

# Our Parish Visitor

## Our Lady of the Visitation Parish Newsletter



### Christmas Tree Sale

#### Tree Sales

**Fri, 06 December to  
Sun, 15 December**

#### Weekends:

**8:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

#### Weekdays:

**4:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

### Volunteers Needed No Experience Necessary

Come on down and sign up after mass the weekend of 16-17 November to help sell our Christmas trees! This is the parish's primary fundraiser for the year. If you cannot sign up that weekend, call Bill Connors at the number below.

Invite family members to work with you, especially your teenagers. It's great fun for all. On the weekend, enjoy a gourmet lunch too! You will spend a wonderful few hours together during a very hectic season.

### Calling All Cooks



We also NEED the wonderful COOKS in our parish to provide food and HELPERS to serve the food to our volunteers on the weekends.

**To volunteer to sell trees or cook  
contact:  
Bill Connors  
(301) 869-8203**

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### Myths About 8 December

**1) The term "The Immaculate Conception" refers to the Virgin Birth.** The Immaculate Conception refers to the conception of Mary, not Jesus. In 1854 Pope Pius IX proclaimed *ex cathedra*: "We declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which asserts that the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God, and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, was preserved free from every stain of original sin is a doctrine revealed by God and, for this reason, must be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful". The Virgin Birth refers to the conception of Jesus and the Incarnation; it is celebrated on the Feast of the Annunciation on 25 March.

**2) Mary could never sin.** The privilege of the Immaculate Conception did not remove Mary's free will. She was free to sin. However, Mary chose always to do whatever God asked of her (*Luke 1:38*). Both the Council of Trent and the writings of Pope John Paul II hold that Mary remained free of sin throughout her life.

**3) No one else has been born free from Original Sin.** Scripture scholars and Doctors of the Church maintain that John the Baptist was born free from Original Sin. Their belief is rooted in the story of the Visitation. The unborn infant John leaped with joy when Mary greeted Elizabeth. (*Luke 1:44*).

**4) It is just another holyday.** Actually, it is the patronal feast of the United States. In 1846 at the Plenary Council of Baltimore, the Bishops placed our still young country under the care and protection of Mary with the title of the Immaculate Conception.

**5) It follows the rules of observance of any holyday.** Because it is the patronal feast of our country, even if 8 December falls on a Saturday or a Monday, it remains a holyday of obligation. If 8 December falls on a Sunday of Advent, the feast transfers to the following Monday, but it is not a day of obligation.  
-- Fr. Ray

### Christmas Mass Schedule

**Christmas Vigil  
Tuesday, 24 December**

**\*4:00 p.m. – Church**

**\*Passes Needed**

**7:00 p.m. – Church**

**11:00 p.m. - Church**

**Midnight Mass/Special Music**

**Christmas Day  
Wednesday, 25 December**

**9:00 a.m. – Church**

**11:00 a.m. – Church**

**Family Liturgy**



### Christmas Pageant

**Sunday, 15 December 2013  
5:00 p.m., Church**

Come celebrate the spirit of Christmas and the real reason for the season – Jesus – by attending OLVP's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Pageant, "Sing with Us a Christmas Story". This musical program will present the Christmas story from the gospel of St. Luke and will include some of our most well known and beloved Christmas hymns. You can sing along!

Come see the beauty of our children dressed as members of the Holy Family, angels, and others from the Nativity story. Adults will also participate and many of our youth will help behind the scenes.

The program is sponsored by our Faith Formation program and we hope to see you there! All are welcome. – Mrs. Olewack

## IMPORTANT DATES

### December

- 01 First Sunday of Advent  
09 Mon *Feast of the Immaculate Conception*, Sacred Liturgy, 12:00 Noon Church  
Patronal Feast of the USA  
15 Sun Christmas Pageant, 5:00 p.m.  
24 Tue Christmas Eve  
Parish Office Closed at noon  
25 Wed Christmas Day  
Parish Office Closed  
31 Tue New Year's Eve  
Parish Office Closed at noon

### January

- 01 Wed *Feast of Mary Mother of God*  
Sacred Liturgy, 12:00 noon  
Parish Office Closed  
05 *Epiphany of the Lord*  
9:00 a.m., Family Liturgy  
Refreshments after mass

### February

- 28 Fri Volunteer Appreciation Party,  
7:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.,  
Founders Hall

### March

- 02 Sun Family Bingo, Founders Hall  
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

## New Pre-Advent Family Bingo

In response to requests from many parish families, a second family bingo will be sponsored this year by the Holy Name Society, Sodality and Mary of Nazareth families from the parish. The bingo is scheduled for Sunday, 24 November 2013 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Founders Hall. Families with the last name beginning with A-H, please bring beverages, I-P please bring snacks, and Q-Z please bring desserts to share.

## Volunteer Appreciation Party

Mark your calendars! The next Volunteer Appreciation Party will be held on Friday, 28 February 2014, 7:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. in Founders Hall. All parishioners who volunteer in any capacity are invited to attend.

Great food, beverages and wonderful music will all be provided. Come visit with friends and enjoy a relaxed evening of fun. Watch the bulletin for details.



## Confirmation 2013

There have been moments in my life when I have felt pure joy, happiness, love and grace. One of those moments was the day my daughter, Paige Marie, received the Sacrament of Confirmation last May. To be surrounded by those I love, and to observe my daughter renew her faith in God and receive the Holy Spirit is a truly spiritual moment.

We were blessed the day of Paige's Confirmation in so many ways, including being surrounded by relatives and beautiful weather! What made the occasion even more special was the location of the Confirmation at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, in Washington D.C. I believe this was one of those 'once in a lifetime' experiences. I can honestly say that the moment I walked into the Basilica, a feeling of pure joy and grace fell upon me. Family, friends, fellow parishioners, strangers...we were all experiencing a beautiful moment together. Donald Cardinal Wuerl was incredibly inviting, warm, and loving. He engaged everyone, young and old – it was a very special mass.

After the Confirmation mass, our family celebrated with a luncheon and had some good family fun. However, the part of the day I will remember most fondly was the actual Confirmation mass that took place in such a beautiful location. I encourage you and your family to visit the Basilica or attend a mass there. It is something you will remember forever. – *Cecilia Matthews*

## Confirmation 2014

Once again, the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmands from Our Lady of the Visitation Parish will have the blessed opportunity to participate, with several other parishes, in the Archdiocese of Washington's Regional Confirmation. It will be held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Donald Cardinal Wuerl is scheduled to preside at the Confirmation at 10:00 a.m. on 31 May 2014. This date is especially significant to our Confirmands and to our parish, because it is also the Feast of Our Lady of the Visitation, our parish Feast Day.

## New Vestments

Parishioners will notice the Presider, Concelebrant and Deacon wearing new matching vestments. Vestments have been acquired for the four seasons of the liturgical year. In Ordinary Time, *green* vestments are worn. During Advent and Lent, *purple* (or violet) vestments are used. *White* vestments are worn on both Christmas Day and on Easter, and during both the Christmas and Easter Seasons, and on special feasts. Lastly, *red* vestments are for celebrating special feast days such as Passion Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost and the feasts of the Apostles.

New dalmatic vestments were first acquired for our Deacon. Matching vestments for the presider and concelebrant were then purchased to provide greater uniformity for the celebration of sacred liturgies throughout the liturgical year.

A dalmatic is the distinguishing outer vestment of a deacon. When first worn at ordination, the bishop says: "May the Lord clothe you with the garment of salvation and with the vesture of praise, and may he cover you with the dalmatic of righteousness forever".

If you would like to contribute to the cost of the new matching vestments, please contact Fr. Ray in the parish office at (301) 948-5536 x109.



## Pastoral Council

In keeping with new Archdiocesan guidelines for Pastoral Councils, several changes are being made within OLVP's parish council.

First, the pastor of a parish is now designated as the Chair of the Pastoral Council. The lay leader of OLVP's Pastoral Council will now be known as the President of the Council. This change was recently made on the front of the bulletin.

Second, highlights of future Pastoral Council meetings will be posted on the parish website: [www.olvp.org](http://www.olvp.org). Parishioners will be advised of the postings through the bulletin.



## Blessing of the Animals

Saturday 5 October was a beautiful Maryland morning with not a cloud in the sky. Several parishioners gathered early in the lower parking lot of the church with holy cards, apples and water for our awaited guests. They waited anxiously for the first cars to arrive. When they did arrive, 30 furry cats and dogs, two not so furry turtles, and one large stuffed friend, along with their families, joined Fr. Ray for a Blessing of the Animals in honor of the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi. His feast day is 4 October.

One of the most beloved and popular saints, Francis is often associated with animals and a concern for creation. He preached that all creatures are proof of divine goodness and beauty in the world. Francis loved to preach the Good News.

As Fr. Ray blessed each pet with their family, you could hear a pin drop in the parking lot; not a peep, a bark, a meow or turtle noise was heard. It was a peaceful moment that surely made St. Francis smile. For those who like to plan ahead, we hope to see all our friends again next year on the morning of the first Saturday of October. – *Michele Olewack*

## GIVE LE\$\$ TO THE IRS

Before the New Year, consider giving a donation to Our Lady of the Visitation Parish through one of three ways:

1. Special Christmas Gift
2. Donation of Stock to OLVP
3. Remembering OLVP in Wills and Bequests

All 2013 donations to the parish are tax deductible. All stock donations in 2013 are credited to the donor at full face value on the date of transfer.

There are many repairs to parish facilities that could be met with special contributions this time of year. Your giving to the church is truly a blessing.

Questions should be directed to OLVP's bookkeeper, Kora Perrin, at 301-948-5536 x102 or [kperrin@olvp.org](mailto:kperrin@olvp.org).

## Adopted Family Christmas Collection

The Adopted Family Collection has been moved to an online process called SignUp Genius. This has enabled the Social Concerns Committee to conduct the project with much improved efficiency and completion with amazing turn-around time.

We have successfully utilized the SignUp Genius program for both the spring and fall Adopted Family Collections. The upcoming Christmas Adopted Family Collection will operate in the same format.

If you would like to participate, it is not too late! Please sign up for the Social Concerns email list. After doing so, the list of the needs of the families for the Christmas Adopted Family Collection will be emailed to you via a link to SignUp Genius. You can then view the requested donations and choose the gifts to give.

Please contact me, Marianne Beattie, Chair of the OLVP, Social Concerns Committee, to be placed on the email list. I can be reached at: [olvpsocialconcerns@gmail.com](mailto:olvpsocialconcerns@gmail.com) or at (301) 869-6898. – *Marianne Beattie*



## Volunteer Opportunities

Confirmants and their families are encouraged to volunteer for the following parish activities:

Head Start Food Bag Distribution  
 Sat, 07 Dec 2013 – 5:00 p.m. mass  
 Sun, 08 Dec 2013 – 9:00 a.m. mass  
 Sun, 08 Dec 2013 – 11:00 a.m. mass

Cardinal's Appeal Collection  
 Sat, 22 Feb 2014 – 5:00 p.m. mass  
 Sun, 23 Feb 2014 – 9:00 a.m. mass  
 Sun, 23 Feb 2014 – 11:00 a.m. mass

The Lord's Table Soup Kitchen  
 St. Martin's Parish, Gaithersburg, MD  
 Thu, 30 January 2014  
 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

To volunteer, contact Kathleen Rooney in the parish office at (301) 948-5536 or email [vrooney@olvp.org](mailto:vrooney@olvp.org).



## Collection for Baby Items

The collection of much needed baby items has been moved from the Fourth Sunday of Advent to January 2014 in honor of the March for Life. The March is scheduled for 22 January 2014. New baby items can be donated after mass on 18-19 and 25-26 January, the weekends before and after the March.

The collection will include both the Shady Grove Pregnancy Center and Birthright of Montgomery County. The pregnancy aid centers specialize in providing confidential support for those with unplanned pregnancies. All their services are free. Both agencies were founded by OLVP parishioners.

This year, a particular effort is being made to highlight the March for Life to the families and the children in our parish. Students attending Faith Formation classes in Grades K through 8, and students at our parish school, Mary of Nazareth, will be given an opportunity to participate in the collection.

All parishioners are encouraged to celebrate the gift of life by donating diapers, wipes, formula, baby food and clothing for a newborn infant to 18 month old toddler. Items can be left in the alcove downstairs in the church on either weekend.

Representatives of both the Shady Grove Pregnancy Center and Birthright have expressed their deep appreciation for the parish's generosity in the past. They are grateful that the parish is continuing its support through this special collection in January. – *Fr. Ray*

**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](http://www.olvp.org)

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