

PARISH NEWS

NEW PARISHIONERS:

Ryan & Lindsey Layer, Nancy Hofmann, Susan Villageliu, Marilyn Minath & Rafael Triana, and Paula Nania.

SAINTS TO REMEMBER

DECEMBER 28 – The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

29 – St. Thomas Becket

30 – St. Egwin

31 – St. Sylvester I

JANUARY 1 – Mary, the Holy Mother of God

2 – Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen

3 – Most Holy Name of Jesus

4 – St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

5 – St. John Neumann

PREVIEW OF NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Jerusalem is extolled as a place of glory and splendor because the Lord has come to His own city.

Second Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

Paul tells the Ephesians that his special mission is to make the Gentiles co-heirs with the Jews in Christ — “members of the same body and sharers of the promise.”

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Herod learns that Wise Men from the East are searching for the newly born Christ Child. He instructs them to find the Child and to report His whereabouts to him. The Wise Men follow a star to the place where Mary and Jesus are and offer the Child gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They do not return to Herod but follow another route to their own country.

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday December 28

5 PM – Deceased Members of the Pruffer Family (Betty Jane Pruffer)

Sunday December 29

8:30 AM – John Macro (The Cerrone Family)

11 AM – Members of the Parish

Saturday January 4

5 PM – Members of the Parish

Sunday January 5

8:30 AM – Bridie Barron (The Allen Family)

11 AM – Nancy K. Mosca (Rebecca & Dr. Alfon B. Mosca)

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

SUNDAY (12/29) – FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

7 - 7:45 AM: Reconciliation

8:30 AM - MASS

11 AM – MASS

MONDAY (12/30)

NOON – MASS

7 PM – PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP

TUESDAY (12/31)

10 AM – NOON: Food Pantry

7 PM – VIGIL MASS

WEDNESDAY (1/1/2014) – SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

11 AM – HOLY DAY MASS

THURSDAY (1/2)

8 AM - MASS

NOON - 1 PM: Soup Kitchen

FRIDAY (1/3)

8 AM - Daily Mass followed by First Friday Adoration

10 AM – NOON: Food Pantry

NOON - AA Meeting

SATURDAY (1/4)

8 AM – MASS

3:30 - 4:30 PM - Reconciliation

5 PM – Vigil MASS

SUNDAY (1/5) – EPIPHANY

7 - 7:45 AM: Reconciliation

8:30 AM - MASS

9:45 - 10:45 AM: Christian Formation Classes

11 AM – Children's MASS

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR _____

PARISHIONERS: Winifred Smith, Frank Pologruto, Al Bracuti, Norman Bednarczyk, Nicholas Sisman, and Mary Ann Williams.

FRIENDS AND RELATIVES: Josephine Nampijja, Gloria Aberg, Grace Dawn Wicke, Melyssa Dove, Nicole Carpenter, Beth Mauk, Evan Dotas, Dave Halley, Cullen McQuhae, Bill & Marie Jones, Ray & Cecilia Caretti, Jessica Caretti, Christine Bentéjac, David Rumpf, Mrs. Jessica Viglietta, Pam D. Goines, Janet D. Gunther, Charlie Joseph Previtali, Nicole Shaw, Jean Clayton, and Rich Hawkins

MILITARY: Brian Fagan, Jamie Torbet, Mike Eiermann, David Alvey, Charles G. Ellison, Eric Emmott, and Matthew Mickiewicz.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULES

BULLETIN DEADLINE JANUARY 5TH (CORRECTED):

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26TH AT 3 PM

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

- DECEMBER 31ST MASS : 7 PM

- JANUARY 1ST MASS: 11 AM

NEWS FROM HAITI

Anne Knasel (STA): anne@stagebridge.net
Ginny Zeller (HC): ginnyanzeller@gmail.com
www.saltadere.org



NEWS OF OUR TWIN PARISH: On behalf of Saltadere, St. Michel parish and Father Ilric Louis Jeune, thank you and please continue to support our twin parish. Accomplishments this year still needing mention include the visits by parishioners and specifically, Monica Walker's efforts to enhance the computer capability of St. Michel School. In the New Year, we look forward to continuing the projects already mentioned and to raising funds to improve the "old dispensary" building and to add classroom capacity at St. Michel. Happy Independence Day to our Haitian brothers and sisters. They celebrate on January 1.

BI-PARISH HAITI COMMITTEE: The committee's next meeting will be January 19th at 1 PM at Holy Comforter. To learn about the Bi-parish committee, you can e-mail Anne Knasel or Ginny Zeller. You may also visit the website.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CCS STUDENTS WHO WERE NAMED TO THE "A/B" HONOR ROLL FOR THE FIRST QUARTER:

SEAMUS ALLEN,
AIDAN SHAFFREY
AND
JASMINE FURIN

JUSTICE & PEACE

A suggested New Year's Resolution: bring a can of tuna for the food pantry each week. You'll be helping someone less fortunate than you. It might be good exercise to pick up the can if it happens to be on a lower shelf in the grocery store. It's definitely good exercise to bend over to put it in the basket at the top of the stairs. Win. Win. Win.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF INTEREST

MEDJUGORJE ROSARY PRAYER GROUP: Make a commitment this Advent to pray the rosary. Come join the Medjugorje Rosary Prayer Group on Wednesdays in the Chapel at 6 PM. (*Note the time change.*) Our Blessed Mother's message to her children on December 2, 2013 says "Dear children, with a motherly love and a motherly patience I am looking at your ceaseless wandering and how lost you are. That is why I am with you. I desire to help you to first find and come to know yourself, so that, then, you would be able to recognize and to admit everything that does not permit you to get to know the love of the Heavenly Father, honestly and wholeheartedly." Come be with us and pray the Rosary of the Blessed Mother who so loves us. All are Welcome!!!

BETHLEHEM CHRISTIAN FAMILIES: More than 150 families in the Holy land are in danger of leaving their homes in search of work. Their olive wood carvings will be available at HC the weekend of January 18th/19th. Help support those Christians who make their livelihood through the selling of these hand carved items.

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTERS: John the Baptist tells us to reform our lives. Learn how to use the graces of your Sacrament of Marriage to renew your marriage and draw closer to God. Let the Lord strengthen, renew, and rekindle your marriage by attending an upcoming Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend on Feb. 21-23, Sep. 12-14, Nov. 14-16 in Herndon, VA; Apr. 11-13 in Fredericksburg, VA; Jun. 27-29 in Richmond, VA; Aug. 8-10 in Roanoke; or Oct 10-12 in Norfolk. For more info, visit renewmarriage-vasouth.org or call (757) 483-3209.

MARTIN LUTHER KING PROGRAM/MASS: The Office for Black Catholics invites you to our annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. program and mass Monday, January 20, 10 AM, Holy Rosary, 3300 R Street, Richmond, VA 23223. This year's theme is "Free at Last: True Freedom in the Spirit". Fr. George Clements will be the main presider. Reception immediately following. For more information, please contact Angela Jackson, (804) 622-5262 or email obc@richmonddiocese.org. For a complete listing of OBC events, visit us at www.richmonddiocese.org/obc. Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cdrobc.

MEET IN RICHMOND TO SUPPORT A PRO-LIFE VA

Please join the Virginia Catholic Conference and other state and national pro-life organizations in Richmond on Wednesday, Jan. 8, for the **2nd Annual Virginia Stands for Life Rally**. The event begins with a 9 AM prayer walk on Capitol grounds, followed by a rally featuring pro-life activist Lila Rose of LiveAction. The event coincides with the opening of the 2014 Virginia General Assembly and the upcoming inauguration of Virginia's new governor. It is designed to demonstrate broad support for recent years' critical pro-life successes in the General Assembly and to urge public officials to protect those gains in the upcoming session, as well as to achieve further life-affirming policies. Please RSVP to Virginia Podboy at Virginia@vacatholic.org or call 804-225-8565.

FROM THE PASTOR

EMMANUEL CHRISTMAS

My subject this time I want to think about the name given to our Savior, both in prophesy of Isaiah, and as recorded by Matthew in his account of the Angel visiting Joseph – the name ‘Emmanuel’ Matthew 1:23. It is a Hebrew word, Emmanuel: meaning “**God with us**” God with us! It is an amazing word! It is a very precious word. There are four thoughts I would like to leave with you for your further meditation, each centered around the glorious truth that Emmanuel has come and He is with us not only at Christmas!

GOD WITH US - IN THE FLESH

This truth is fundamental to everything else. It is such an amazing truth that Paul, who had so much revealed to him by the Lord, called it a mystery! I Timothy 3:16 most certainly, the mystery of godliness is great: He was manifested in the flesh. And in John 1:14 -The Word became a human being and lived here with us. We saw his true glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father. From him all the kindness and all the truth of God have come down to us.

GOD WITH US - AS REDEEMER

Because we were unable to save ourselves, He came to bring salvation to us, but at what a cost. Good works were marred by our sinful nature, so they would not do. Silver and gold, and all that it represents could not pay the price of our salvation; one soul is of more value than the total wealth of the whole world. Sin had to be dealt with by death! Here we have the death of the perfect substitute in our place. Our salvation was purchased with His blood. Let us not forget that this is a vital part of the true meaning of Christmas! What a gift. See how Peter expresses it, I Peter 1:18-19 You must know that you were redeemed from the useless way of living inherited by tradition from your forefathers, not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, But you were purchased with the precious blood of Christ (the Messiah), like that of a sacrificial lamb without blemish or spot. Paul also take this message, making clear the purpose and price of the purchase. The purpose was to ‘purchase – the church of God’. The price was ‘His own blood’.

GOD WITH US - IN ALL FULLNESS

Colossians 2:9-10 In Him the entire fullness of God’s nature dwells bodily, and you have been filled by Him, who is the head over every ruler and authority. What a gift! This is about God actually being with us! Not being represented by some mighty angelic being. We now have GOD WITH US - IN ALL FULLNESS. The limit to what we receive is governed by how much we draw from Him! He is with us - IN ALL FULLNESS. To help us appreciate this, the Lord did not simply give us a manual, although we do have one in the Bible, but to aid our understanding He came right where we are – just like we are – knowing us through and through, and seeks to reveal God to us! See what John says; John 1:17-18 the law was given through Moses, but God’s unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. But the one and only Son is himself God and is near to the Father’s heart. He has revealed God to us.

GOD WITH US – ALWAYS

II Corinthians 6:16 We are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." It is a fact that God wants to be with His people. When the Children of Israel came out of Egypt, the Lord showed them how to make a place for Him to meet with them as they journeyed – the Tabernacle. Later He showed them how to build a Temple in which they could meet with Him. Now He has us, the Church, where He delights to meet with His people. What an incredible gift – the gift of His continual presence. In Hebrews 13:5-6 God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you." So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?" Finally the words of the Lord Jesus Himself, Matthew 28:19 Be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. What a Gift, the gift of His abiding presence. There are people who doubt this. There are people who do ... **Do you? MERRY CHRISTMAS.**

Formation Notes

Dear Friends,

A deep breath for us today, the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas, and the Feast of the Holy Family. Not only have we made it through the holiday season (more or less). We have made it through the last two months of something of a Catholic whirlwind in the popular media. Our new Pope stands front and center in the world: Pope Francis the author of *Evangelii Gaudium*, "The Joy of the Gospel" – an astonishingly widely reported document in the non-Catholic press. Pope Francis, the Time magazine person of the year. Pope Francis the subject of innumerable media stories in this country alone, from the Daily Show and the Colbert Report, to Rush Limbaugh and Stuart Varney on Fox News, to NPR's *Morning Edition*. (And that's just a bit of the secular press coverage.) Pope Francis the "vigilante vicar" (in Stephen Colbert's words) as he is rumored to sneak out of the Vatican at night in anonymous priest attire and minister to the homeless of Rome.

There is so much to absorb in all this. Is the Pope, as certain commentators suggest, a Marxist? (Despite the fact that, while still Cardinal Bergoglio in Argentina, he staunchly opposed liberation theology as "hopelessly tainted with Marxist ideology.") Are discussions of wealth distribution and the role of money in the world necessarily political, and therefore inappropriate topics for the Holy Father's pronouncements? Are his reflections on the poor, on why so many people are poor, on the whole concept of poverty in the world today, simply straightforward pronouncements of gospel truth?

I hope to reflect on all these things over the next few weeks in this space. In the meantime, our new Pope takes the hearts of the world – Catholic and non-Catholic alike – by storm, with the all-encompassing passion that a storm entails.

I will never forget standing around Gloria's computer in our Holy Comforter office last March, all our little staff and Fr. Joseph Mary squashed together, watching and waiting for the live announcement that would follow the white smoke. The image of our new pope as he came out onto the balcony in simple white, eschewing the ermine and trappings of ecclesial power, touched all of us deeply. His smile was calm and sincere. His gentle humility was immediately apparent. And then he clinched it with his first words to the huge crowd standing there in the rain in St. Peter's Square, a simple Italian greeting: *brothers and sisters, good evening*.

He proceeded to briefly (and wryly) thank his fellow cardinals, to say a prayer for Benedict XVI using publicly for the first time the title "pope emeritus," and then, quietly, to lead all of us in the Lord's Prayer, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be. In Italian. Wow. It was pretty powerful. (Here at HC, we rang the bell in the middle of the afternoon.)(A few times.)

Less than ten months later, Pope Francis continues in this engaged and insistent vein to influence our lives, to astonish us and make us smile. On his birthday on December 17th, he deserved a really good present, in my opinion. But he gave us one instead. A new saint.

Via a rarely used process of "equivalent canonization," Pope Francis announced on his birthday that Peter Faber (*Pierre Favre*) is now a saint of the Catholic Church. "Equivalent canonization" is an acknowledgment of sainthood for a church figure who has already been widely recognized and who has partially undergone, though not completed, the process of becoming a saint. Favre was beatified by the church in 1872.

A whole bulletin page could (and will) be written about our newest saint. With Francis Xavier, Favre was roommates with Ignatius of Loyola (the founder of the Society of Jesus) before there *was* a Society of Jesus. They were students together in Paris. He helped Ignatius with his Greek (Ignatius had problems with Greek.) And Ignatius served as his spiritual guide. "From that little trio," writes James Martin of *America* magazine, "came the Jesuit Order."

Born the son of a shepherd in Villaret, France, Favre was said to be able to hear a homily in the morning and repeat it verbatim that afternoon. His dedication to his studies led him improbably to the University of Paris where his life altering encounter with Ignatius took place. The first in that very small community of "first Jesuits" in Paris to be ordained, Favre was the one who celebrated mass for the group in those early days. After all these years, he continues to hold a special place in the hearts of Jesuits all over the world, our new pope included. James Martin cites the following as his "all-time favorite quote from Favre." And it feels like a wonderful Christmas prayer for us all:

Take care, take care
never to close
your heart to anyone.

Many blessings on your ongoing Christmas Season!

Dawn
dawnaberg@gmail.com
434.295.6559