

**Third Sunday
of Advent**

15 Dec 2013

Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church
FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA



what's coming

december

15 Sunday, Third Sunday of Advent

Coffee and Donuts after morning Masses in Parish Life Center. (CYM)
SCRIP Sales after all Masses. Christmas Card sales after Masses. Prayer Quilt Tying after Masses.
12noon-1:45pm, English as a Second Language Classes, 2nd Fl., Parish Life Center.
2pm, Korean Prayer Group, John Paul II House.
3:30pm, Las Posadas (bi-lingual), Parish Life Center.
6pm, Catholic Youth Ministry Dinner, Parish Life Center.
7-8:30pm, CYM Youth Group, Parish Life Center.

16 Monday, Advent Weekday

10am, Legion of Mary, Room 100, Parish Life Center.
7:30pm, Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, church. Topic: Salvation and Redemption, The Paschal Mystery. All parish adults welcome. 8:15pm, small group discussion continues for RCIA candidates in Parish Life Center.
8:15pm, Young Adult Ministry meeting, John Paul II House.

17 Tuesday, Advent Weekday

7pm, Advent Confessions, church.

18 Wednesday, Advent Weekday

6:30-8pm, YOUCAT - Youth Ministry Program, JP II House.
7pm, Advent Confessions, church.
8pm, Legion of Mary, Room 100, Parish Life Center.
8pm, Hope and Help Job Search Program, 2nd floor, Parish Life Center.

19 Thursday, Advent Weekday

9:30am, Craft Group, Room 100, Parish Life Center.
7pm, Spanish Prayer Group, John Paul II House.
7pm, Advent Confessions, church.

20 Friday, Advent Weekday

9:30am, St. Anne's Sisters in Faith (Mom's Group), John Paul II House
7pm, Advent Confessions, church.

21 Saturday, Advent Weekday (St. Peter Canisius, priest and doctor of the church)

8am, SHARE distribution, Parish Life Center.
Christmas Card Sales and SCRIP Sales after 5pm Mass.

22 Sunday, Fourth Sunday of Advent

Coffee and Donuts after morning Masses. (Thurman Brisben Center)
Christmas Card and SCRIP Sales after Masses.
No CYM Dinner or Youth Group tonight.

23 Monday, Advent Weekday (St. John of Kanty, priest)

No Religious Education Classes until January 6.
10am, Legion of Mary, Room 100, Parish Life Center.
7pm, Advent Confessions, church.
7pm, Las Posadas, Parish Life Center.
8pm, Young Adults Group, John Paul II House.

24 Tuesday, Advent Weekday

Parish Offices Closed. Mass schedule on page 6.

25 Wednesday, The Nativity of the Lord

Parish Offices Closed. Mass schedule on page 6.

26 Thursday, St. Stephen, the first martyr

Parish Offices Closed.



SAINT
MARY

of the
IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION
Roman Catholic Church



this week's
bulletin:

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catholic
education

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education

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outreach

NOTA BENE (*note well, please*):

- ☞ Please be sure to visit the display of **Handmade Olive Wood Carvings** and other articles outside the Church after all the Masses **this weekend!** Every purchase you make supports our Bethlehem Christian families who continue to endure much hardship in the Holy Land.
- ☞ Please note our special **Advent Confession Schedule** this coming week. Please plan to attend early in the season to avoid the last minute rush. We will hold Confession at **7pm** on: Tuesday, December 17; Wednesday, December 18; Thursday, December 19; Friday, December 20; and Monday, December 23. We will also have our regularly scheduled Confessions on Saturday, December 21 at 8am and 3:30pm. Confessions always end when a Mass begins. There will be no additional Confessions after Monday evening, December 23.
- ☞ Please see our **Christmas Mass Schedule** on page 6 of today's bulletin.
- ☞ **SCRIP is on sale** in the Parish Life Center after all Masses except Saturday 7pm and Sunday 2pm. SCRIP makes great stocking stuffers and **teacher gifts!** Please use SCRIP, and a percentage of what you spend will be applied to our school.
- ☞ Help support the church and the community by purchasing a **Christmas Tree** through the Knights of Columbus. Trees and wreaths are available **through December 22** until 8pm each day at St. Jude Catholic Church, 10725 Courthouse Rd., Spotsylvania.

from our pastor



Dear Good People of Saint Mary,

We have just recently completed compiling all the responses you graciously gave to our Parish Life Weekend call for ministry participation in parish groups and ministries. Thank you. If you haven't heard from someone already, it is now the work of our group and ministry leaders to contact all you who are interested in actively participating in various activities in the parish and you should be hearing from someone soon. If you don't, please give us a kind reminder.

Of the nearly 4,900 catalogues that were mailed to registered families, we received 765 responses, all very different, each beautiful in its expression. You see, a tangible commitment is more likely to be carried out than an "I'll get to it" in a rare moment of calm. But the overwhelming sense that I get as I read through your comments, nearly all of which were kind and constructive this year (thank you again!) is that there is a remarkable amount of love, charity, involvement, service, commitment that could never be measured by a survey or quantified into a total analysis of "who we are." I am humbled by the sheer immensity of the ways our people serve one another and never mention it or are never recognized for it.

Although the 765 responses, which constitute a 15% response rate, would be considered an excellent return for a direct mail piece to strangers, I think they are probably only scratching the surface of what we go about doing quietly in the name of Christ. Because the Church is not a professional association of dues-paying members and does not require any sort of annual report of our activities, we are not accustomed to the idea that it might actually be important for the benefit of all the faithful that we share what we are doing at this point in our lives, and how we are living the Gospel.

I would like to include here one such response I received attached to a returned commitment card. It was so inspiring to me, I

called up this person and asked if I could use it in the bulletin. Her message was for me, itself, a work of ministry and I hope it illustrates for you this idea of what I am talking about. You just never know where people are coming from, and what they are dealing with at the present time.

Dear Fr. Don,

My husband and I have been in the parish for the last three years. We are both graduates of Jesuit universities where we were deeply formed in service. I have participated in many ministries during our parish lives in Boston. Now, retired and in our early 70s, I am a 24/7 caregiver for my husband who has had Parkinson's disease for the past 20 years.

We were Eucharistic Ministers from 1976 to 1987. My husband has been rector in Cursillo many times and both of us on teams as well. I sponsored a candidate for RCIA. I was president of a parish organization and my goal was to sponsor a Laotian family from a refugee camp in Thailand. They eventually moved to Rhode Island and one of their sons graduated from Providence College. We were active members of the "Voice of the Faithful" in Boston when we were stunned by the sexual abuse scandal. I could go on and on!

My desire is to attend daily Mass (which was my habit) and be involved in as many parish activities as possible. Unfortunately, or fortunately, my altar is at my husband's side - helping him live as normal a life as possible for as long as possible. Thus, the limited offering of time, talent, and treasure.

In Christ's love.

And she signed her name. I wanted to share her message with the whole parish as a word of encouragement and inspiration for all of us in this Advent of hope-filled waiting. Trust in the deep goodness which God has placed in your hearts, and let this goodness become visible in you as we prepare for Jesus' coming.

God bless you.

Fr. Don

Preparing our Hearts

Holy Cross Academy and St. Mary Preschool students have begun to prepare for the coming of Jesus. Advent reminders and devotions fill the classrooms and are displayed in the hallways. First, Second and Third grade students are working together to remind us of the true meaning of Christmas. They are preparing their hearts in many beautiful ways. Mrs. Mabin's second graders are using daily devotionals to reflect upon and then writing letters to Jesus announcing how they plan to carry it out. Large Advent wreaths and countdown calendars decorate the hallways displaying reminders of this wonderfully exciting time of year.

Our preschoolers made Advent wreaths and calendars to remind them of the true meaning of Christmas and help them countdown to that special day. In middle school Advent candles are lit and daily scripture is read to help students prepare their hearts for the coming of Christ.

If you want to learn about our school and all that we can do for your child, please call us at 540-286-1600 or visit our website, www.holycrossweb.com. For St. Mary Preschool, please call 540-373-7553. Holy Cross Academy is a place where each child can flourish and grow. We would love to hear from you and will gladly give you a tour of our National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and tell you all about the wonderful things happening here.



*A National
Blue Ribbon
School, 2012*



*Students participate
in the preparation
activities of Advent.*

mass schedule

WELCOME
HOME for
CHRISTMAS



ST. MARY
of the
IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION
Roman Catholic Church

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22 —

FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT

Regular Mass schedule for Saturday/Sunday
Saturday evening Vigil Masses • **5:00 & 7:00pm**
Sunday Masses • **7:00, 8:30, 10:30am, 12:30pm, 2:00pm** (*en español/in Spanish*), **5:00pm & 7:01pm** at St. Mary Church
10:30am at Holy Cross Academy

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 —

CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL MASSES

4:00pm at St. Mary Church
4:00pm at Holy Cross Academy
6:30pm at St. Mary Church
6:30pm at Holy Cross Academy
8:30pm at St. Mary Church
11:00pm, Festival of Carols before **Midnight Mass**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25 —

CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

Midnight Mass at St. Mary Church
7:00, 8:30, 10:30am and **12:30pm** at St. Mary Church
2:00pm (*en español/in Spanish*) at St. Mary Church
*There is NO 10:30 Holy Cross Mass,
nor 5:00pm or 7:01pm Mass on Christmas Day.*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29 —

FEAST of the HOLY FAMILY

*Regular Saturday/Sunday Mass schedule of the parish
(see Dec. 22 above).*

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY, DEC. 31 - JAN. 1 —

SOLEMNITY of MARY

The **SOLEMNITY of MARY, MOTHER of GOD**
is a Holy Day of Obligation.
*Tuesday evening Vigil Mass **6:00pm** at St. Mary Church*
*Wednesday Masses **7:00, 8:30, 10:30am,** and **12:30pm** at St.
Mary Church, **2:00pm** (*en español/in Spanish*) at St. Mary Church*

SUNDAY, JAN. 5, 2014 —

SOLEMNITY of the EPIPHANY of the LORD

*Regular Saturday/Sunday Mass schedule of the parish
(see Dec. 22 above)*

St. Mary Prayer List

Please Pray for those who are sick or in need, especially: Helen Kozyra, Nancy Sturtevant, Joseph Bozicevic, Julie Fabula, Ree Messer, Martha Clements, Amelia McDevitt, Gerald Gardiner, Rico Santos, Rebecca Lowe, Erma Dean, Beverly Winful, Judy Larkin, Catherine Thompson, Lynn Jacobs, Katie Bailey, Holly Smith, Donald Estes, Frederick Brems, Jordan Rizer, Jeri Carone, Joseph Terreri, Dawn Walter, Anna Castagna, Tim Murray, Tom Gibbs, Douglas Moore, Bill Luck, Mary Ullmer, Georgene Burton, Joe O'Connor, David Silberman, Hieu Nguyen, Katie Billing, Audrey Wolski, Morgan Wolski, Ruth Weaver, Lucy Holzworth, David Arnold, Linda Moler, Matt Miller, Wilma Evans, Hoop Hooper, Rita Wainwright, Marianne Ford, Randy and Vicky Dehr, Velda Taylor, Deborah Ellia, Linda Kaila, Monica Lantigua, Bert DeVore, Betty Ann Dateno, Frank Moehler, Harold Gardiner, Garafano Family, Grant Family, Casey Family, LaCombe Family, Cecelia and Charles Lee, Cecelia Davis. Christopher Ford, Abraham Gomez Ramos, Joan Baker, Barbara Leone, Mary D'Amato, Sal Detrane, Tina Beaversdorf, Robert C. Murphy, Josephine Kreider, Eleanor Mitchell, Virginia Rose, Peter Fisher

Please Pray for all the men and women in our military and civilian support services overseas, especially: Javier Acosta, Leah April, Joel Asher, Miguel Ayala, Crystal Black, Ned Brownell, Jr., Derek Brostek, Christopher Burton, Matthew Campos, Leslie Capuano, Bruno Carriero, Jonathan Catalano, Frank Creamer, Sal Contreras, James Cook, Brad Cowan, Sam Del Grande, Glenn Dickinson, Aaron Doble, Anthony Dowden, John Dussault, Sandy Dussault, Travis Eades, Doug Ebanal, Christopher Eckert, Tim Evan, Christopher Ewers, Paul Fischer, Jonathan Fleming, Roberto Fuentes, Jason Geary, Ramon Guerra, Jr., Andrew Hamilton, Harry Hamilton, Ronnie Hamilton, Maria Harbeson, Andy Haskell, Raymond Haskell, Robert Haynes, Michael J. Herbek, James Helm, James Hoffnagle, Jr., Robert Horner, Danny L. Howard, Jr., Anthony Howell, Christine Kaila, Matthew Kearney, Daniel Kramer, Julio Laffitte III, Chris Lammers, Stephen Lammers, Scott LaRousse, Ryan Larsen, Jeffrey Lawrence, Kenneth Linstrom, Ryan Lynch, Sean Malloy, Josh Martin, Samantha Martin, Justin McClelland, Patrick McGroarty, Nathaniel McNamara, Roger Mitchell, Joseph Moore, Joseph Muldoon, Corey Nash, Mindy Niemann, James Kevin O'Donnell, Bryce Parson, Joshua K. Pastell, Sean Penczak, Dominick Joseph Petro, Scott Price, Nick Schulz, Duayne Scott, Tim Smetek, Andrew Smith, Douglas Stransky, Shawn Tupta, Heidi Urben, Christopher Williamson and Daniel Zeytoonain.

Please pray for all the faithful departed: especially Melanie Weart, Agnes Mardini, and all the benefactors of St. Mary Parish.

Daily Advent Prayer

Check out a webpage from rc.net. The address online is www.rc.net/wcc/advent.htm. You will find some pretty amazing reflections and prayers for Advent, including John Henry Newman's "To Watch with Christ," Bernard of Clairvaux's "A threefold coming of the Lord," and eight sermons by early Church Fathers including Saints Augustine, Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Irenaeus and Eusebius. These kinds of treasures can't be overlooked. It is such a blessing that these resources are available to the Church.

Pro Life Reflection

When Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego, the Aztecs were practicing human sacrifice. Mary's image brought the message that God was with them – so much, in fact, that He became a child carried in Mary's womb. This gave them hope, and they stopped their human sacrifice and became Christian. *Jesus, through Our Lady of Guadalupe may we spread Your hope everywhere.*

What Is Gaudete Sunday?

Gaudete Sunday is the Third Sunday of Advent. The *Introit* for Gaudete Sunday is taken from Philippians 4:4,5: "*Gaudete in Domino semper*" ("Rejoice in the Lord always").

Unlike Lent, Advent is not a penitential season, though the priest normally wears purple vestments. The color purple is one more of royalty than passion, a redder purple that is used in Lent. Still, the work of waiting in hope is difficult work! But on Gaudete Sunday, having passed the midpoint of Advent, the Church uses the color of rose to provide us with encouragement to continue our spiritual preparation—especially prayer—for Christmas.

For this same reason, the third candle of the Advent wreath, first lit on Gaudete Sunday, is traditionally rose-colored.

Daily Mass Intentions and Readings

December

16 MONDAY

6:30 Fr. Michael Isenberg
9am Nguyen children
Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Mt 21:23-27

17 TUESDAY

6:30 Virginia Mercado
9am Catherine & John Sturtevant
Gn 49:2, 8-10; Mt 1:1-17

18 WEDNESDAY

6:30 +Richard Onofrey
9am +Raymond Corpe
Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25

19 THURSDAY

6:30 +Helen Novick
8:20* Sr. Mary Elizabeth Hoffer, SSND
9am Ismael Bermudez
Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25

20 FRIDAY

6:30 +David Niederkofler
9am +Helen Novick
Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38

21 SATURDAY

9am +James Mooney Cook
5pm +Emmanuel Lucia
7pm +Lawrence Baker
Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Lk 1:39-45

22 SUNDAY

7am +Addie Comerford
8:30 +Theresa Boehringer
10:30 +John Murphy
10:30* +Jacob Storck
12:30pm Lance Schulte
2pm Elvire Lherisson
5pm For the Parish
7:01pm Mr. & Mrs. Colangelo
Is 7:10-14; Ps 24; Rom 1:1-7;
Mt 1:18-241

*indicates Mass at Holy Cross Academy

www.stmaryfred.org

1009 Stafford Ave., Fredericksburg, VA 22401

SUNDAY MASS	Saturday Vigil 5 & 7pm Sunday 7, 8:30, 10:30am, 12:30, 2pm (Spanish), 5pm, 7:01pm 10:30am at Holy Cross Academy
DAILY MASS	Mon.-Fri.: 6:30 & 9am; Sat., 9am First Friday 8pm Holy Days of Obligation, as announced
DEVOTIONS	Adoration & Benediction, Wed., 7-9pm Novena with Exposition, Mon., 7-7:30pm All Night Adoration, First Friday Miraculous Medal Novena, Mon., after 9am Mass Divine Mercy, Wed., 3pm
CONFESSION	Wed., 7-9pm; Sat., 8am & 3:30pm, or by appt.
PARISH OFFICE	540-373-6491, fax 371-0251 stmary@stmaryfred.org Mon.-Fri., 8:30am - 4:30pm; students staff office weekdays until 9pm, Saturdays 9-5pm, Sundays 9:30-1:30pm Pastor, Fr. Don Rooney Fr. Keith Cummings Fr. Stephen Holmes Fr. Lino Rico Rostro Deacon Alberto Bernaola Deacon Dick Delio Executive Assistant, Rick Caporali Business Manager, Elaine Stanislawski Director of Sacred Music, David Mathers Administrative Assistant, Kelly Keiser Secretary, Mary Fitch
HOLY CROSS ACADEMY	540-286-1600 250 Stafford Lakes Parkway Fredericksburg, Virginia 22406-7234 Principal, Sr. Susan Louise Eder, O.S.F.S.
ST. MARY PRESCHOOL	373-7553 Director, Nanci Scharf
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE	373-6491 Director, Aristides Lucas Associate Director, Karen Sturtevant
YOUTH MINISTRY	373-6491 Director, Leo Chavarria
BAPTISMS	Parish registration (90 days) and class required. Please contact the parish office to schedule the date at least four weeks in advance.
MARRIAGE	Parish registration required; contact parish six months in advance to begin preparation.
JOIN US	New Family Registration meetings are held monthly in the church on fourth Sundays, following the 10:30 Mass. Please notify us of any telephone/address changes.

Weekly Offertory

Offertory Collection for 12/8/13	36, 108.
Annual Catholic Charities Collection	9,216.
Parish Building Fund (addl)	3,288.
Poor Box for St Vincent de Paul (2 wks ending 12/08/13)	1,082.
SCRIP Profit week ending 12/08/13	416.
YTD profit	3,153.

Thank you for your continued generosity! Please remember to use your Offertory Envelopes to ensure the accuracy of your end of year statement. The "Children's Envelope" proceeds will not be recorded on family statements.

Children's Offering for December

The "We Care Project" was initiated to awaken in students an awareness of the needs of others, right in their own diocese, and to encourage students to implement the Gospel Message by making their own personal sacrifices to raise money for Catholic Charities' Programs which serve the poor in our Diocese. All donations made by the children will be sent to Catholic Charities by our parish on behalf of the children.

Shop with SCRIP

Win a Meat and Cheese Gift Box!
This month we are partnering with the Share Program and giving away a Sausage and Cheese Gift Box to the family who orders the most SCRIP. The totals will be from sales starting November 23 to December 20. The package will be delivered on December 22 just in time for the holiday! The package includes 3 Beef Summer Sausages and three cheeses. Online SCRIP orders will count for double so start ordering today. SCRIP Gift Cards are a great way to shop for all your Christmas presents or just to send as a gift!

To set up an account online at www.shopwithscrip.com and use our school code, 7B876EBB188L2, so Holy Cross Academy gets credit for your purchase. If you have any questions about SCRIP please email Torie Baldwin at scripcoordinator@holycrossweb.com or 571-330-3448. Thanks for using SCRIP!

Parish Christmas Collection for Special Charities - Dec. 14 & 15

Every year at Christmas we take up a special collection for charity. None of the money collected stays at St. Mary, but is distributed as a gift from our Parish to different charities. Today's collection will be taken up for the following:

The Holy Land Christians Society for the benefit of the Creche Orphanage in Bethlehem in the Holy Land. The orphanage is managed by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. The Crèche provides services of high quality for children and people of the Palestinian Authority Area and continues to function thanks to the support of its benefactors.

The Oblate Sisters of St. Francis de Sales run a school, the Father Brisson Institute in Alausi, Ecuador which is in very bad condition. Contributions from our parish will greatly assist the Sisters in making the necessary repairs.

The monthly Community Dinners in Fredericksburg for those in need receives much financial assistance and volunteer support from our parish.

We know you will be generous, as you have always been, and we thank you for sharing the joy of this holy season with those who are less fortunate.

Articles must be submitted two weeks prior to publication. Send articles to stmary@stmaryfred.org. Thanks!

Philippines Typhoon Relief

Thanks for the abundant donations for the suffering people of the Philippines. The collection has now ended, and we ask that your donations of clothing and other necessities not be deposited in the church, nor in the Parish Life Center. From the day the plea went out donations began coming in. We are truly living the Gospel teachings of sharing our time, talent and treasure and teaching our children to do the same.

Medals of the Immaculate Conception

The blessing of the medals was well received. We issued well over 1100 medals to our students.

The Meaning of the Miraculous Medal

The front of the medal depicts Mary standing on a globe, with the head of a serpent beneath her feet. Circling the oval-shaped medal is the sig-

nature, "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." On the reverse, twelve stars (representing the 12 Apostles, who formed the first Church) surround a large "M," from which a cross arises. The large "M" stands for Mary as Mother. Below the "M," the medal depicts two flaming hearts. The flames represent the burning love Jesus and Mary have for us. The left heart, circled with thorns, represents Jesus. The right heart, pierced by a sword, symbolizes Mary.

The Association of the Miraculous Medal, in Perryville, Mo., notes that there is no superstition or magic connected with the Miraculous Medal, nor is it "a good luck charm." Rather, it is "a testimony to faith and the power of trusting prayer. Its greatest miracles are those of patience, forgiveness, repentance, and faith."

CYM Youth Group Tonight - Dec. 15

Sunday December 15 our High School Youth Group will have an Ugly Christmas sweater party. We will have games, prizes, a short powerful talk on the meaning of Christmas and 15 – 20 minutes with our Lord in Adoration. This is a perfect night to celebrate the gift of Christ with our church family. Ugliest Sweater gets a really nice prize so hit up those Goodwill stores!

There will be no High School Youth Group on December 22 or 29 due to the Christmas holiday. Also, no YOUCAT on December 25 or January 1. Enjoy!

Help at Dec. 30 Community Dinner

St. Mary is in charge of running the Community dinner, Monday December 30. The dinners are at St. Georges Episcopal Church, in downtown Fredericksburg, on the corner of Princess Anne and George Street. The dinners serve the homeless population in our area. St. Mary is in charge of providing the help for this night. Preparations begin at 2pm, meals are served around 5pm and cleanup begins around 6pm. People can come

anytime in between. This is a great way of getting our young people to witness their faith and also to serve our brothers and sisters. Please join us!

Life is VERY Good

Wednesday, January 22, St. Mary Youth Ministry is heading to the Patriot Center and Washington DC for a morning of prayer and praise at the Diocesan Life is Very Good Rally. We will have Mass with Bishop Loverde, hear musical performances by Josh Blakesley Band and inspirational speaker Mary Bielski and Fr. Agustino Torres, CFR. Then we will head to the March for Life in Washington DC in prayerful protest and march to the Supreme Court for an end to Roe vs. Wade. Permission slips available on website. Spaces are limited and they fill up fast!

youth



liturgy is life

Hispanic Ministry “Posadas de Navidad”

All parishioners are invited to join us in a special celebration! On December 15 we will start with “Las Posadas.” The first one will be held in the Parish Life Center at 3:15pm; it will be bilingual and is sponsored by the Outreach Committee. We would appreciate it if you could donate a can of food to help the Food Bank of Fredericksburg.

Ministerio Hispano “Posadas de Navidad”

Se les invita a todos los feligreses a la primer posada del mes de Diciembre. El 15 de Diciembre tendremos nuestra primer posada y será en el Centro de Vida Parroquial a las 3:15pm. Todos son bienvenidos! Esta posada será bilingue y es patrocinada por el Outreach Committee. Se estarán recogiendo productos enlatados, los cuales serán donados al Banco de comida de Fredericksburg. Gracias!

Help and Hope for Meaningful Employment

If you are unemployed or underemployed, the General Thomas F. Meagher Division, Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), has established a program to help you.

We meet twice each month. Times and locations are: 7pm on the first Tuesday of each month at the St. Patrick parish hall and 8pm on the third Wednesday of each month at the St. Mary Parish Life Center (December 18).

The program provides guidance and networking opportunities to improve your job search. Help areas include resume writing, interviewing, and networking.

For additional information, please contact AOH Brother Chuck Payne at aohchuck@gmail.com.

St. Anne’s Sisters in Faith

Join us Friday, December 20, as we continue to delve into *Courageous Women*. We pray you can join us for 9am Mass followed by refreshments at 9:45 at the JP II house. We will

discuss lesson 7. Our next book study beginning in January will be Dr. Ray Guarendi’s new book, *Marriage, small steps, big rewards*. Babysitting is available. Please contact Rocio at Rocio.o.atkinson@gmail.com or Suzi Eggleston at 540-834-0752 for more information.

The group will take a two week Christmas break. We will not meet December 27 or January 3. We will resume our meetings starting on January 10, 2014. We wish all of you a most blessed and holy Christmas season.

Over 40 Singles Fun & Fellowship - Dec 22

Join the group next Sunday, December 22 after the 8:30am Mass at Panera in Central Park. This is a great way to get to know people in the group and offer your suggestions for future activities.

They have many fun events planned throughout the spring. Contact Kathy at ksaladino2009@comcast.net to get on the distribution list.

Keep Christ in Christmas

The Knights of Columbus continue the annual Christmas card sale. With the increase of secularism, it is important to keep Christ at the center of the Advent and Christmas Seasons, and sending religious Christmas cards is the perfect way to do this. Please stop by the table after Mass now through December 22 to purchase your Christmas cards and other items.

Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale - Last Week!

The Knights of Columbus Christmas Tree sales fundraiser continues through Sunday, December 22.



life is mission

There is only one week left to get your Virginia grown Fraser Fir tree.

Trees will be sold at St Jude Catholic Church - 10725 Courthouse Rd., Spotsylvania on weekends from 8am to 8pm and weekdays from 3pm to 8pm, but not during Mass.

If you buy a live tree please consider helping the Knights of Columbus with this important fundraiser and buy from us. Our profits go back to charity and church support. Questions about the Tree Sales can be directed to Tim Fleming at tim.g.fleming@comcast.net or Mark Williams at mark.a.williams64@gmail.com.

Theology Courses at Christendom Graduate School

Registration is now open for spring theology courses at the Christendom Graduate School. Earn your MA in theology or take a course for personal enrichment! Courses at our convenient Alexandria campus include Liturgy and Sacraments, Catholic Social Teaching, Christology, Philosophical Errors, New Testament, Moral Theology, and Introduction to Ecclesiastical Latin. We have several online courses including two new real-time, inter-active online courses on the The Synoptic Gospels and The Pentateuch taught by Dr. Sebastian Carnazzo. The semester runs from January 13 until May 3, and there is a special discounted rate for catechists, seniors, and religious who wish to audit courses. For more information, please visit www.christendom.edu/grad, call 703-658-4304, or email us at NDGS@Christendom.edu.

World Wide Marriage Encounter in 2014

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 sacrament by attending one of the upcoming Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekends in 2014 on Feb. 21-23, Sep. 12-14, Nov. 14-16 in Herndon, VA; Apr. 11-13 in Fredericksburg, VA. Early registration is highly recommended. For more information visit our website at: renewmarriage-vanorth.org or call 703-378-4150.

Giant A+ Bonus Bucks

Please consider designating our parish school, Holy Cross Academy, when you use your Giant Food A+ Bonus card. It has to be done annually. Giant Bonus Bucks School Id: 02320

Al Anon Surviving the Weekend Group

Al Anon is for those who have been affected by someone else's drinking, and members come together to learn a better way of life and how to find happiness. It's important to know that you are not alone and there is help. There is an Al Anon meeting every Saturday at 10am in Room 204 of the St. Mary Parish Life Center.

Go Forth with Hearts on Fire

"In this pastoral letter," writes Bishop Loverde, "I hope to provide a tool box for you to become a great evangelist in this age." Read our Bishop's call for each of us to "take specific and concrete steps in drawing closer to Jesus

Christ and proclaiming Him to others" online (in English and Spanish). The letter includes a study guide, practical takeaways, and suggestions. Download Go Forth on your laptop, tablet, smart phone, or order copies of the letter at www.heartsonfire.arlingtondiocese.org.



Religious Vocations

"I send my messenger ahead of you to prepare your way before you." Are you called to be sent by Jesus as a priest, deacon, sister, or brother? Call Father J.D. Jaffe at 703-841-2514 or email jjaffe@arlingtondiocese.org.

“as I have done for you

Circle of Love Ministry

The CCW would like to share an opportunity to live Christ's words by loving our neighbors. Our Circle of Love committee wants you to be part of our mission by joining us in visiting the sick and home bound, providing needed rides to church or doctors, sharing meals with families in crises, babysitting, and fulfilling a variety of other needs. If you have a few hours to share and would be willing to join us, please send your name and e-mail or telephone number to emgccw@gmail.com and you will be contacted. We look forward to having you on our team.

If any parishioners are in need of assistance, please contact the CCW Circle of Love Ministry at emgccw@gmail.com or call the Parish Office.

St. Mary Giving Tree

Thanks to everyone who has participated with this year's Giving Tree. Please remember to bring your items back by December 15. We have the privilege of supporting the following charities this year:

- Mary's Shelter
- Micah Ministries
- Greenfield Nursing Home
- Woodmont Nursing Home
- Golden Living Assisted Living
- Refugee Services
- Hope House
- St. Vincent De Paul

2013 Catholic Charities Christmas Collection

Year-end giving still available
Thank you for your support of Catholic Charities this year. Your support is vital to our annual operating needs, so thank

you for your time, talent, and treasure. If you missed the opportunity to give, however, you may still do so. You can make your year-end gift in support of Catholic Charities by going online to www.ccca.net. The mission is vital to the diocese's work to serve the poor with Christian love and compassion—and your support enables us to perform these works. As you reflect on the many needs within our parish community, please prayerfully consider Catholic Charities' mission to ease the suffering of people in parish communities across the diocese. All gifts stay in the diocese. Visit www.ccca.net to learn more or to make a year-end gift.

Cold Weather = Socks

It's that time again....Cold Weather Shelter is now open and from now until March St. Mary volunteers will be going on Tuesday nights. Each time the parish serves at the Shelter, we are to bring thirty pairs of white socks.

We need socks all winter long. Please drop off your donation of white socks to the Parish Office.

Catholic Charities Baby Closet

Our Catholic Charities baby closet is in desperate need of DIAPERS, WIPES, FORMULA, BOTTLES, and BABY FOOD. We provide emergency resources to parents/guardians with children younger than 24 months. Donations may be delivered to St. Matthew's Thrift Store, 10639 Courthouse Rd. Fredericksburg, 22407, in the Breezewood Shopping Center next to Food Lion, Monday-Friday, 10am-3pm and Saturday, 9:30am-2:30pm.

For Unto Us a Child Is Born, Christ the Savior! Give a Gift for Life

This Advent, include a Gift for Life on your Christmas List, by supporting Project Rachel or the Gabriel Project. It is easy to make a small, tax-deductible contribution as a gift in the name or memory of a family member or friend, and it will make a big difference in a woman's life. You have the opportunity to assist a frightened young woman who has just learned she is pregnant, or a woman who opted to abort her child and is now experiencing the after effects of her choice. Your gift directly supports the cost of an expectant mother's prenatal vitamins, or counseling for a woman who is experiencing the emotional distress of an abortion. Please pick up a flyer in the vestibule of the Church and follow the directions, or go to the following link to donate online: www.arlingtondiocese.org/giftforlife.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The SVDP Thrift Shop is located in Greenwich Plaza off Lafayette Blvd and open Monday-Saturday, 10am-4pm, 540-898-9066. The shop is supported by your donations of furniture, clothing and household goods. Monetary donations may be placed in the Poor Boxes near the church doors. The proceeds from the Thrift Shop and your donations are used to help families in need in our community.

Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels (MOW) is a program that provides a cold noontime meal and a hot evening

so you must also do”

meal for individuals who are incapacitated and cannot obtain or prepare food for themselves, and do not live with someone who can provide these services for them. Eligibility is not dependent upon age or income. Clients pay for the meals, which are prepared by Mary Washington Hospital and delivered Monday through Friday by volunteers. The current cost is \$4.25 per day and the delivery area is within a 4-mile radius of the hospital. Contact the Rappahannock Area Agency on Aging at 540-371-3375 if you want more information on this program.

The MOW Program needs volunteer drivers! Drivers are part of a dynamic team that delivers meals to elderly or incapacitated members of the community. MOW is looking for a commitment of at least once a month but interested individuals may drive more often, if they so desire. Each driving run will take approximately two hours and is done using the volunteer's personal vehicle. Contact Pam Ray at 540-720-3966 if you are interested.

Hope and Healing this Holiday Season

For those who are suffering from the after-effects of abortion, do not be afraid, for nothing is impossible with God. Now is the time to make peace with your past. Project Rachel offers days of prayer and healing, retreats, and referrals to understanding priests and counselors. For confidential help, call 703-841-HOPE (4673) or email info@helpafterabortion.org. One woman wrote, "The retreat was peaceful, safe, comforting and freeing. It is truly a transforming experience."

Mary's Shelter A Pro-Life Ministry

Volunteer Interview--Rita Pinion

Rita was born in Dover, NH and moved to the Washington, DC area to work for the government. She retired in 1994 and realized that she was too young to stop working. She looked into various volunteer opportunities and her service work was with ECHO (Ecumenical Council Helping Others) in Woodbridge, VA. She was "hooked" on service work from then on.

How did you first get involved with Mary's Shelter and begin volunteering?

When I moved to Fredericksburg, I began volunteering at the St. Vincent de Paul thrift store. A few years later, while working there, I met a new volunteer, Monika Felock. While talking with her, she mentioned she had expressed an interest in volunteering at Mary's Shelter to organize their "storage" closet. It sounded interesting and challenging so I said I'd also be interested in helping her. The "storage" closet is now called the "Boutique."

What do your volunteer duties include?

The Boutique is now completely organized. My duties now are to sort the donations and help keep it organized.

What is the best part of volunteering at Mary's Shelter?

The sense of accomplishment in that I am a small part of a wonderful Christian outreach program who are helping the less fortunate to have a safe home for their babies as they are brought into this world.

What have you learned or gained from your volunteer experience at Mary's Shelter?

I have been made even more aware of how many young women coming from various difficult situations are in need of this safe environment.

How do you find the time to volunteer?

It is a matter of setting priorities. My service work is top priority with me. However, I also make sure to balance my life, making time to socialize and have fun.

What would you recommend to others who want to get more involved with Mary's Shelter through volunteer work?

I promote service work with Mary's Shelter at every opportunity by telling people what it is all about. When they see my enthusiasm (which I'm told is contagious), that speaks for itself. If they are not able to do service work, they often find other ways to help, i.e. monetary donations or by purchasing needed supplies and donating them to the Boutique.

What is the best thing about Mary's Shelter?

That's easy--it's seeing the new mothers with their infants, then watching them grow in a healthy environment.

If you're interested in volunteering at Mary's Shelter, please email Theresa, Volunteer Coordinator, for more information! volunteers@marysshelterva.org