy. Let your kids know you are there for them and give them clear boundaries. He cites examples showing how to demonstrate you care. The opposite of love is not hate but indifference. Be available to them at all times, setting the standard high and clear. They can blame you for not doing stupid things. He gives great examples on this too! He points out that while

phones where they are! Learn about the dangers of child porn and how it is spread! It is the best way to spend your time! Evert also lists ways to limit use of phones and other media.

Seventh: Keep communication open by not always delivering a lecture. Learn how to listen well to them! Think, “What is the best question I can ask them to help them think about their issues?” If you take an interest in everything in their lives, they will be more likely to be open about everything.

Eight: Don’t just give “the talk,” give many talks. With their academic subjects, they get years of formation. They need to hear early and often about the truth of human sexuality! The Church does not give an age; every child is different. Both parents should speak when it comes to human sexuality, whereas moms speak to daughters and dads to sons about the “birds and bees.” Teach the value of delayed gratification. You can start teaching this message early in many ways and use children’s books like The Princess and the Kiss. Children who learn impulse control and delayed gratification develop the ability do much better later. Be ready with not only what the church teaches but also with resources that document how marriages last for those who are chaste before marriage. Skeptical kids can see that the social statistics back what the Church says.

Ninth: As parents, get over your insecurities when it comes to talking about the subject. Both parents need to speak on these issues. If dad is silent in spiritual and

moral matters, the teens assume he disagrees with mom. Do things like father/son days or dates for father and daughter to show how she should be treated by a man. Spend time together.

Tenth: Chastity is a virtue, like courage. Virtues are more caught than taught. Practicing chastity in your marriage is the best way to teach it to your kids! Use the gift of sexuality according to God’s plan. Know the Church’s teaching on marriage such as no contraception or sterilization. Good Catholics are open to the gift of life. That is the default position, and if you have a sufficiently just reason not to have a child, Natural Family Planning is the way to do this.

Remember, the kids may not always obey you, but they will imitate you! Let them recognize they are not waiting to have sex made legal but rather waiting for a spouse, their future husband or wife: their vocation!!

I recommend this CD especially if you have children or teens. We can all learn something from this since most of us are not nearly as well educated as we might need to be for our children. We also may be able to help others in this regard – nieces, nephews, grandkids, neighbors kids! If this topic is not useful to you, there are many others. Jason’s What’s so Great About Being Catholic would be a great one to start with! Maybe you can relate! Check out www.chastityproject.com. Ask Father Robert if you would like this CD!

TO MY CHILDREN

By Denise Jackson ©

I have so much to give you
So much love to share
You’re in my every thought and
Kept in every prayer.

From the dawning of each morn
Till the ending of each day
I spend my life daydreaming
Loving you my way.

I want to make you happy
Want to make you glad
To bring your life more sunshine
Cheer you when you’re sad.

I want to be there with you
When you feel all alone
When you feel lost or lonely
I will bring you home.

To listen very closely
To the thoughts you share
Wish my heart to understand
Show you that I care.

I want to look out with you
Show you what I see
I want to help you become
All that you can be.

Let’s look at your tomorrows
See what we can see
Let’s hold hands as you become
That which you will be.

I believe In You!

"THE CIRCLE OF LIFE"

A CHICKEN STORY



Congratulations to Saint Mary's parishioner, Sandra L. Polvinale, for her first place award in the first annual Christian storytelling contest in the Fall of 2013 in Hagerstown, MD.

In her own words, Sandi shares a little about her story: It seems all kids, young and old, enjoy a good chicken story. Although I shan't reveal the whole story due to length and publisher's first rights, I will tell you that it is never a good idea to name your pet chickens after your sisters' middle names, your own, and your mother's nick name Chic, pronounced Chick! What happens in this story is pretty much true with a slight bit added for artistic license. It involves a chaotic surgery attempt, a chase scene, a villain, the heroine, surgeons, surgeon wanna be's, and a whole colorful cast of characters!

There is even a St Rita's character that started this whole commotion! And if that isn't enough drama, there's a pause for an endearing cell phone call to my mother and a run to the emergency room at Feathers Tails and Scales. Throw in some civil war anesthesia, and you have the recipe for a hilarious disaster that ends in an unexpected twist. Life on a farm is fodder for a whole slew of stories.

Maybe we can convince Sandi to share her hilarious, award-winning story with us one day soon.



ONE MAGICAL DAY

BY DENISE JACKSON © 1995

A special experience that brought our family closer together occurred one marvelous afternoon, made magical by the gift of laughter. Enchanting from the start, it began with a spine-tingling ride high atop the backbone of Ice Mountain. Our family could barely get enough of the crisp October air into our lungs. All the while, the glorious autumn sunshine warmed our spirits to the joy of complete abandonment. Blessedly, away from the busy world, we were alone on our own private mountain for a whole day.

In union, white knuckled, clinging to the rope support and each other, we trembled as we crossed the rickety wooden foot bridge. Valiantly, we thrilled with the triumph of reaching the other side, high above the rushing stream. A family of God's ageless children, we impetuously scampered with the squirrels among the leaves. Laughing ourselves silly, paying no attention to the staining walnut husks or green grass, we rolled pell-mell over and over down the sloping mountain side. As we breathlessly lay on our backs, we watched the painted cotton-balls roll our azure blue sky... a magnificent canvas.

Grateful for that sparkle in time, I knew we could never again recapture those iridescent moments. For one afternoon we belonged to each other, hearts and souls. What joy! We were a family united in Christ, on a day born of Mother Nature.

Perhaps that is how God feels when we spend time with Him.

FAITH BEE???

BY PAULETTE NIDEL



What is it all about – a Faith Bee? Do any of us adults know enough about our faith that we could name the eleven bishops of Harrisburg or all the Popes of the 20th and 21st centuries in sequence beginning with Pope St. Pius X who established the age of First Communion at seven, the age of reason. Could we name all the books of the Old and New Testaments in order?

This past January 19th, the seventh and eighth graders of St. Rita's took a written test about the Catholic faith. In both parish CCD programs and Catholic schools throughout the diocese, students in these two grades took the test and then competed in an oral Faith Bee at their parish to select a finalist for the Diocesan Faith Bee. All of St. Rita's seventh and eighth graders took part in the judged, live Faith Bee on Feb. 2nd during the regular CCD class time. As a result Nick Hays, Peter Warthen, and Katie Manning were the finalists, and Katie went as the delegate to the Diocesan Faith Bee held on March 25th, interestingly enough, the Feast of the Annunciation.

Katie said she was a bit nervous but very excited about the experience that was an opportunity to meet our recently installed Bishop and to take part in this challenging

contest. They left school at noon, and the contest started at 2 P.M. lasting until 6:30! They stayed until the end encouraging contestants and curious about the winner.

First of all, Katie said she had not realized how much she already knew as she took part with a total of fifty-six students, of whom three quarters were from Catholic schools. There are about eighty parishes in the diocese so this was a good representation from fifty-six of those. Secondly, she became increasingly aware that there is so much more to learn! (That old saying: "The more you know, the more you know you don't know!") She said she was very happy to have had the experience and would gladly do it again. She felt good about how well she did, finishing in the top twenty students. Had she studied? YES! Her twin sister Hanna as well as her mom and other family members helped her to study, for which Katie is grateful. I asked about the winner, a guy, and she said he seemed like he knew everything! Katie thought he might someday be dedicated as a religious in the Church and with all that knowledge – a real gift!

Students were invited to submit questions to Bishop Gainer before the bee actually started, and Katie's deeply thought out question was selected: "Why does God seem so much more stern or wrathful in the Old Testament than in the New?" Bishop Gainer gave a

lengthy answer which included the concept that maybe man's understanding and interpretation were more stern and that, since Jesus had not come yet, there would be a greater contrast to show the impact of the Commandment to love one another. The New Testament law includes more a spirit of love for which the people of the Old Testament were not yet prepared.

Katie seemed to really enjoy the day and even made friends with the students sitting next to her. Though she did not win the grand prize, Katie is a winner in her own right and well on her way to realizing that we all can learn more about our faith and should be highly motivated to do so. We are then better able to explain and defend it especially today when there is so much confusion about truth and what we believe as Catholic Christians.

The day ended on a great note with Father Robert treating Katie, her mom, Chris, and sister Hanna to dinner on the way home!



ADORATION

BY DICK HEIBEL



Susan E. Bates
Photography

“Oh my God, relying on Thy infinite mercy, almighty power, and promises. I hope to obtain **for-giveness** of my sins, **everlasting life**, and all thy **graces**, through the merits of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.” I began to say the Act of Hope every day in 1995 to keep me focused on attaining my goal of reaching heaven. When the Adoration Chapel opened, Mary and I signed up for the 2:00 A.M. hour. This was one of the hours during which the apostles had fallen asleep during Christ's agony in the garden. I thought I could do better.

After seven years of Adoration, I have found the following:

1. I am never tired or bored. I find myself looking forward to this quiet time with no distractions between me and God. I ask for help solving my problems, and perseverance to live my life the way God wants.

2. Going to Adoration is a lot like taking up jogging. Once it becomes a habit, you'll find you miss the peace and quiet, just like a jogger misses the endorphin rush when he doesn't do routine exercise. The Adoration rush is one quiet hour when you are in Christ's physical presence and can ask Him for guidance, help, etc. You always feel better.

3. I discovered that you can obtain a plenary indulgence for a half hour visit, when you meet the additional conditions of Mass, Communion, Confession, and prayer for the Holy Father's intentions. To me a plenary indulgence represents a “get out of Purgatory free card” or at least to spend a shorter time there.

I urge you to make the commitment to go to Adoration, then start with a half hour when you are free. Don't pick a time that stresses you out. Then make a commitment to yourself, no one else, to go once a week for nine weeks. At the end of this novena, your life will change.

For most of my adult life, just like the apostles, I had fallen asleep. It was the sleep of indifference and ingratitude towards Christ's suffering and love. Now I have a way to show my gratitude and get to my ultimate goal.

Two weeks ago after 5:30 Mass there was a huge rainbow in the eastern sky. One end was to the North in Gettysburg the other end was at the Adoration chapel. It was like a memo from God reminding me that the only treasure I needed was with Him.

THREE LITTLE WORDS

BY MARY ANN CARR

DAY LIGHT SAVINGS TIME

Just three little words. They didn't sound as if they would cause much trouble. The TV and computer had reminded us for weeks, at least a half dozen times a day, to be sure and turn back our clocks on Saturday. Saturday night rolled around, and I reminded Bruce that now was the time to DO IT.

“Eh. I'm a little tired. I think I will change them in the morning.”

“Let's do it tonight and get it over with so that we won't be late for Mass.”

“Don't worry. No problem. I'll get it done in the morning. Trust me.”

I didn't listen. All the clocks that were within easy reach or essential to the correct time in the morning, such as the coffee pot, I pushed back an hour.

We woke the next morning to another story. Half of the clocks pronounced the time to be 7:00. The other half chimed 8 times. “Which clocks did you set back? Is this the right time on this clock, or is other one already set back? How many of them did you turn back?”

“Well, now that you mention it, I'm just not sure. You know what my memory is like these days, and you told me that I should trust you.”

... And then, I did have a memory of something that happened several years ago. Bruce had run a twenty-one mile race for cancer. I was so proud of him. As he neared the finish, I waited on the other side of the line to greet him. He saw me and opened up his arms for the big hug. I did the same. His long legs didn't stop. They continued to lope along the path. The sudden burst did its job. He ran right over me. His arms did break my fall, but the next thing I knew, I was on the ground. Glasses flung to one side, hearing aids on the other. So much for trust!

I believe I will stick with Jesus.

Trust in Me.

I will be with you until the end of time.

FINALLY OUR NEW BISHOP INSTALLED HARRISBURG HAS A SHEPHERD AT LAST!

BY PAULETTE NIDEL



On March 19th, Rick and I were able to attend the installation of our newly appointed Bishop, Ronald Gainer, ordained in the diocese of Allentown, Pennsylvania, in 1973, and formerly serving as the second Bishop of Lexington, Kentucky, since February 2003. What a privilege this was for us! Though the Installation Mass and ceremony lasted over two hours, the experience was totally consuming and it flew by. Large TVs provided continual coverage which meant all were able to see very well.

The entrance procession consisted of Knights of Columbus in full regalia, diocesan seminarians, ecumenical and civic leaders, deacons, priests, bishops, archbishops and cardinals, including Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia and Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States. It was such an awesome gathering of religious, even more than the Chrism Mass in Holy Week which always impresses me! The photos can speak for themselves. Most of the left side of the cathedral was empty as the pews awaited the arrival of those many

special dignitaries, priests and deacons!

Archbishop Chaput, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Philadelphia (the diocese from which Harrisburg was born), addressed the congregation and presented Bishop Gainer as the eleventh Bishop of Harrisburg, after which Archbishop Vigano read the Apostolic Letter from Pope Francis appointing Bishop Gainer as Bishop of Harrisburg. The congregation, including people from the dioceses of Allentown, Lexington, and Harrisburg responded with a standing ovation in welcome.

Bishop Gainer mixed humor with the serious in his homily, saying although the song in his heart was now back to the "Pennsylvania Polka," he would always have the echo of "My Old Kentucky Home" in his heart. On a serious side, Bishop Gainer focused on the Feast Day honoring St. Joseph and spoke of his courage, obedience, and humility. He reminded us that the devotion to St. Joseph must go far beyond the real estate intercession when we are trying to sell our house! He said St. Joseph is a model for us as he was always

aware of God's inner promptings, ready to do His will, and humbly obedient even in the most

challenging circumstances.

Bishop Gainer comes highly recommended from all areas of his experience, even from the woman who helps care for his ninety year old mother who lives in the Bishop's residence in Harrisburg. He shows the traits of a father, a priest, and Christ Himself. He is truly a "pastor at heart." (*Catholic Witness*, March 28, p. 30)

Father Robert was asked to greet the Bishop during the ceremony on behalf of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. One of the most impressive moments was during the Eucharistic Prayer to hear the chorus of so many priests voicing the words of Jesus in the Consecration!

All in all, I would consider this an experience of a lifetime, one which certainly brought me to a greater awareness of the unity which exists in our Church. How privileged we are to be blessed as the only true Church, the one with apostolic succession!

Father Robert Gillelan, as well as all present, would no doubt agree that "Lexington's Loss was Harrisburg's Gainer!" (Headline, p. 30 *Catholic Witness*, March 28, 2014) He spoke earlier saying that as Diocesan Administrator during the sede vacante or empty seat, there was no one present as relieved as he was on this day of Bishop Gainer's Installation!



Bishop Gainer and Ron & Sara Smith, with Paulette Nidel and Fr. Robert at the Rite of the Call to Contin-



Father Robert and newly installed Bishop Gainer at his Installation Ceremony on March 19, 2014

A GRACE FILLED WEEKEND WITH JAIME THIETTEN

BY FR. ROBERT MALAGESI, MSSCC

A bitterly cold winter was suddenly warmed on the first weekend of March in the land of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts (Bonneauville, Blue Ridge Summit, and Fairfield, Pennsylvania) through the gift God has given to one of His daughters, Jaime Thietten. Jaime, in sharing the gift of her beautiful voice, could be the personification of the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in one of his papal audiences. He reminded 5,000 pilgrims of the universal human response to beauty as reflected in a sculpture, a painting, a poem, or a beautiful piece of music. The Pope said it is, "something bigger, some-

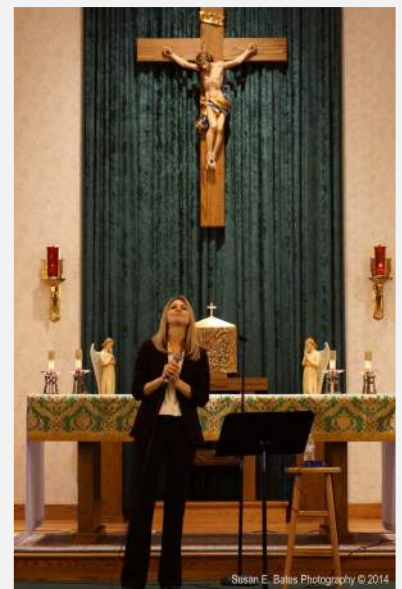
thing that speaks, capable of touching the heart, of communicating a message, of elevating the soul." Truly, the sincerity with which Jaime gives of herself in serving God is evident not only in her music but also, from what I was blessed to see, in all areas of her life, for many hearts were touched and souls elevated.

For never really having met, except for a brief introduction at the National Catholic Youth Conference last November in Indianapolis with 25,000 young people, over the weekend we quickly came to feel as though we were spending time with a family member. She shared in multiple birthday parties for both Fr.



Peter

and me which included breakfast, lunch, and dinners on various days. She spent time talking about her life and faith and hanging out with the students of St. Rita's on their Confirmation retreat. This made them feel special and appreciated. The concert itself, attended by parishioners from all three parishes, left those present with a spirit both renewed and filled with joy and grace. It was truly a "Good Day to be Alive." Thank you Jaime for visiting us, and we look forward to your returning to us again.



JAIME THIETTEN PERFORMS AT ST. MARY'S

BY JOHN BUTCHER

On March 2nd Jaime Thietten, Catholic recording artist, joined the parishes of St. Mary's, St. Rita's, and St. Joseph the Worker, performing at Masses and at a concert at St. Mary's. The appreciative audience included an equal mix of parishioners from each church. Attendance was good considering predictions of up to a foot of snow; fortunately we only had rain.

Jaime, from Idaho, said this was her first trip ever to Pennsylvania. In 2006 she, a Seventh day Adventist, and her husband, a Mormon, converted to Catholicism. She told of her struggle with the continuing call to share her talent praising God and championing the unborn through her music. She and her husband have been married fifteen years, but she cannot conceive a child due to infertility. Jaime said they may adopt in the future, and her motto is "There is no such thing as an unwanted child."

After the concert, Jaime had her CDs available and joined us for a cookie social in St. Mary's hall. We thank Father Mike, Father Peter, and Father Robert for arranging to have Jaime share her talent with us, and we wish her success in spreading the pro-life message through her music.

BELL CHOIR, BIRTHDAY PARTIES, AND MORE!



Bell Choir Party - Christine Carpenter's Birthday



First Friday Luncheons



Donut Social at St. Mary's Church



Father Robert's Birthday Party



(L) Fr. Mike with Superior General Fr. Luigi Toscano and Vicar General Fr. Benny James of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (R) Corby hosting annual gathering with visiting priest, Fr. Dan Nussbaum



(L) New alter server, Kolbe Coughlin (M) Caitlin and Adam McClain with daughter Gracelynn (R) Seminarians Denton Morris and David Dawson

ST. MARY'S PARISH NURSES

BY MARY ANNE GARDNER

Most of St. Mary's parishioners recognize our Parish Nurses on donut social Sunday. After Mass we are at the corner table in the parish hall, offering blood pressure screenings and a variety of educational handouts on numerous health topics. Or they know that the Parish Nurses are hosting the donut social when they see fruit and/or bagels along with the donuts on the table. But that's not all your Parish Nurses do for St. Mary's congregation.

Parish Nurses are Registered Nurses who have received additional education to help them serve the members of their congregations by providing a holistic approach to health and wellness. They recognize the importance of integrating physical, mental, and particularly spiritual aspects of each individual on their path to wellness.

We work under the auspices of Meritus Health in Hagerstown, Maryland. They provide us with professional oversight, continuing education, referral and consultation services, and a variety of resources. This spring and summer they are assisting us during our participation in the Million Hearts program spon-

sored by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Our part of the program involves working closely with several at risk parishioners, regularly recording blood pressure readings and working on several interventions in an attempt to decrease any abnormal readings.

When the Parish Nurses arranged for the purchase and installation of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) several years ago, we worked with the Fairfield Fire and EMS (Emergency Medical Services) staff to ensure compatibility with their equipment. Since then we have been invited to participate, as community partners, in their annual Open House in May in recognition of National EMS Week. Sometimes we do blood pressure screenings, sometimes we offer materials about a variety of health issues, and sometimes we focus on disaster planning.

One of our Parish Nurses has become a certified CardioPulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) instructor, and offers CPR certification to parishioners of both St. Mary's and St. Rita's. [If anyone is interested in participating, please contact Becky at the Church office.]

Several of your Parish Nurses work with the local American Red Cross organization, particularly in support of Disaster Services. We have nurses who are qualified to run the medical services in an emergency shelter, and one who is a qualified Shelter Manager. We also maintain ties with several additional organizations, including the Adams County Registered Nurses, and the Parish Nurse group from Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. Contact with all these organizations helps us learn and grow and improve the services we can provide to our community here at St. Mary's.

We continue to offer educational materials, personal counseling, and referral to any of our parishioners. Stop by the Blood Pressure table in the corner of the church hall on donut social Sunday (or the upstairs classroom on the Saturday before). We would be happy to take your blood pressure, answer your questions, or say a prayer with you or for you. Or feel free to stop any one of us whenever you see us. We will gladly help any way we can.



A LENTEN SATURDAY WITH FR. MILLER

BY DICK HEIBEL

Father Miller, a Marian expert from Mount St. Mary's University, led this year's Lenten retreat. He discussed the Blessed Mother's role in Christ's redemption of all mankind by selecting just two of St. John's gospels about Mary. These gospels were about the Annunciation and the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Annunciation/Incarnation had to happen, and Mary had to say "yes" to save mankind. This was an overwhelming responsibility to lay on a teenage girl. Happily, Mary's unconditional "yes" to God's will led to the removal of the stain of original sin and Eve's "no." This acceptance by Mary made her the Mother of God. Jesus' relationship with Mary must be clearly understood in order to understand Mary. Understanding that Jesus, the second person of the blessed Trinity, was fully incarnate as a human and also fully divine, is important in rebutting the early heresy which held that after Mary gave birth, God then took over the human body. This truth means that Jesus was born of Mary, not through Mary. Therefore Mary is truly the Mother of God, and her spouse is the Holy Spirit. In the Creed we pray, "He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and

was born of the Virgin Mary."

From the time of the Annunciation, Mary was Christ's first disciple and follower. Because she was to be the mother of Christ, she could not have any stain of sin and had to remain pure throughout her life, that is "full of grace." She requested Christ's first public miracle in front of his other disciples at the wedding feast at Cana. When Christ addressed her as "woman," this term was not disrespectful. In those times, a husband addressed his wife as woman. In essence He is alluding to the fact that she is the spouse of God.

At the crucifixion, Christ once again called her woman when he said to her and John, "Woman behold thy son, and son behold hold thy mother". Mary at that moment became a mother to all of us. She represented the Church, the Bride-maid of Christ, and therefore the spiritual mother of all mankind. From that day forward, Mary was taken in by John and treated as if she was his mother. Mary became not only our spiritual mother but also represented the Church on earth. As such she was to give support and aid to the early disciples and to us today.



Father Miller also discussed the Assumption in this way: Since Mary was conceived without the stain of original sin, and Christ's human nature came from Mary, both her soul and body would be taken up to heaven. We all will be resurrected one day just as Christ was resurrected, but because of sin, our bodies must return to dust before our resurrection. Mary had no sin and so was never subject to death or corruption.

One inquiry that stayed with me from the question and answer period was about Christ's last words on the cross. "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" These words are the beginning of Psalm 22, not an act of despair. The psalm actually ends with reaffirmation of trust in God's help.



*"For mental prayer is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us. The important thing is not to think much but to love much and so do that which best stirs you to love. Love is not great delight but desire to please God in everything.
- St. Theresa of Avila"*

~ Submitted by Corby

PULPIT PONDERING: REFLECTIONS ON RECENT HOMILIES BY FR. ROBERT MALAGESI, MSSCC (AND OTHER PRIESTS)

BY PAULETTE NIDEL

From May 28, Wednesday of the sixth week of Easter: “How are we able to speak about God?” We hear in the Gospel of St John, 16:12-15, that the Holy Spirit will come and guide us to all truth. In Acts, 17:15, 22-18:1, we hear how Paul went to Athens and spoke to the Athenians about what they were familiar with. He noted they were very religious and spoke of their shrines, mentioning an altar he found among them to an “Unknown God.” He proceeded to proclaim to them this God whom they unknowingly worshiped. He told them how this God is the source of all life and everything that is. He made the whole human race from one man and fixed the seasons and the boundaries of their regions so we might seek God. But He is never far from us; He is immanent, ever near and wanting us to seek Him. We have this innate desire to worship one greater than ourselves!

How we speak to people about God is called Apologetics. God plants the seed of faith within people which draws them to the truth. Only when we seek God are we truly able to live. Even the poets have writ-

ten, “We too are His offspring,” and Plato and Aristotle said to “Look toward God.”

There is no doubt that someone greater than ourselves exists. As did pagans, we too have statues, but our statues are a reminder of the one they represent. For pagans, the statues themselves are the gods!

God calls us to repent. There will be a day when God will judge the world. If we know the truth, we are responsible for it. Though not all accept the truth, such as Christ crucified, we must still speak it and live it. When Msgr. Rohlf's was here in early June, he said, “Truth is not something different for you and for me. We don't invent the truth. God does! We just become aware of it through our intellect. So if someone tells you, “That may be true for *you*,” let them know truth exists independently of what you or I may believe or understand!

At the invitation of the Master, we must entrust ourselves to the Holy Spirit, learn the faith, and then we need to leave the final outcome up

to Him! We heard how we sometimes fail to recognize the Holy Spirit and how He works in our lives. The story is told in the Magnificat about St Augustine of Canterbury who was directed to go to England to convert the people there. Fear developed in him and the group with him, so they turned back. Then the Pope sent him back, and this time he succeeded. The Holy Spirit will persevere to have us act according to His Will as long as we are open to His lead!

The Holy Spirit, Advocate, Comforter, and Consoler will guide us, and the Father with the Son will work together so they all work in God's will. We just have to trust! The same Holy Spirit who came to the Apostles on that First Pentecost acts now in and through us. We must allow Him!

Thought for the day: How will I work to fulfill God's will today and share my faith and speak the truth? Pray for such opportunities and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words and deeds to support that faith!

A PRAYER FOR OUR PRIESTS BY JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR

Lord Jesus, we your people pray to You for our priests. You have given them to us for OUR needs. We pray for them in THEIR needs.

We know that You have made them priests in the likeness of your own priesthood. You have consecrated them, set them aside, anointed them, filled them with the Holy Spirit, appointed them to teach, to preach, to minister, to console, to forgive, and to feed us with Your Body and Blood.

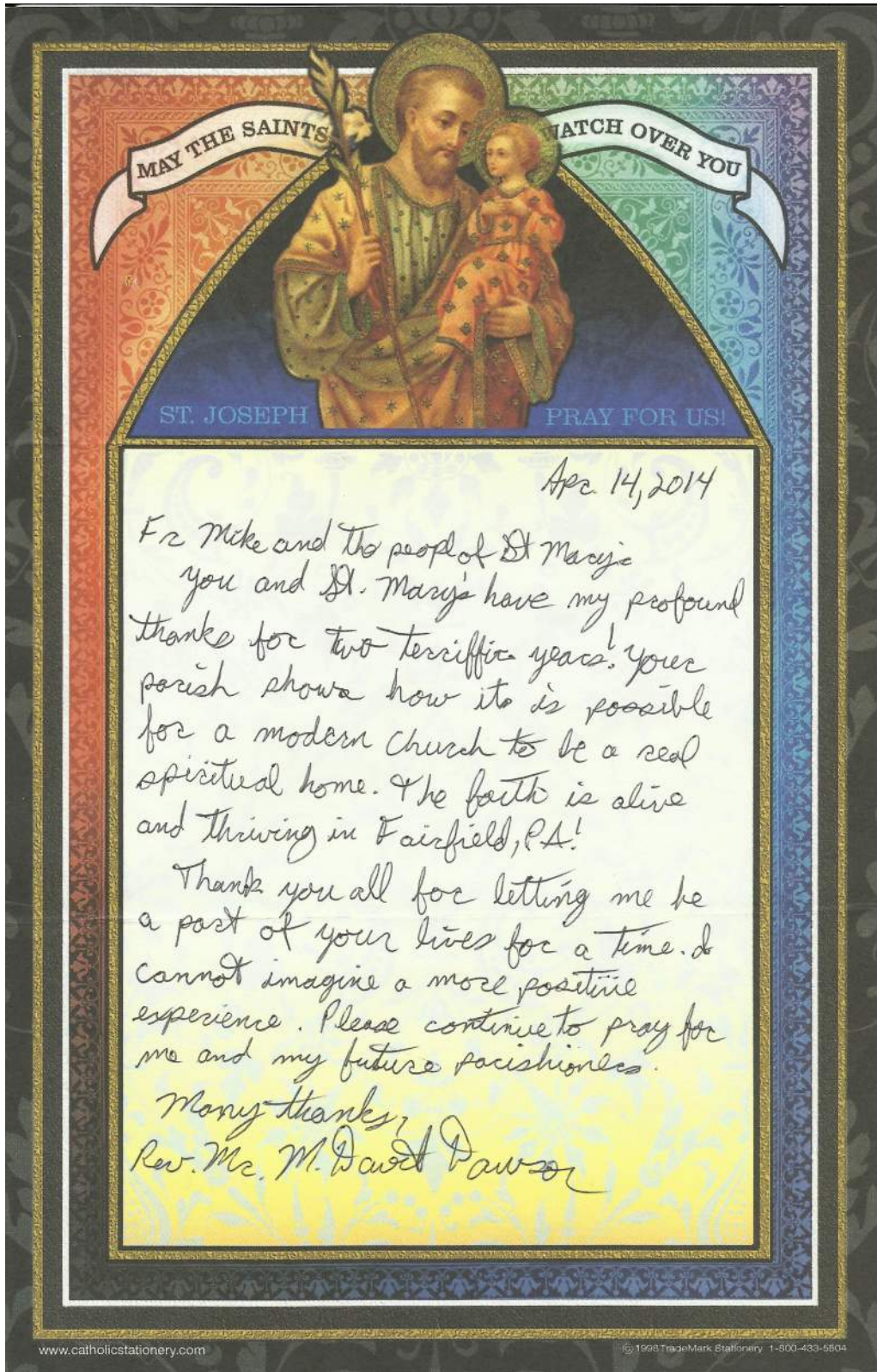
Yet we know, too, that they are one with us and share our human weaknesses. We know too that they are tempted to sin and discouragement as are we, needing to be ministered to,

as do we, to be consoled and forgiven, as do we. Indeed, we thank You for choosing them from among us, so that they understand us as we understand them, suffer with us and rejoice with us, worry with us and trust with us, share our beings, our lives, our faith.

We ask that You give them this day the gift You gave Your chosen ones on the way to Emmaus: Your presence in their hearts, Your holiness in their souls, Your joy in their spirits. And let them see You face to face in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread.

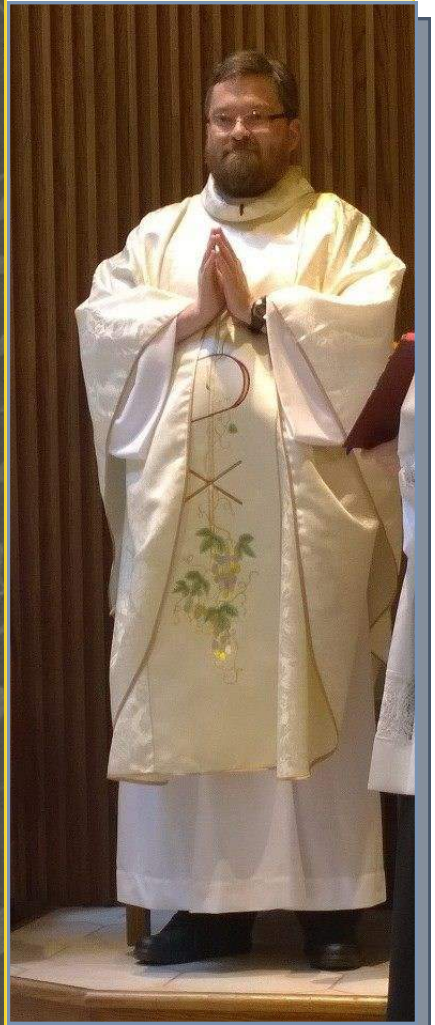
We pray to You, O Lord, through Mary the mother of all priests, for Your priests and for ours. Amen.

A NOTE OF THANKS TO THE PEOPLE OF ST. MARY'S
FROM NEWLY ORDAINED FATHER M. DAVID DAWSON



St. Mary's friendly seminarian, Marcel David Dawson, whom we had come to know and love, was recently ordained a priest in the diocese of Hartford (CT) on May 17, 2014.

Below is a photograph from his first Mass.



MY MEMORIES OF POPE ST. JOHN XXIII AND POPE ST. PAUL II

BY FR. MICHAEL A. MESSARO, MSSCC

I went to Rome in 1961 (eons ago) for philosophical and theological studies at the Pontifical University Urbaniano. It was an exciting time to be in Rome since the Second Vatican Council was in session. Anticipations were high regarding the outcome of the Council and rightfully so. Our Superior General at the time, Fr. Leonard Carrieri, was a Council Father. From time to time he would sit with us students telling us about the various ideas and proposals under consideration. Studying at a Pontifical University also had its advantages because our professors were councilors to the bishops.

On one occasion, I do not remember the date, Holy Father John XXIII came to the university chapel to celebrate Mass for the students. It was the old Tridentine Mass, and the university choir sang their hearts out. Afterwards I was standing outside chatting with some fellow classmates when the Holy Father came out the chapel's main door to get into his car to return to his residence at the Vatican. Much to our surprise, he first turned and walked toward us. With a cheerful smile, he told us that we were the future of the Church. We needed to follow the call of God and become holy priests bringing many souls to God. With that he returned to his car and went off. We could not believe what just

happened because he caught us off guard with his behavior that was very unusual for a pope at that time.

Now that he is canonized a saint, I feel privileged that he took a moment of his life to encourage us to be faithful to God's calling. Hopefully we have done what he had asked of us in being holy priests.



Trips to Italy always include a trip to the Vatican and to St. Peter's Basilica. I lived and studied in Rome for six years, and it is truly the eternal city. Visits to St. Peter's were never tiring, and every time I went to the basilica I learned something new, something I was not of aware of before.

On one of my return visits, when John Paul II was pope, I went to the Vatican to see the Holy Father. It was general audience day. I stood in the crowd outside hoping he would pass my way. After we had

waited for a little while, the Holy Father appeared in his pope-mobile. Since it was before the assassination attempt, the pope-mobile was not covered with the bulletproof covering, and he could be seen very clearly. As was the custom he passed by blessing the people while the car moved on. I guess it was the Holy

Spirit that led me to stand at the right place to see the Holy Father because as his car approached, we were not more than ten feet apart. For some reason the car slowed down just a little, and I could see his eyes. I was amazed to see nothing but sheer holiness, and I was overcome with awe.

My next encounter with Pope John Paul II was at the beatification of the Founder of my Institute, St. Gaetano Errico. For this occasion I had the happy privilege of con-celebrating

Mass with His Holiness along with other priests and bishops present for the beatification. This time when I looked into his eyes I saw sadness, suffering and pain, but there was still that gleam of holiness that the pain could not take away. Pope John Paul II is known as "the great" for many reasons, but for me it is because of his acceptance of his physical ailments and limitations that he patiently embraced for the love of God. This has been my inspiration to keep on going - no matter how difficult it may be - and do it all for the greater glory of God.

ADORATION IN THE SAINT GAETANO ERRICO CHAPEL

BY JOAN RITTER

God has been so good to all of us at St. Mary's and St. Rita's. He has blessed us with Missionary Priests from the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and the St. Gaetano Errico Chapel. I love to start my day with Mass and end my day with a date with Jesus at the Adoration Chapel when possible.

I have been so blessed to be a part of this beautiful devotion, and I want to share with you some of my prayer partners. Ray and Marie Beaumont spent many hours with Jesus at the Adoration chapel. One Friday night when Marie and Ray were there, Father Robert came in to make a visit,

and they all fell asleep. I told our Lord that they were singing a song for him.

Then there was Joe Pecher. He also spent many hours with Jesus. I would hear him coming up Tract Rd. in his old truck, and it always sounded like it was on its last run. He would pull into the parking lot, slam the door, and come into the chapel. Joe had some health issues, and it was not easy for him. He would come into the chapel, give me a wink, and go sit down in his favorite corner and pull out his Rosary. I am sure he probably said, "Here I am Jesus. It wasn't easy but here I am because I love You and

your
Blessed
Mother."



Ray and Marie and Joe are now in Heaven with Jesus. I now see Joe's son and family visit Jesus often. I am sure Ray, Marie, Joe, and Arlene Pecher are praying from heaven that we get adorers for the Adoration chapel.

This is a treasure that God our Father has given us. This is the treasure that will get us to heaven with Him if we only take time to be with Him on earth.

COVENANT

BY DENISE JACKSON©

*When two hearts entwine,
Nurtured love grows- like the ivy-vine
Each spirit vowed and thus endowed
Each lover graced- one from the other
Words spoken oft and tenderly-
Promises honored thus contently
The union held sacred by man and wife-
Bloomed and proffered throughout its
life
Though frigid winters unceasingly came-
And summers' heat repeated the same
The couple weathered each storm anew-
Held tightly to the bond that grew.*

*The roots of forever firmly took hold,
Thus love outwitted the ages of old
When the breath of life denied one lover -
Memories breathed on for the other
Somewhere beyond the realms of life,
There wanders the faithful man and his
wife
Holding hands, embracing each other-
Their love lives on, in one another
For a covenant blessed by integrity
true,
The couple had earned the joy that was
due.*

A SEED IS PLANTED - A GENTLE INVITATION

MEET AND WELCOME RON SMITH INTO THE CATHOLIC FAMILY OF ST. RITA

BY PAULETTE NIDEL

Ron says he just used to bring his wife Sara to Mass on Sundays and listen to the homily. While he enjoyed coming to church, he wanted to learn more. Though he and Sara live in Thurmont, they started coming to St. Rita's over a year ago, found people here very friendly, and were enriched by the liturgy, especially the homilies. Ron works as the plumber for Frederick Memorial Hospital and seems quite the expert in his field. One can always use a plumber for a friend! Not only that, when the RCIA team sponsored a Simple Supper during Lent, he and Sara provided most of the meal with pulled pork and baked beans as their specialty. (I don't know any other plumbers who can also cook!)

When he and Sara met with Fr. Robert, and Father inquired as to whether he was Catholic, Ron said no. So Father spoke about RCIA and invited him to come learn more about the Faith. Sometimes all it takes is a simple invitation! (Note to self: am I as invitational as I should be with potential candidates or lapsed Catholics?)

What was Ron expecting to receive from the Easter Vigil? Besides being received into full Communion with the Church, receiving both Confirmation and first Eucharist that evening, he had no idea what a wonderful experience that would be. The candles, readings, and fellowship at the reception afterwards were more than he expected,

but receiving the Body and Blood of Christ was most significant because he had long anticipated it.

Ron felt prepared for this great sacrament through having learned much from the classes. He was happy to know that the Catholic Church is the only church dating back to the time of Christ and the only one with the Living Presence of the Eucharist. He felt he had grown in the Faith and in understanding of what we believe and was ready for the Easter Vigil.

Ron intends to live up to the commitment made with the Easter Vigil and his entry into the Catholic Church by regular Mass attendance on Sundays and Holy Days, except if he is sick. He will continue to read the Scripture, pray the Rosary, and learn new prayers. He has enjoyed the CDs as well as the books and pamphlets available in the church vestibule.

Knowing that his sponsor Bill Stahl, Father Robert, and others are there to support and encourage him in his faith journey, he asks for continued prayers from both the RCIA team and the parish. Take some time to introduce yourself to Ron and Sara and welcome them into our parish family. You too will like Ron's simple straightforward style which makes him easy to talk to and get to know. Remember to keep him and Sara as well as all our parish family in your ongoing prayers!



Ron and Bill at the reception in the hall, sponsored by St. Rita's Women's Society, following the Easter Vigil Liturgy



Dusk is just falling as Father begins the traditional Easter Vigil outside with blessing and lighting of the Paschal Candle



Fr. Robert anoints Ron Smith with Holy Chrism as part of the Confirmation ceremony while Ron's sponsor, Bill Stahl, places his hand on Ron's shoulder

CRADLE CATHOLIC FINDS A HOME

BY SUSAN BATES

As a “Cradle Catholic,” my journey to RCIA is not the typical path. I was baptized as an infant at Our Lady of Hope in Baltimore, MD, in September 1964. My mom raised my brother and me in the Catholic faith, but we did not go to church. We prayed, we fasted and abstained during Lent, and our faith was very strong.

As a four year old, I spent two weeks in Johns Hopkins Hospital after having heart surgery to correct a heart defect. During the times when any four year old would have enough poking and prodding by doctors and nurses, I would ask my mom, “Can you call the priest?” Father would come, and we would pray. I knew, even as a child, to turn to God for comfort especially in times of need.

We started going to Mass regularly at St. Matthew’s in Baltimore several years after my brother graduated from Loyola College in Maryland. My mom taught me about the Real Presence in the Eucharist. I never questioned it because I knew in my heart that it was the body and blood of Jesus. Yet I did not make my First Communion until I was eighteen years old. Every Sunday, Mom would ask me, “Do you want to go up and receive?” Every Sunday I said, “No.” I wasn’t ready. She never pushed. She knew that it had to be when I was ready. I’m pretty sure Jesus understood also and allowed me to decide when the time was right as well. Months Years Time went by. Every Sunday Mom would look at me, silently asking, “Are you going to receive?” During this time I would ask myself, “Is it time? Am I ready for such a gift?” The answer; “Not yet.”

Christmas was such a special time for my family and me. Yes, Santa brought gifts, but from little up, my brother Bill and I were taught and understood the real meaning of Christmas.

The best gift Mom gave me, besides life, was my faith.

December 24, 1982 – Midnight Mass. As Father Jack was preparing for Communion, it was as if my heart shouted out, “IT’S TIME! I’M READY!” Without saying anything, I got up, got in line, and I made my First Communion. What a wonderful gift I gave Mom that night. Not only were we celebrating the birth of Jesus, it was a new beginning for me in the Church.



Bishop Gainer with Sue Bates (left) and her sponsor, Denise Jackson, at the Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion

As the years went on, my faith grew stronger, but my attendance at church dwindled. After many years of not attending Mass regularly, Mom and I began to attend St. Joseph’s Parish of Texas in Cockeysville, MD. After a year or so, I started talking about being confirmed. Again I was not ready, and again years went by. During the end of 2011, I decided, although I had not told anyone, I was going to sign up for RCIA the following fall. Again, I would surprise Mom. This didn’t happen. New Year’s weekend of 2012, Mom was diagnosed with stage three lung cancer. Eight weeks later, God called Mom home. She was now with my brother whom God called home two years earlier. I forgot all about RCIA. The fall came and went.

December 25, 2012. My cousin Christy Weller who is more like a niece to me, was expecting baby number seven in January. Christy and Buddy announced that the baby would be named Gloriana, after my mom Gloria. They also asked me to be Gloriana’s godmother. Suddenly I remembered RCIA. I wasn’t confirmed, but I would call St. Joseph’s and find out what I needed to do.

After many meetings with Deacon Don, Fr. Paul was able to obtain special permission for me to be confirmed at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore by Archbishop Lori on March 10, 2013, with the understanding that I would attend RCIA in the fall. I chose the name Elizabeth Bernadette. Elizabeth for Mother Seton and Bernadette because she was very special to Mom and that was her confirmation name. After Confirmation, Gloriana was baptized and I was her godmother. What a wonderful Christmas gift!

As promised, I began attending RCIA and I loved every minute! I got to be a part of a wonderful group of people while taking part in the celebrations, all of which I had missed out on when I was confirmed. I now truly feel like I belong. I am home.

My only regret is that I missed out on so much by not attending CCD and RCIA prior to my First Communion and Confirmation. As I said, my journey was not by way of the typical path. Furthermore, I do not recommend this path to anyone. Attendance of CCD classes for children and RCIA for adults is such a pivotal part of the growth of our Catholic faith. Don’t miss out on the wealth of knowledge and love of GOD our CCD and RCIA instructors share with us. It is a priceless Grace from GOD.

COME HOLY SPIRIT - THE GIFT OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

BY PAULETTE NIDEL

The question of fitting in families, some of them large, for a lunch in St. Rita's hall came into play as we realized how big the class preparing for this great Sacrament was. There were seven from St. Rita's and sixteen from St. Mary's! With six to ten family members per family on average, we knew there wouldn't be enough seating. That problem was easily solved with stand-up pub tables and more finger than fork foods, once we re-thought the plan.

Not only was the class large, the Confirmation was set for March 29th, over a month earlier than the usual time for Confirmation sometime in May. This meant the students all needed to get their twenty or more service hours in three different categories of family, church, and community completed

much sooner in the school year.

Thankfully these snags did nothing to dim the special day as these students were, 'Confirmed with the Holy Spirit and sealed with the Chrism of Salvation.' Father Robert was the main celebrant with Fathers Michael Messaro, msscc, and Father Jack Lombardy concelebrating.

Confirmation candidates are required to take part in the two-year seventh and eighth grade CCD or parochial school catechesis program for Confirmation and can work on service hours once they have completed the seventh Grade. This past year Luanne Murphy of St. Rita's taught the Confirmation class, and for St. Mary's large group, Joanne Conrath and Jackie Kapfhammer were co-teachers. Students also take part in a day of retreat prior to

their Confirmation.

All this preparation in class time, service experience, and retreat serves to help students realize they are reaffirming their commitment as Catholic Christians. They now will benefit in a special way with the Holy Spirit, that same Holy Spirit who came on the Apostles at Pentecost. May they be able to share their faith as they continue to grow in the knowledge of it. Hopefully they also are imbued with a strong desire to learn more and recognize the need to keep learning!

God bless our new Confirmandi, and may we fellow parishioners encourage them to be active in their faith, their faith community, and the community at large. Keep them in your prayers as they are faced with the challenges of our modern society!



St. Mary's Confirmation Class of 2014

Front Row: Kari Conrath, Gena Eiker, Max Kirby, Gabriel Maturo, Theresa Blickenstaff, Margaret Grenchik, Sarah Stouter, Emily Weller, and Joseph Oleskey

Back Row: Jessee Hummel, Brendan Peck, John Macharsky, Ashlynn Grinder, Thomas Schubring, Lily Kapfhammer, Allison Hoffman, and Rev. Fr. Robert Malagesi, msscc



St. Rita's Confirmation Class of 2014

Bottom Row: Zoe Mutchler, Peter Warthen, and Jane Bramson

Top Row: Hanna Manning, Nora Stocksedale, Alex Diaz, and Katie Manning

ST. RITA CONFIRMATION

BY LUANNE MURPHY

Father Robert Malagesi, msscc, Confirmed seven teens at St. Rita Catholic Church on March 29, 2014. The seven are Jane Bramson, Alexander Diaz, Hanna Manning, Katie Manning, Zoe Mutchler, Nora Stocksdale, and Peter Warthen.

Jane Bramson chose St. Flora for her Confirmation name because St. Flora's father was Muslim and her mother, a Catholic. Jane's mother is Catholic and her father, Jewish. Jane chose her cousin, Kelly Miller, as her sponsor because of the love they share. She is inspired by the faith of her mother, Susan Keane, and her brother, Michael. Jane believes, "That just because you receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, it does not mean you can stop learning."

Alexander Diaz chose St. Dominic for his Confirmation name because it is his middle name. Alex chose his beloved grandfather, Charles Thomas, as his Confirmation sponsor because of his strong Catholic faith and his commitment to St. Rita's Church. Alex attended St. Mary's Catholic School in Hagerstown, Maryland.

Hanna Manning picked St. Maria Goretti for her Confirmation name because her story inspired Hanna about forgiveness as St. Maria Goretti forgave the man who killed her. Don Sprinkle was Hanna's Confirmation sponsor because, "He taught me a lot about my faith that I never knew." Hanna's parents, Chris and John Manning, inspire Hanna's faith as they have led her through faith during her entire life. In Confirmation, Hanna learned, "Even though bad stuff happens, trust in God's plan."

Katie Manning selected St. Clare for her Confirmation name because St. Clare trusted God. Cynthia Gillard was Katie's sponsor because she

is close to Katie and the Manning family. Fr. Robert inspires Katie's faith because, "He does everything for our Church." "I have to trust God and trust myself in everything I do." That is what Katie learned about her faith through Confirmation.

Zoe Mutchler chose St. Charity because she liked what St. Charity did in her lifetime to help others, particularly the poor. Casey Gouldman, Zoe's closest cousin, was her sponsor. Zoe is inspired by the faith of her grandparents, Kathy and Dutch Amann. Through her Confirmation, Zoe learned how to find and to stay close to God.

Nora Stocksdale picked St. Rose of Lima because she has a literal connection with her. "I can relate to her on so many levels and can turn to her when most needed." Nora asked her grandmother, Rose McNally, to sponsor her for Confirmation because "she is the relative in my family who most appreciates Catholicism." Nora's parents, Greg and Rhona Stocksdale, inspire Nora's faith. Through Confirmation, Nora learned, "That there are other ways to reach God than strict, one way prayer. We can reach Him with our talents. Everything you do and represent should be for and under the name of God."

Peter Warthen selected St. Vincent de Paul because he wanted to pick a saint who exemplified humility. Peter honored his sister as his Confirmation sponsor because she loves God. Peter's father, Rich Warthen, inspires Peter's faith. Peter learned more about St. Vincent de Paul through Confirmation.

Congratulations to Peter, Nora, Zoe, Katie, Hanna, Alex, and Jane for your commitment to our Catholic Church, and we pray for you as you continue to grow in your faith.



THE EASTER VIGIL AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH

SEE THE JOY OF ENTERING INTO THE LIFE OF CHRIST



At the Easter Vigil this year, St. Mary's welcomed some new members into her family: Richard Baker (receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist), with his children Allisa (receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist), Jady

(receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist), and John Daniel (receiving the Sacrament of Baptism); Ron Kirby receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist; and Royce Wiseman, receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist. Susan Bates also participated in the RCIA program to complete her promises regarding her full union into the Roman Catholic Church. Welcome to them all!



Photo on Left:

(front row) John Daniel Baker, Royce Wiseman, and Jady Baker

(last row) Father Fredric Clement, msscc, Allisa Baker, Richard Baker, and Ron Kirby



THE CREED

BY JOHN OUNAN

The Creed is a very special prayer to me because the good Sisters of IHM taught me not only how to say the prayer but that all the chief truths of the Christian-Catholic Faith are found therein.

At Saint Thomas More Catholic Boys High School, the priests taught me, in Ancient History and Religion class, how the Creed was to be applied to my life. Not only how to say the prayer but how to live it. One priest in particular comes to mind: Reverend, now Monsignor James E. Mortimer. Father Mort, as we called him, showed us that it was not un-cool to believe and live the Creed. He taught us that in respecting the Triune God in the Creed we learn to respect ourselves and our fellow man.

As a tenor in the a cappella choir at Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church, I was taught to sing the Creed in Old Church Slavonic by Father John D. Lazarek and this increased my love for the prayer. I pray for all those who helped me to love and understand this great prayer.

One morning, while having breakfast in the restaurant of the Hotel Lutetia in Paris with my boss, Duke Westover of Royal World Tours, a parishioner of Epiphany, who was also attending the Slovak World Congress, approached. Sitting at our table were: Most Reverend Michal Rusnak, Byzantine-Slovak Bishop of Canada, Father Litva, a Slovak, Roman Catholic Jesuit, and Reverend Dusan Toth, Slovak Lutheran Minister. The parishioner sat down and told the Bishop how well I sang the Creed in Slavonic. "You will sing the *Viruju for me," the Bishop said.

I said, "Right now, here?"

"Yes."

While I sang very softly, my fellow parishioner explained, in English, to my boss, who is a Baptist from Lynchburg, Virginia, the words I was singing and what they mean.

After my command performance, which stopped everyone in the dining room, it was amazing to see how Roman Catholics, Byzantine Catholics, Lutherans and Baptists all believe in the same Creed.

**Viruju - Old Church Slavonic*

To listen to the Creed sung in Church Slavonic while seeing the words in English, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yo53amqybX8>

BRUCE KOCSIS PSUAC WRESTLING COACH OF THE YEAR

St. Mary's parishioner and Penn State Mont Alto's Head Wrestling Coach, Bruce Kocsis has been named 2013-2014 PSUAC Coach of the Year. This year was Coach Kocsis' third year as the Head Coach at Mont Alto and it was an impressive season.

Wrestling had not been part of the Mont Alto Campus for over thirty years when Coach Kocsis was hired. In less than three years, Kocsis and his staff have created and built it into the successful program it is today.

This year the team went 9-5 overall and 6-0 in the PSUAC, they were the PSUAC regular season champions as well as taking first place at the PSUAC Championships and fourth in the USCAA Championships. Not only did they finish second in the NCWA Mid-East Qualifiers but sent eight wrestlers to the NCWA Championship tournament in Allen, Texas. While in Texas, the team was very competitive and Jimmy Hughes finished 7th place in his 133 lbs. weight class and earn NCWA All-American. This was the first time a wrestler from Mont Alto was named All-American.

"It's an honor to receive this award," Coach Kocsis comments. "The credit has to go to the team. They are the ones on the mat, they are the ones that bleed, sweat and work hard every day to achieve their goals. Without them working hard to achieve their goals, this wouldn't be possible."

<http://www.psumontaltoathletics.com/sports/wrest/2013-14/releases/20140421nka25a>



AN EASTER WEEK GIFT - A DAY IN THE CAPITAL CITY

BY PAULETTE NIDEL

Father Robert recently received special visitors from Italy. Fr. Luigi Toscano, msscc, Superior General of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and Fr. Benny James, msscc, Vicar General of the order, were here in the US for three weeks just after Easter. Some of their time was also spent in Linwood, New Jersey, at the US Motherhouse.

I have wanted to be a tour guide in our nation's capitol for many years now, so I somewhat boldly offered to take the special visitors on a day trip to DC. I was a bit nervous as the day approached, especially considering our son Rick and I would be accompanying the four priests going: the visiting dignitaries as well as Fathers Robert and Augusty. We started out from St. Rita's a bit later than planned, but all went smoothly, and any anxiety was quickly dissipated as I heard gales of laughter repeated throughout the ride. (Joy-filled Christians indeed, these men are!) It worked out well that Fr. Augusty knows Italian, so he and Fr. Luigi shared the "way-back" seat; neither is very tall, which is also good!

With a quick stop at Burger King for coffee and light breakfast, we arrived in DC at the first destination, the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, where the thriving Franciscan community supports the mission of guardianship of the Shrines in the Holy Land as well as other religious shrines. The interesting guided tour was provided by a lay Franciscan who carefully noted the need for silence in the area where Confessions were being heard. I was duly impressed to see the beautiful tulip gardens but unfortunately did not get a photo of them. I was so excited to be there, as I have wanted to go since we moved here fifteen years ago.

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception was

our next stop where we spent much time visiting the main Sanctuary as well as the many altars in the Crypt Church, and the gift shop. It was too bad we did not catch a glimpse of this great Basilica at night when the dome is lit. Next time!

To help make the day itself more noteworthy, we visited the soon-to-be-St. John Paul II Cultural Center. We arrived to see the unveiling of the new picture and title of the Pope who would be proclaimed Saint on the following Sunday, Divine Mercy Sunday. What perfect timing! Though we did not really get to tour much inside, this was a special treat which others had not yet experienced. (And, luckily for us, the crowd was not there yet either!)

By this point, everyone was quite hungry so at Rick, Jr.'s suggestion, we drove to Ben's Chili Bowl, a "famous" eatery on the way into the more central part of the city. Though I don't think it was named with Fr. Benny in mind, we enjoyed the break and meal and then moved on to the monuments downtown. But before going there, Rick told us of the National Catholic Cathedral, St. Matthew's. Wow, another religious highlight that was new to me that day! We arrived after some tricky navigation just before they closed, but they allowed us to look around and meet the sextant who gave us some great details of the church and its history.

With little time left, I then dropped all the passengers off near the Lincoln Memorial, and they walked the area nearby until I joined them. As we returned to the car by way of the East Potomac Park, the long trek allowed us to see some parts of the FDR and Martin Luther King memorials.

We arrived back late that night exhausted, I am sure, but having had at least a small taste of some of the national

capitol's Catholic highlights as well as a little flavor of the city itself. I only hope the rest of our party enjoyed it as much as I did! I know they will not forget Rick's scream as he shouted "Mo-o-o-om!" to get my attention about a car entering the roadway near the Cathedral of St. Matthew!

I trust the Superior and Vicar Generals had a fruitful time here and enjoyed some free time too. It was a privilege to get to know them a bit from my lay perspective. My prayers are for them all in their challenging ministry and responsibilities for their Missionary order! And good luck with the Italian language to Fr. Benny!

As for me, I am ready to go back to the city any time. Is anyone out there game?

Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land - Fr. Benny, Fr. Augusty, Fr. Robert, Fr. Luigi and Rick Nidel, Jr.



Ben's Chili Bowl:

Fathers Benny and Luigi, Rick Nidel, Jr., Fathers Augusty and Robert



In front of the Lincoln Memorial:

Fathers Luigi, Benny, Robert and Augusty



ST. MARY'S MENS CLUB

BY JOHN BUTCHER

Our February 16th spaghetti dinner had about 200 patrons and many compliments about the sauce cooked by Italians (Roger Venzin). The Club may consider extending the dinner hours to 7:00 P.M. during ski season to attract more skiers and ski instructors who get off work at 6:00 P.M.

The Men's Club was in a relearning mode this year bringing back its pancake breakfast. The last one we held in 2011 was free to the parish as a thanks from the Men's Club, the PCCW, and the Knights of Columbus for their continuing support of our activities. Our March breakfast wasn't free, but that didn't deter about 140 parishioners from joining us for a breakfast universally praised by everyone I spoke with. We had some surprises for the diners including the addition of bacon and Tex-Mex scrambled eggs.

We are putting the profits from our ventures to good use around the parish. With mowing season coming, the club purchased parts to get the lawn tractor moving. We thank Lloyd Ritter for his efforts in making the repairs. We also purchased and installed new TVs and DVD/VCR players in two CCD classrooms. Thank you, Bruce Carr, for your efforts to make this happen.

Congratulations to our new officers-- Roger Venzin, President; Bruce Carr, Vice President; Bill Emory, Secretary; and John Butcher continues as Treasurer.

We invite all men of the parish to participate in our meetings and activities. There are no dues except your work and time. Meetings are normally held on the third Wednesday every month at 7:30 P.M. in the church hall. The business portion of our meeting comes first, and then we have a social gathering. The meetings are announced in the bulletin so check for possible changes. Please come out and share your ideas and talents with us and enjoy the hospitality



The Nightmare

By Sandi Polvinale

And those rhythmic beats of the
native drums

The drone – so monotonous!

Over and Over and Over!

Reminders of distant thunder.

I am so close. I can feel the body
heat,

Smell the jungle sweat!

With the stomping, jumping of the
natives...

Like ten thousand soldiers on two
feet!

The dusty, earthy odor...Oh, that
jungle heat!

That monotonous native

HEARTBEAT?

With that thought, I was jolted awake

By the racing heartbeat

And fevered body of Chris.

The reality eased itself

Into my consciousness

As my cool body revved up its
temperature,

Pressed next to him.

I HAD FORGOTTEN.

We were still within those hospital
walls

With soft muffled souls

Of the nurse's footsteps

Those monitored heartbeats

And those sterile smells.

FIRST PENANCE RETREAT : FAITH AND FUN FILLED DAY

BY PAULETTE NIDEL

Just one week before making their First Communion, ten second graders assembled in the hall to spend the day in retreat. I was there to help with “crowd control” and help the day go more smoothly, but as I recalled my own First Penance and Holy Communion, the day became more special to me as I hoped it was for each child there.

I was impressed to see how well they focused when they gathered first for some prayer and a light snack before focusing on the short movie entitled “A Child’s First Penance.” They were amazingly attentive while they heard about the ideas guiding them to know what sin is, and how to prepare for Confession, their first of which would be the day’s culmination for them.

Dorothy Fawks, their teacher, had planned plenty of activities as they went through the day, the first of which was the painted cross sun catcher. They delighted in using the water colors and were most creative in their color choices. I am sure they have a special place in a window in their homes!

They had a little play break before decorating their banners which would mark the family’s pew on their First Holy Communion Day, May 4th. Dorothy, good teacher that she is, had all supplies cut out and ready to place for each student.

(Yeah, glitter glue!)

Father enrolled the students in the Brown Scapular of Our Lady as the morning came to a close. During the special pizza lunch, the students watched the film, “A Child’s First Communion.” As you can see from the photos, they were truly interested!

After finishing lunch, the students played bingo identifying sacred vessels, vestments, and other religious items found in the church and won religious articles as prizes. Father used this opportunity to set up the church for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a Penance service prior to their making their private First Confession. Families joined the children at 1:00 P.M. in the church where, after Exposing the Blessed Sacrament, Father Robert led them in Scripture and prayer preparing for Confession. All were invited to go to Confession. Many family members used this opportunity, too, before Father celebrated Benediction and reposed the Blessed Sacrament.

Father encouraged the children to receive both Eucharist and Penance frequently to stay close to Jesus. Maybe you remember your own First Penance and Communion Days and can reflect on the meaning these sacraments have become for you?



Corby remembers her childhood days: While in the seventh grade at Saint John's Catholic School in Westminster, MD, Sister Julian wrote a quote on the blackboard. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." (Alfred Lord Tennyson) Corby never forgot that.

I'll Grow

By Denise Jackson ©

If you tell me you love me
every single day
teach me to believe in my abilities
help me to be proud
show me the goodness I possess inside
and guide me to the paths I can follow...
I'll grow.

If you correct me
in a positive manner when I'm wrong
teach me to respect myself and others
show me by example
that life's privileges
come with responsibilities
guide me with a sense of humor
bless me with the gift of faith...
I'll grow.

...and when I'm all grown up
I will have grown
well!

I KEPT LOOKING FOR YOU

By FR. ROBERT MALAGESI, MSSCC

The title of this article is taken from a new DVD about the life of St. John Paul II. I am using it because it expresses perfectly the thoughts of my heart when I look for familiar faces at Mass and do not see them. If I, just an ordinary man, can be affected by this, how must Our Lord feel if we can imagine His eyes looking from the Tabernacle?

In my brief life as a priest, I have been blessed to meet many wonderful people who seemed to have a deep love for God yet are not present at the most beautiful, powerful, and grace-filled event in this life, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. I have met you through RCIA, through friendships, through marriages, through Baptisms, and other encounters. You have assured me that you will come to Sunday Mass and even to daily Mass when possible, but I do not see you. I miss you and long for you to return, for nothing and no one should prevent you from coming to the source of your true joy, Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

As a priest, God has entrusted me with the care of your soul. One day when my life on this earth has ended, I would like to tell Him that "I kept looking for you," and I found you, with Him, in Mass. Please come if you have been away, and please come more if you are able.

ST. RITA'S FIRST COMMUNION

BY LUANNE MURPHY

On May 4, ten beautiful children processed up St Rita's aisle to take part in the Mass at which they received Jesus for the very first time. After the homily and Preparation of the Gifts, the children knelt at the foot of the altar for the duration of the Eucharistic Prayer, at the end of which they received their First Communion. After the Mass, the First Communicants and their families and friends were treated to a reception hosted by St. Rita's Women's Society. They are pictured (top right) with Fr. Robert Malagesi, msscc, from left to right: Brendan Lawrence, Emma Dylewski, Gabriel Riling, James Warthen, Hannah Cahill, Paul Inverso, John Scott Manning, Riley Newton, Bridget Hays, and Patrick Orlando.



ST. MARY'S FIRST HOLY COMMUNION



Photo at Right:

Bottom from left is Luke Post and Aiden Culley.

*Rear from left is Lily Fredrikis, Kylee Oseen
and Maria Clare Schubring.*

ST. RITA SENIOR RECOGNITION MASS

BY LUANNE MURPHY

Kevin Aughinbaugh, Zachary Mutchler, and Emma Whelan were recognized during the June 1, 2014, Mass celebrated by Father Robert Malagesi, msscc. We, as a Church, thank them for faithfulness to our God and St. Rita Church.

Kevin Michael Aughinbaugh, son of Dianne and Ray Aughinbaugh, is a graduate of Fairfield Area High School, Fairfield, Pennsylvania. Kevin is a member of the soccer and track teams and is active in Student Government, National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, the Envirothon team, Jazz Band, and Chamber Choir. Kevin has been most active in serving our St. Rita Church as an altar server for seven years. He attended the High School Religious Ed program and the Youth Ministry. He is an Eagle Scout with Troop #76 in Fairfield and the Fairfield Venture crew and volunteers at Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve. Kevin will attend Gettysburg College in September where he plans to study biology or chemistry. He

would like to participate in their Jazz Ensemble and A Cappella group. According to Kevin, "The most influential people in my faith are those that instruct me and further deepen my appreciation and love for Our Lord, and guide me in my life."

Zach Mutchler, son of Terri and Chris Mutchler, is a graduate of Smithsburg High School, Smithsburg, Maryland. Zach plays tenor sax in the Jazz and Marching Bands and was captain of the Varsity and JV Soccer teams. He was a Varsity wrestler for three years and is active in the Smithsburg Youth Athletics (SYA). Zach is an active Boy Scout and he works at Food Lion, Smithsburg. Zach is most well-known for his contagious smile and his big heart. He follows the words of Pope Francis as he puts his faith into action as the "hands and feet" of Christ. Zach frequently volunteers to work at local farms and the Food Bank. He is inspired in his faith by his grandparents, Kathy and Carl Dutch Amann, who taught Zach "the Chris-

tian way of life."

Zach will attend Hagerstown Community College to study nursing with the plans to complete his education at a four year college as a Physician Assistant.

Emma Whelan is the daughter of John and Flora Whelan and a graduate of St. Maria Goretti High School, Hagerstown, Maryland. Emma plans to attend Shippensburg University in the fall with a business major and psychology minor. At Goretti Emma was co-captain for cross-country, track, and swimming. She was active with Special Olympics of Washington County, Varsity Club Secretary, and Student Government as Homeroom Representative. She enjoyed being on the Homecoming and Prom courts. Emma attributes her faith to her mother and grandmother. "My mother and grandmother have inspired me in my faith the most, encouraging me to further strengthen and develop it over the past four years."



LIFE RARELY SURPASSES PRECIOUS MOMENTS AS THIS

BY MARY ANN CARR

Bruce and I have just returned from a wonderful patriotic Memorial Day weekend on the Eastern Shore. The whole family was with us. It was the most fun and the best time we have had in years. The weather couldn't have been better. The meteor shower was rather a bust since there weren't as many as advertised, but sitting on the lawn taking in a million stars well made up for the loss. We oohed and aahed with the best of them, and our hearts were chock-full of awe as we thanked God's for this nightly gift.

The two newest kids on the block, Cee Cee, age three, and Natalia, age sixteen months, were in for the time of their young lives. We showed them the stars. They loved the pool and sat in their small lawn chairs as they experienced the ins, outs, tastes, drops, and stickiness of s'mores while the rest of us sat in a circle around the fire pit singing camp songs feeling happiness for the goodness of life.

When the girls were born, one of the first things that Tricia and Travis did was to teach them to sign. I know that during the first year of life, children start understanding the English language, but it takes a good while before they can learn how to say the words. Not so with signing. You wouldn't believe how fast they catch on to knowing what is going on when they learn how to sign . . . , and then they sign back! I walked around with open mouth as I watched Natalie show off her skills.

One afternoon Natalie and I were sitting at the picnic table. I would take a bite of the ice cream in my bowl and then give her a bite.

After a couple of bites, she said, 'Mmmm.'

Then she signed, 'I Love You.'

I was sure that I had died and gone to Heaven.

. . . And I shut my mouth.

ST MARY'S SPECIAL OLYMPIAN

BY JOHN BUTCHER

I was on the way to Saturday evening Mass when Father Mike excitedly pointed to a young man behind me saying I needed to write an article about him for the Messenger. I recognized him from an article in the Gettysburg Times just that week. Matthew Charland was attending Mass with his grandmother Janet, so I got a phone number and called his mother Amy to arrange a meeting. I reviewed the Gettysburg Times story about Matthew's accomplishments in the Special Olympics, thirty-one gold, twenty silver, and five bronze medals. It seemed that much of his story was already covered, however, there is much more to tell.

Matthew faces a wide variety of health issues with Kabuki syndrome. He has had twenty-four surgeries for the kidneys, heart, eyes, ears, cleft pallet and has a titanium rod implanted to help with scoliosis of the spine. Amy calls Matthew her miracle. He was born completely blind. When he was six months old a friend of Amy's was traveling to Lourdes and took a pair of Matthew's booties. They were placed in the spot where the Blessed Mother appeared. A few weeks later Amy thought she saw Matthew tracking her movement. She took Matthew to an ophthalmologist in Philadelphia for evaluation; he agreed to do an iridectomy (laser surgery on the

iris). Although Matthew's Virginia ophthalmologist had done three electroretinograms finding no brain response to the eye, he tried once more. Amy recalls she was in the hospital waiting room when a flock of white coats flew by. The doctor came out and said he could not explain it, but the test was positive this time. Amy knew it was a miracle. Matthew's current ophthalmologist has told Amy he doesn't know why Matthew can see and that he should be completely blind due to the condition of his retinas.



Matthew attended St. Francis Xavier Church in Gettysburg, serving as a greeter. His grandmother Janet moved here a couple years ago and finds it easier parking and getting into St. Mary's. If you see him at Mass, you will know him from his infectious smile. Matthew works five days a week at the HART (Hanover Adams Rehabilitation & Training) Center in New Oxford. He takes the Adams County Transit Authority bus each day. Matthew prac-

tices for the Special Olympics on Thursday evening, Saturday, and Sunday. He competes in the 25 and 50 meter fast walk and softball throw.

Amy said Matthew, in spite of all the difficulties in his life, demonstrates what she believes Jesus wants of all of us. He is very kind and does not have an unkind word for anyone. He never gets angry and has a positive outlook every day.

Amy said she advocated for Matthew's involvement in Special Olympics so that he might develop to his full potential both educationally and socially. He got involved at age 8. Since the article in the Gettysburg Times, Matthew competed at a multi-county athletic meet, adding one more gold and one more silver medal to his collection. At twenty-four now, Matthew has a challenging month of competition in June. From the 4th through the 7th, the state summer games will be held at Penn State. On the 14th through the 21st, the USA games will be held in and around Princeton, New Jersey. He and Amy are excited to be going. She is very thankful for community support. Although these games will be over by the time you read this, we wish him well in other competitions. We also look forward to seeing him at Mass at St. Mary's.

**It's faith in something and enthusiasm for something
that makes a life worth living. -Oliver Wendell Holmes**

- Submitted by Corby

MILESTONES

BY JOHN BUTCHER



WELCOME TO OUR NEWCOMERS:

AT ST. MARY'S

Josh Anderson & Victoria Schoepke
of Orchard Lane, Blue Ridge Summit

Horst & Christine Stehmer
of Weikert Road, Gettysburg

AT ST. RITA'S

Nevin & Christina Camp & family
of Gladhill Road, Fairfield

Melvin & Geraldine Clark of Blue Ridge Summit

Bob & Debbie Davison
of Jolly Way, Kensington, MD

Paul Lingg of Old Waynesboro Road, Fairfield

Teresa Parr of Old Waynesboro Road, Fairfield

Catherine Stahl of South Avenue,
Blue Ridge Summit

Emily Taylor of Gladhill Road, Fairfield

Carla Valore of Charmain Road,
Blue Ridge Summit

WELCOME TO OUR FAITH COMMUNITY

THE FOLLOWING NEWLY BAPTIZED:

AT ST. MARY'S

Allisa Baker (RCIA)

Jadyn Baker (RCIC)

John Baker (RCIC)

Richard Baker (RCIA)

Caleb Jacobs, son of Adam & Kelly Jacobs

Ronald Kirby (RCIA)

Royce Wiseman (RCIC)

Jaelyn Zapata,
daughter of Jamie & Shannon Zapata

AT ST. RITA'S

Jacob Darsey, son of Luke & Jenna Darsey

Gracie Mullen, daughter of Angela Palinkas

Ronald Smith (RCIA)

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE WEDDINGS

AT ST. MARY'S

Lewis Masser, Jr. & Shasta Stonesifer,
both of Fairfield

AND WE PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF THE RECENTLY DEPARTED:

AT ST. MARY'S

Chester Cornwell, Fairfield

Anne Fox, Fairfield

Joseph Pecher, Fairfield

Gary Sites, Fairfield

John Weatherly, Fairfield

AT ST. RITA'S

Rebecca Hays, Cascade, MD

Arthur Leibold, Fairfield

the Messenger

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