

Our Parish Visitor

Our Lady of the Visitation Parish Newsletter

From Fr. Ray

My dad, Paul Fecteau, just turned 91, and my mom, Cecile Fecteau, 90. They have been married for over 68 years. Our family recently helped my dad, who has Parkinson's, move into a Catholic nursing home. I did not know the impact this move would have on him, on my mom, on me and on my family. I now understand what parishioners experience when faced with such a life changing event. I am most grateful for all of your prayers and support. Sacred Heart Home is under the care of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. The facility is ranked number one in the State of Maryland for quality of health care. (www.sacredhearthome.org)

The Congregation of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate (SSMI) was founded in 1878, after the Immaculate Virgin Mary appeared to three young country girls in Gietrzwald, Poland. The Sisters Servants came to the United States in 1934. In America, they have served both the old and the young, with a pre-kindergarten program and nursing home in Baltimore, Maryland, and with Sacred Heart Home, a nursing home community, in Hyattsville, Maryland. They also work with Catholic Charities doing outreach to the homebound elderly in Cleveland, Ohio, and they serve as sacristans at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, in Washington, DC.

The goals of the Sisters Servants are as simple as they are spiritual: spread the word of God, help individuals strengthen their lives of faith and Christian morals, increase devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary by imitating her hidden life, encourage others by good example and deeds, and pray for the world and its needs through the recitation of the rosary. In addition to the Motherhouse in Poland and their ministries in the United States, they also serve communities in Italy, Lithuania, Africa and Latvia.

Because visible religious communities were subject to suppression and dispersal at the time of the congregation's founding, the Sisters Servants did not initially wear a traditional, distinctive habit, and they still do not wear one today.



HOLY THURSDAY MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

7:00 p.m., 17 April 2014



GOOD FRIDAY CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION

7:00 p.m., 18 April 2014



HOLY SATURDAY THE EASTER VIGIL

8:00 p.m., 19 April 2014

EASTER SUNDAY

20 April 2014

7:00 a.m. – Sunrise Liturgy
9:00 a.m. – Family Liturgy
11:00 a.m. – Special Music



Snowfall Shortfall

With the numerous and unexpected snow storms this past winter, the parish does not have sufficient funds in its budget to cover the cost of snow removal. A special collection was taken the weekend of 29-30 March to help balance the budget and to pay bills.

If you were not able to contribute to the collection at church, you may still do so. Simply mail in a check to the parish office or place the donation in the collection basket at church. Be sure to note "snow removal" in the memo line on the check.



Spring "Spruce-Up" Day

Saturday, 05 April 2014
8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Rain Date: 06 April 2014
1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Parishioners are needed to help with our annual spring cleaning of the parish grounds. All parishioners and children are encouraged to help weed, mulch, sweep and perform other tasks that will help our parish grounds look their best for the spring and summer. Confirmation students and their families are especially encouraged to volunteer. Individuals should bring their own work gloves, safety glasses and small gardening tools and should dress for the weather. Come and make our parish grounds look beautiful!

To volunteer contact Tony Glander, Chair, Facilities Committee: (301) 460-6404.

Baby Item Collection

The collection of baby items in January was a resounding success, due to the generosity of parish families. Parishioners donated diapers, wipes, formula, baby food and clothing for newborn infants and toddlers up to 18 months old.

Following the collection, a volunteer from the parish collected the items and divided the donations into two groups. The volunteer then arranged for the baby items to be delivered to the Shady Grove Pregnancy Aid Center and Birthright of Montgomery County. Both organizations have expressed their great appreciation for the wonderful generosity of OLVP's parishioners.

In addition, the children in Faith Formation collected money in tiny baby bottles during the same time period. Four hundred dollars (\$400) was donated to the baby collection.

The collection was held over two weekends, 18-19 and 25-26 January. These are the weekends before and after the March for Life on 22 January 2014. These dates were chosen to highlight the needs of expectant mothers and their newborn infants at the same time the March for Life was being held. Future baby item collections will be held in January near the March for Life.

Adopt a Family

The Adopted Family Program is part of the direct service component of the OLVP Social Concerns Committee. In the last year, we have very successfully conducted four collections by using an online organizing tool called SignUp Genius. Parishioners are sent an invite with a link to view the requested items to donate during approximately a two week collection period. If they choose to donate, they can "click" and "submit" their selected gifts which are recorded by the site. Then it is simply a matter of purchasing and delivering the items to the Founders Hall alcove after Mass on the designated weekend.

A reminder is e-mailed to donors several days before the delivery date. As our distribution list expands, we will be able to assist more families. So far, most all parish participants have been extremely pleased with the new process.

If you would like to be included, please contact: olvpsocialconcerns@gmail.com. Thank you for your support! - *Marianne Beattie, Chair of Social Concerns, OLVP Pastoral Council.*

IMPORTANT EVENTS



CONFIRMATION AT THE SHRINE Saturday, 17 May 2014 2:00 p.m.

For the second year, our confirmands will have the honor of being confirmed by the Archbishop of Washington, Donald Cardinal Wuerl, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The confirmands from Our Lady of the Visitation Parish will join confirmands from several other parishes in the Archdiocese for this special occasion. Each year, the Cardinal gives several parishes in the Archdiocese the option to receive Confirmation from the Archbishop at the National Shrine. This year, our parish was, again, blessed to be given this opportunity.

ASCENSION Sunday, 01 June 2014 9:00 a.m. Family Liturgy

PARISH PICNIC Sunday, 01 June 2014 12:00 – 3:00 p.m. Church

PENTECOST Sunday, 08 June 2014 9:00 a.m. Family Liturgy



CORPUS CHRISTI Sunday, 22 June 2014 9:00 a.m. Procession

ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL Sunday, 29 June 2014

Sodality

A warm hearted thank you is extended to Maria Martin for her two years of service as Prefect of the Sodality at OLVP. She has guided the Sodalists in their spiritual growth through retreats, evenings to pray the rosary and other opportunities. When needed, she has offered comfort to those experiencing difficult times. Maria has coordinated the Sodality's support for many of the parish's activities, such as the family bingos, parish picnics, as well as the 40th anniversary celebrations for both Fr. Ray and Fr. Mathew.

Maria will be moving to Pennsylvania in the near future and will be missed by many. The parish expresses its gratitude for her commitment to the mission of the Sodality and the parish, and wishes Maria and her husband a wonderful retirement.



Parish Picnic

On 01 June 2014, the parish will hold its annual picnic to celebrate our Feast Day, Our Lady of the Visitation which is 31 May. All parishioners are invited to enjoy this relaxing and festive event.

This year, a more simplified approach will be taken. The picnic will be held on the grounds next to the church instead of the pavilion. This is a more convenient location and nearer the facilities where items are stored. This also affords a quick relocation of the picnic to Founders Hall in case of rain.

The picnic will be held immediately following the 11:00 a.m. mass. Parishioners are welcome to attend mass in more casual, but still respectful, attire for a picnic. The parish will provide the hamburgers and hotdogs and parishioners will bring side dishes according to the alphabet. However, this year parishioners will be asked to bring their own beverage of choice. This will avoid purchasing beverages that are not consumed.

The parish hopes to once again provide pony rides for the children and other fun activities. Please watch the bulletin for further details.

Living Catholic

Have you ever been stumped by the questions your children or others have asked you about the Catholic faith? Have you had a desire to volunteer as a catechist, Eucharistic minister, or reader but felt that you didn't know enough? Do you have a desire to learn more about your faith and grow closer to God? Well, the Archdiocese of Washington has the answer for you.

You no longer have to fret because the date is inconvenient or you can't make the class beginning at 6:30 p.m. The Archdiocese offers easy to use online courses through the My Catholic Faith Delivered program at www.mycatholicfaithdelivered.com. The courses are affordable and can be done at your own pace, either individually or in a group setting. If you prefer, many courses are available live throughout the Archdiocese.

For those who began their Archdiocesan catechist certification prior to December 2, 2012 through the Hearts of Flame program, you may complete your remaining courses through the online program. Those who are certified through Hearts of Flame are encouraged to continue their learning through the program.

Did you know that you can stay connected with the Archdiocese through the Archdiocese's App, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Bing, as well as the Cardinal's Blog, Cathstan.org (The Catholic Standard), and elpreg.org (the Spanish language website)?

I would encourage everyone to take a moment to visit the Archdiocesan website www.adw.org to see the wonderful opportunities available to you. – *Gayle Brown Driver, Chair, Faith Formation, OLVP Pastoral Council.*



The Light is On for You

Every Wednesday evening during Lent, the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is offered at every parish within the Archdiocese of Washington. At OLVP, confessions are heard from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the church. A guide with an explanation of "What is Reconciliation", how to do an Examination of Conscience, and the Act of Contrition is available in the church.



At Weird Animals Totally Catholic Vacation Bible Camp - VBC (and by "weird" we mean unique, wonderful, one of a kind) kids learn that GOD LOVES US no matter what.

God loves us when we're feeling left out or afraid, or even when we don't understand. We all sometimes feel a little like "weird animals." Learning about the goodness of God's love, family, friends, prayer, and Scripture helps kids feel confident and secure.

Church tradition is woven throughout the week, and each of the days is connected to important elements of our Catholic faith, including the Corporal Works of Mercy, wisdom, discipleship, the Resurrection, and even angels.

Weird Animals Totally Catholic VBC (we call it camp not school) is a fun-filled opportunity for children to meet new friends, play untamed games, sing and dance to incredible music, make fun crafts and be part of our interactive Bible Center stories and activities.

You may register, up until 01 May 2014, at www.groupvbpro.com/vbs/ez/FaithKidsOLVP or email molewack@olvp.org for additional information.

Volunteers may register at the above online site. Priority goes to High School Students, followed by 8th and 7th grade students. Volunteer spots for 6th graders are limited. Registering as a volunteer does not guarantee a position. Mrs. Olewack will contact each volunteer to confirm their volunteer position. SSL hours are given to MCPS students.

Updated Registration Forms

Over the course of the next year, parishioners may be asked to complete a new Parish Registration Form. The objective is to have the most up-to-date information for each individual and family as the parish prepares to convert to a new computerized records system provided by the Archdiocese.

Your cooperation in completing the updated form is greatly appreciated.

Living Faith as a Family

"The single most important influence on the religious and spiritual life of adolescents is their parents." *National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.*

Learning to love and rear children and teens as people of faith and followers of Jesus is a challenging and lifelong task. Recognizing that another's life is always a gift and never a possession, we are challenged to raise our children in God's image, not our own.

Parents are the primary catechists or teachers of faith for their children. Seek ways to pass on a living and active faith to your children and teens, with the parish, in supporting a lifelong journey of faith that is modeled throughout all generations of family.

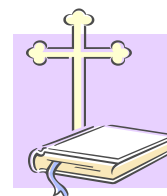
Evangelization means to share the good news of our faith with others. In order to meet this expectation we must first name and claim the faith for ourselves. No one ever graduates from "faith formation", it is a lifelong journey. Be sure that each family member is growing in their own faith. Parents who participate in adult Bible studies, retreats, and adult formation programs or serve as catechists and sponsors cannot help but pass along their faith to friends and family members.

Seek ways to participate together as a family in community service, working together at a homeless shelter, spending a Saturday morning doing Meals on Wheels, or "adopting" a family in need around each of the holidays or doing service to your parish. Here are some resources:

Raising Happy, Healthy and Holy Teenagers: A Primer for Parents by Dr. Robert McCarty, NFCYM 2009.

Raising Faith-Filled Kids; Ordinary Opportunities to Nurture Spirituality at Home by Tom McGrath; Loyola Press.

Soul Searching: A Movie about Teenager and God, Revelation Studios, 2007 (DVD: 79 minutes).





Mary of Nazareth

OLVP would like to welcome Jennifer Sanders as the new liaison from the parish to Mary of Nazareth Catholic School, OLVP's parish school. Jennifer takes over this role from Heidi Titus who did an outstanding job as liaison for the last several years.

There are seven parishes in the up county area that are affiliated with Mary of Nazareth Roman Catholic Elementary School. Each parish identifies one parishioner, whose children attend Mary of Nazareth School, to facilitate transmittal of documents, planning of Catholic Schools Week (CSW) and communications related to school events.

The parish has been one of the seven affiliated parishes since the school's opening in September 1994. Visitation Parish has approximately 80 families currently registered who send their children to Mary of Nazareth School.

The parish would like to thank Heidi for her many years of dedicated service and attention to detail when planning school-related parish activities. Additionally, the parish would like to wish Jennifer well as she moves toward completion of her first year as liaison.



Our Lady of the Visitation Parish
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Look for more information in our weekly Parish Bulletin or on the Parish website
www.olvp.org

Charitable Giving

Thank you to all parishioners who gave from their hearts to help the neediest among us in our community and around the world.

Parishioners generously donated to the many in-kind giving programs sponsored by the Social Concerns Committee, Sodality, Holy Name Society, Faith Formation and others. These programs included the food bag collections for St. Martin's and Head Start; the Adopted Family Collections, school supplies in the summer; Lenten Rice Bowl and other collections through Faith Formation; Vacation Bible Camp charity; the Shawl Ministry, toiletries and meals for the homeless shelters; and the baby items donated to the Shady Grove Pregnancy Center and Birthright of Montgomery County.

In 2013, parishioners donated a total of \$158,785 to the Cardinal's Appeal, second collections through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and parish Social Concerns Programs. A summary of these donations is provided below.

Cardinal's Appeal	\$121,835
USCCB Second Collections	
Church Missions	2,270
Church in Develop. World	2,344
Holy Land	574
Catholic Relief Services	3,343
Holy Father	1,976
Catholic Communication	1,416
Catholic University	1,628
World Missions/Prop. Faith	2,223
ADW Priests Retirement	4,207
Retirement for Religious	<u>2,665</u>
	\$ 22,646

St. Nicholas Catalog	
OLVP in Haiti	\$ 2,975
So Others Might Eat	2,235
St. Ann's	1,855
Anugraha School – India	3,320
Little Sisters of the Poor	<u>1,650</u>
	\$12,035

Haiti	
Ash Wednesday	\$ 1,401
Holy Thursday	537
Thanksgiving	<u>331</u>
	\$ 2,269



The Rosary

In May, the month of Mary, blessed rosaries will be available in the church in front of the statues of the Holy Family.

The rosary is Scripture-based prayer, and begins with the Apostles' Creed. The Creed summarizes the great mysteries of the Catholic Church, and is followed by the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be in a special sequence. Repetition of the prayers in the rosary is meant to lead one into restful and contemplative prayer related to each mystery. The rosary can be said privately or in a group.

Abundant grace is received through praying the rosary. There are four sets of mysteries: The Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous prayed on different days of the week. The Visitation is the second of the Joyful mysteries which are traditionally prayed on Mondays and Saturdays, and on Sundays during Advent. For instructions on how to pray the rosary, go to www.usccb.org and follow the links.

ADW Website Redesign

On 19 March 2014, the Archdiocese of Washington launched a beautifully redesigned website at www.adw.org.

Re-tooled to be "more engaging...to support the efforts of the New Evangelization", it compliments Pope Francis' statement, "It is not enough to be passersby on the digital highways...connections need to grow into true encounters".

A new "PrayerNet" feature allows visitors to submit prayer requests each week, as well as to pray for the intentions listed. Another key feature is the integration of social media platforms in the new design. This allows users to spread the Gospel message through sharing on their own social media platforms. An enhanced event calendar enables visitors to import events into Google Calendar and iCal.