

Our Parish Visitor

Our Lady of the Visitation Parish Newsletter

Christmas Mass Schedule

**Christmas Vigil
Thursday, 24 December**

***4:00 p.m. – Church**

***Passes Needed**

7:00 p.m. – Church

10:00 p.m. - Church

Special Music at 9:30 p.m.

**Christmas Day
Friday, 25 December**

9:00 a.m. – Church

11:00 a.m. – Church

Family Liturgy

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, 20 December 2015

6:00 p.m., Church



Volunteer to feed the Tree Sales Crew

Make your favorite recipe, donate food or beverages, or help in the kitchen as we feed the tree volunteers to keep them warm and energetic. For questions, contact Barb Moschella at (240) 988-1633 or Roberta Connors at (301) 869-8203. To sign up, go to:

www.olvp.org

*Click on the SignUpGenius Food
Donation Link*

*Click on the SignUpGenius
Kitchen Help Link*

Syro-Malabar Community

The members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Syro-Malabar Mission of Greater Washington are extremely grateful to Fr. Raymond Fecteau and Visitation Parish for welcoming our Community and allowing us to use Visitation Church and facilities for worship and other activities every Sunday from September 20, 2015 onwards.

At Visitation Parish, we hold Faith Formation classes at 1:30 p.m. The Eucharist is the focus of Christian faith and living; Mary is our help and guide. Hence, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help take place every Sunday at 2:00 p.m.; Holy Qurbana (Holy Mass in the Syro-Malabar Rite) is celebrated at 2:30 p.m., followed by fellowship and hospitality, parish meetings and other activities.

The words “Syro” and “Malabar” give insights into the origin and roots of this Apostolic Church. “Syro” connects the Church with the great traditions of Syriac Christianity. “Malabar” is used to denote the state of Kerala in India. The Syro-Malabar Church owes its origin to the apostolate of St. Thomas the Apostle who reached Kerala in the southern part of India in 52 AD. The members of the Church are the descendants of the first century converts to Christianity. Today, the Syro-Malabar Church is the second largest of the Eastern Catholic Churches. – *Fr. Mathew*

Christmas Tree Sale

**Fri, 04 December to
Sun, 13 December**

Weekends:

8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Weekdays:

3:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Special Guest

Sunday, 06 December

11 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Bring your camera - capture a
memory!**



Buy trees! Support your parish's biggest fundraiser of the year! Buy a beautiful Christmas tree (Fraser and Douglas Fir) cut fresh after Thanksgiving.

Volunteer to sell trees

No experience necessary. Parents and older children are welcome. Families of Confirmands in 6th, 7th and 8th grade, are especially encouraged to volunteer. For questions, contact Matt Baker at swingsft@comcast.net. To sign up, go to:

www.olvp.org

*Click on the SignUpGenius Tree
Link*

Connie, Thank You

With hearts full of gratitude, we bid farewell to Connie Johnson and her husband, David, as they relocate to Texas. Sodality will miss her ready smile, her spirit of friendship, and her love for anyone she meets.

She leaves behind a legacy of donating her time and talent to Visitation Parish. From welcoming new parishioners, to delivering meals to local homeless shelters, and in spearheading the collection for the Darnestown veterans, her tireless efforts have been a true inspiration.

Happy Trails to Connie and David. We will miss them. There is a lucky parish waiting eagerly to welcome them. Peace, and God bless you both!

Stewardship Council

Our parish would like to thank Michael Lerche for his dedicated service as Chair of the Stewardship Council. Mike is a long time parishioner. He helped guide the parish through several financial challenges and provided oversight for needed repairs in the church, rectory and parish barn. The Council wishes him well.

Steve Staton will succeed Mike as Chair of the Stewardship Council. Previously he served as Chair of the Stewardship Council's Fiscal Management Committee. Fr. Ray has appointed Nicholas Serenyi as the new Chair of the Fiscal Management Committee.

Our Lady of the Visitation Parish
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www.olvp.org

GIVE LE\$\$ TO THE IR\$ WITH AN ANNIVERSARY DONATION

Consider making a special, tax deductible contribution in honor of the parish's 25th anniversary to help maintain the beautiful church and grounds. There are three ways you can lessen your taxes by giving to Our Lady of the Visitation Parish before the end of the year:

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

Donations and/or questions can be directed to the pastor, Fr. Ray, at rfecteau@olvp.org or the parish bookkeeper, Kora Perrin, at 301-948-5536 x108. All donations to the parish made during 2015 are tax deductible in that year. Stock donations are credited to the donor at full face value on the date of transfer.



New Look For Website & Barn Check out our new looks!!!

Thanks to the generosity of several parishioners, our offices in the Parish Barn at 14135 Seneca Road in Darnestown are warm and airtight. New siding, new windows and new doors are reducing our heat/ac expenses while brightening our everyday environment.

Also, thanks to the generosity of a talented parishioner, our website at www.olvp.org has a new look as well. Keep your eyes on Visitation Parish – we are looking good!



New Days and Times for Pre-Lent Bingo and Volunteer Party

Pre-Lent Family Bingo, Friday 05 February 2016 at 6:00 p.m.: Come join our parish friends and families for a fun evening of bingo in Founders Hall on our new day and time.

Adult Volunteer Appreciation Party on Saturday, 06 February 2016: This year, our Volunteer Appreciation Party will be held immediately following the 5:00 p.m. Mass in Founders Hall. Come enjoy food, fun, music and friendship. All parishioners who have volunteered in any capacity in the parish are invited.

Watch the bulletin for further details on both events.

IMPORTANT DATES

November

29 Sun First Sunday of Advent

December

08 Tue *Feast of the Immaculate Conception*, Sacred Liturgy, 12:00 Noon, 5:00 p.m., Church Patronal Feast of the USA
20 Sun Christmas Pageant, 6:00 p.m.
24 Thu Christmas Eve
Parish Office Closes at noon
25 Fri Christmas Day
Parish Office Closed
31 Thu New Year's Eve
Parish Office Closes at noon

January

01 Fri *Feast of Mary Mother of God*
Sacred Liturgy, 12:00 noon
Parish Office Closed
03 Sun *Epiphany of the Lord*

Youth Reflections

Pope Francis...I was going to see Pope Francis! What an honor! Before seeing Pope Francis in person, I felt inclined to do some reading about the Holy Father. I was struck by how the Pope, such an influential man, is such a relatable person. He is a fan of *The Lord of the Rings*, enjoys basketball (as do I), and is said to be a good cook.

On the tarmac at Joint Base Andrews, I was in disbelief that I was soon to see the Pope. There were so many media crews and so much excitement in the stands as people yelled "Papa Francisco" and numerous other chants arose. It was a very humbling experience, seeing the Pope exit his little Fiat and walk up to the plane awaiting him. Being in his presence was such a special event and seeing him in person was a true once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that I will always remember. The entirety of the day's events was surreal. I feel honored to have been given the opportunity to take part in welcoming Pope Francis to Washington, D.C. I have heard Father Ray say that certain moments have made him especially "proud to be Catholic". Being in the presence of Pope Francis was one of those moments for me. – *Will Flaig, Northwest HS, Pastoral Council, Reader*

When I was a little girl, I could only dream about meeting the Pope. I thought it would only be a TV experience. Yet, I have met the Pope. It was a once-in-a-lifetime chance, and I got the honor of going on behalf of Father Ray and Father Mathew. When I was told the news, I was bouncing off the walls. I called my family to tell them the great news.

(Reflections – continued)

My parents and extended family were so proud of me. When it was the day to go, I was over the moon excited. The group met at Visitation Church; some faces were familiar and some were new. We quickly formed friendships.

Finally the Pope arrived and there were a lot of phones in the air taking pictures. It was so cool to see the Pope get out of his car and wave to us. My faith felt stronger as soon as the Holy Father got out of his car. I will always remember that he had a continuous smile on his face as he waved to the well-wishers. He was surrounded by Cardinal Wuerl, Bishop Holley and so many other dignitaries. He waved and started climbing up the stairs which had a red carpet. A woman in front of me yelled to Pope Francis, "Papa Francisco, a papal blessing please?" And he did! Then he went inside the plane.

When they closed the doors I felt like the luckiest person in the world. I was speechless. When the plane started moving I could see him waving in the little window. My last thought as the plane started to pull away and ascend was that all I wanted to do in life is see and experience the Holy Father again.

Going home was difficult, for those few precious minutes being in the presence of our Holy Father made me feel so much closer to Jesus and a stronger Catholic knowing that he is a descendant of Saint Peter and the worldly representative of Jesus Christ himself, our Lord and Savior. – *Hannah Kokinda, Mary of Nazareth School, Altar Server*

Sunday Church School

What a wonderful way to celebrate our church's 25th Anniversary by bringing our 3, 4 and 5 year old children to Jesus. Our hearts are filled with joy when they run to the altar with those beautiful smiles for a special blessing from Fr. Ray or Fr. Mathew; then they run to the elevator to come down to Church School.

We gather in Founders Hall for prayer, singing and Bible stories. The children learn about the same Scripture readings as the rest of the assembly. They are taught a very simplified message of the readings and are encouraged to share it with their parents. They also receive *Growing with the Gospel* handouts. In addition, the children have faith enrichment time through *Finding God*, our textbook. They are very attentive and ask many questions. Upon hearing the story of Noah one child asked "Will the people on Noah's Ark have babies?".

We are grateful to Margo Ball, Anna O'Dwyer and Tiffany Waddell for leading the children each Sunday and encouraging parents to participate when needed. If any teens are interested in helping, please call Mrs. O (301) 948-5536 or email molewack@olvp.org.

Shawl Ministry

Through the Prayer Shawl Ministry, parishioners make shawls and lap robes, which are blessed, and given to parishioners as a comfort in times of grief or illness. These items have always been gratefully received. If you like to knit or crochet and would enjoy becoming a part of this rewarding ministry, please call Ruth Duvall (301) 258-7566 or Rosemary Anderson (301) 926-4399.