

Our Parish Visitor

Our Lady of the Visitation Parish Newsletter

News from Fr. Ray

New Icon - Our new Icon of the Visitation was hand written, or hand painted, by Rosanne Grolman, a parishioner. Rosanne followed the traditional procedure of iconography, including praying before, during and after its creation. She has donated the Icon to our Parish. With her family, she carried it to the altar where it was placed during sacred liturgy on the Feast of the Visitation. Our Icon is, therefore, consecrated. A prayer offered during mass asked that the Icon of the Visitation be a source of healing to all the faithful who look upon the Icon.

Icons predate statues and stained-glass windows. Icons are windows into eternity; a holy space depicting sacred reality. Icons present the bible in art and theology in color. Icons celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ is indeed the Word made flesh (*Jn 1:1-14*). Therefore, Jesus appears in the upper part of the Icon wearing a red (divinity) undergarment and a blue (humanity) outer garment.

The halos on Mary and Elizabeth indicate that they are saints. Their eyes are large and animated because they have seen great things. Indeed, the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, and the power of the Most High overwhelmed her (*Lk 1:35*). Mary, therefore, wears a blue (humanity) undergarment and a red (divinity) outer garment. The names of baby Jesus and baby John the Baptist appear in small letters beneath the names of their mothers. The Icon captures forever the moment Mary greeted Elizabeth (*Lk 1:40*).

We venerate icons, believing that the honor and the love given to the icon passes on to the person it images.

New Hosts - All the hosts we use at OLVP are made by the Sisters of the Visitation in Richmond, Virginia. The Sisters now offer a slightly larger host

for use by priests on Sundays. Beginning with the First Sunday of Advent, OLVP will use the new hosts.

New Deacon Archbishop Wuerl has appointed Deacon Robert A. Fischer to OLVP. Additional information will be included in our weekly bulletin.

Christmas Tree Sales

Fri 30 November - Sun 9 December

Weekends

9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Weekdays

3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Adult volunteers are still needed for tree sales and kitchen help. Please consider helping your parish with this important fundraiser.

To volunteer contact: Bill Connors



(301) 869-8203

Christmas Craft Shoppe

**Hand-crafted gifts and more
Friday, Saturday, Sunday
30 November - 2 December
9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

**Raffle for
Furnished Vintage Dollhouse
and Christmas Gift Basket.
Tickets sold at the Craft Shoppe.
Drawing: 2 December
(winner need not be present)**

**Advent Wreaths, Religious Books,
Poinsettias
Delivery: Fri 30 Nov & Sat 01 Dec**

**Contact: Jean Jurgena
(301) 840-1187
Pastor from Haiti Visits
Visitation Parish**

On Sunday, 7 October 2007, Fr. Effener Renelique, pastor of *Our Lady of the Visitation Parish* in Gonaives, Haiti, visited OLVP in Darnestown. Fr. Ray offered Fr. Effener's thoughts to OLVP parishioners through a translated homily. Fr. Effener encouraged everyone to be welcoming to Faith, which is a gift from God. He equated Faith to Sunshine. You must open your drapes to let in the sunshine, as you must open yourself to prayer, the window that lets Faith in.

After each mass, parishioners spoke with Fr. Effener about the needs of his parish. OLVP has been offering support to *Our Lady of the Visitation* in Haiti since 2004, through the Baltimore-Haiti Project. OLVP parishioners donated \$7,038.00 to Fr. Effener's parish during his visit.

Recently, a thank you was received from Fr. Effener acknowledging OLVP's generous donation (see Fr. Effener's article below).

For those who did not have a chance to donate but would like to, the Haiti Mission will be included in the OLVP St. Nicholas Christmas Catalog.

**Pastor from Haiti Thanks
Visitation Parish**

I would like to acknowledge and thank you for the check that you sent to your sister parish in Haiti, "Our Lady of the Visitation". This check is going to give some foods to the students and pay two (2) months of salary to the teachers at "Our Lady of the Visitation

School". We'll start tomorrow to give some foods to the students. The parishioners, especially the students'

Volunteers Work on Facilities

Efforts continue to maintain the church, the parish office building (i.e., the Parish Barn), the rectory, and the parish grounds.

During the summer we solicited proposals and chose a new company to clean the church weekly. A few large trees that line the rectory driveway were removed or cut back after one fell, while a second was leaning precariously following a night of high winds. A parking lot lamp post was found knocked over one day. And, a previously unnoticed roofing defect was discovered when a small amount of water leaked into the ground-level Parish Barn office during a multi-day rain storm.

Efforts to repair the roof and replace the light post are underway. Through a grant from the Archdiocesan Parish Stewardship Fund; rotting, exterior double doors in the Parish Barn were recently replaced with quality steel doors.

We handle some maintenance tasks via parish volunteers. We are perpetually replacing light bulbs to keep the building and the parking lots well lit. The vast majority of the church's windows were cleaned on the outside for the first time ever. (We hope to do the insides of the upper level windows in the Spring). Mulching, substantial bush and tree trimming, and "varnishing" the church's lower level entry doors are other examples of volunteer projects. A sincere "thank you" to all our parish volunteers who help maintain the facilities.

We have benefitted greatly both from generous parishioners and our neighbors. The parish is very grateful for the parking lot restriping work donated by the Steve Branson Family and Kalos Construction, as well as the newly planted shrubs and plants near the church's lower level entry and stone staircase completed by Kelly Landscaping. In addition, we especially acknowledge Mary of Nazareth School for taking the lead in having the main road patched this

parents, and I are grateful for your support to the parish. May God shower his blessing upon you! I summer and, along with the Katie Fitzgerald Victory Youth Center, for sharing the cost with us for the "Geese Police" and the snow removal contract.

Please contact us if you notice a problem with the parish facilities, as we maintain a "To Do" list (e.g., the church's exterior stairs).

If you are willing to be added to our list of potential volunteers and specialty consultants for building and grounds maintenance, please contact *Brian Dougherty, Chair, OLVP Facilities Committee*, (301) 963-2916.

Thank you for your continual efforts to keep the facilities clean and gently used. - *Brian*



Christmas Mass Schedule

CHRISTMAS VIGIL **Monday, 24 December**

5:00 p.m. - Church*
7:00 p.m. - Church
***Passes needed.**

11:00 p.m.
Midnight Mass/Church

CHRISTMAS DAY **Tuesday, 25 December**

9:00 a.m. - Church
11:00 a.m. - Family
Liturgy/Church



Thank you, Jocelyn Keyes

Jocelyn Keyes, a parishioner from OLVP, has faithfully fed the hungry at The Lord's Table located at St. Martin's Parish in Gaithersburg, Maryland, for the past ten years.

Jocelyn has worked faithfully with our parish volunteers and brought dignity

keep you in my prayers!

Fr. Effener Renelique

to those we fed. She created an opportunity for young and old to learn so much, in just a few hours, through service at the soup kitchen and through praying for those about to be served. Those prayers held special meaning for many volunteers. We thank Jocelyn for her many years of service.

Eucharistic Day Celebration

On September 26, 2007, Mary of Nazareth Roman Catholic Elementary School celebrated Eucharist Day by participating in a variety of spiritual activities. These activities included giving every class, ranging from first to eighth grade, a chance to spend some time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, processing around the school with the Blessed Sacrament and ending with Benediction. Each of these activities is important.

As children of God, we should give ourselves to Him, signifying that we love Him, want Him to be our best friend above everyone else and we want Him to save us. We should also strive to live like Him, therefore, living with Him. To live with Him, we must spend time talking to Him from the heart every day. We can talk to Him at any time, but when we are in front of the Blessed Sacrament, we are talking directly to Him. Jesus is right in front of us. What better way is there to talk to our Lord than to talk to Him face to face?

By processing around the school with the Blessed Sacrament, we blessed the school grounds. They are blessed because Jesus has been on them as we worship Him through the Blessed Sacrament. People don't realize how lucky we are to be able to worship and praise God through Benediction. We need to lead a more thankful and simpler life to become closer to God.

In adoration, we sang out to the Good God, praising Him for His works of mercy shown to us so that we may have eternal life. The priest then blessed us, making the sign of the cross over us with the monstrance. In doing this, our soul was marked with the sign of Christ. Eucharist Day was a great achievement for our

school, and I hope we have it next year.

Claire Conley, 7th Grade, Mary of Nazareth School.



**OLVP Charitable
Contributions 2006-2007**

Over the past fiscal year, parishioners have given generously to many charitable organizations through several Archdiocesan and Parish programs. Below is a summary of all charitable donations. Thank you to all parishioners who gave from their heart to help others in need. **“We help them, not because they are Catholics, but because we are Catholics.” - Theodore Cardinal McCarrick**

Archdiocesan Collections

Congo Mission	\$6,170.00
Retirement for Religious	4,220.00
Catholic Overseas Relief	2,532.00
Human Development	2,517.00
Catholic Home Missions	2,462.00
Eastern/Central Europe	2,192.00
Black & Indian Missions	2,124.00
Propagation of Faith	1,944.00
Latin America	1,746.00
Catholic University	1,609.00
Catholic Communications	1,430.00
Church in Africa	1,195.00
Operation Rice Bowl	1,172.62
Holy Land	868.00
Holy Father	
	<u>100.00+</u>
Total	\$32,281.62

Archbishop's Appeal
\$72,762.00

OLVP Parish Programs	
Little Sisters of the Poor	\$5,300.00**
Rebuilding Together	2,500.00
Visitation Parish in Haiti	3,205.66*
Christmas Flowers	1,578.00
Eagle Scout Projects	1,133.00
Easter Flowers	854.00
Lord's Table	524.00
St. Ann's Infant Home	3,170.00*
SOME	
	290.00*
Anugraha Special	
School (India)	_____
<u>297.50*</u>	
Total	\$18,852.16

GRANDTOTAL
\$123,895.78

*Some of these donations were given

through the St. Nicholas Christmas Catalog.

**Includes money donated directly to the Little Sisters of the Poor outside of church.

+partial donation, balance will be credited in FY 2007-08.

**Attention OLVP Knitters,
Crocheters, Quilters**

Fr. Ray is interested in starting a shawl ministry in the parish, the thought being to present a shawl or lap robe to the homebound parishioners to whom we take Holy Communion.

Shawls for the ladies are usually triangular or long, rectangular pieces. Lap robes for the menfolk would need to be about 30" x 34". For those in wheel chairs, the suggested size is about 26" x 29". At present, we would like to create a supply of these, so that, as they are distributed, there would be a reserve on hand in



Father's office.

This is a very unstructured program. Everything can be done in your own home at your own convenience. Any colors, any knitted, crocheted or quilted pattern would be fine, but please, *no fringe*.

Questions? Please call Ruth Duvall (301) 258-7566

2007 Giving

All 2007 donations to OLVP are tax

deductible. All donations to our parish at Christmas are tax deductible and exempt from Archdiocesan assessment. All stock donated in 2007 is credited to the donor at full face value on the date of transfer.

To receive credit in 2007, your donation checks must be dated by Monday, 31 December 2007. If you are mailing a contribution, it must be postmarked by Wednesday, 2 January 2008 and received in the parish office by Friday, 4 January 2008 to be credited to your 2007 Contribution Statement.

For further information, please call the parish office (301) 948-5536 x102.

IMPORTANT DATES

December

- 02 Sun First Sunday of Advent
- 07 Fri *Feast of the Immaculate Conception*, Sacred Liturgy, 7:00 p.m., Church
- 08 Sat *Feast of the Immaculate Conception*, Sacred Liturgy, 9:00 a.m., Church
- 15 Sat Welcome Weekend
- 16 Sun Welcome Weekend

January

- 01 Tue *Feast of Mary Mother of God*, Sacred Liturgy, 11:00 a.m., Church
- 05 Sat *Epiphany of the Lord*, Sacred Liturgy, 5:00 p.m., Church
- 06 Sun *Epiphany of the Lord*, Sacred Liturgy, 9:00 p.m., (Family Liturgy) & 11:00 a.m., Church
- 05 Sat Welcome Weekend
- 06 Sun Welcome Weekend

February

- 01 Fri OLVP Annual Volunteer Party Founders Hall, 7:00 p.m.
- 02 Sat Welcome Weekend
- 03 Sun Welcome Weekend
- 06 Ash Wednesday

**Catholic Schools Week
at Mary of Nazareth**

Each year, Catholic Schools Week is celebrated in the Archdiocese of Washington. In honor of our affiliation with Mary of Nazareth School, OLVP students and parents who attend the school will host a Welcome Weekend on 2-3 February with refreshments in Founders Hall. All are welcome.

OLVP currently has 130 students enrolled at Mary of Nazareth in Grades K - 8.

Our Lady of the Visitation Parish
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Email: parishoffice@olvp.org

Look for more information in our weekly Parish Bulletin located on the Parish web site.