



PARISH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2017

SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT



MESSAGE FROM FATHER RON

Dear Parishioners,

This past spring we have celebrated the gifts and grace of the Lord Jesus as members of our parish family have drawn closer to the Lord Jesus in their journey with Him. On February 25th, Bishop Knestout celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation for 122 of our young people. We welcomed 11 members of our RCIA class into the Church at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday, April 15th, and 135 second graders received their First Holy Communion on May 6th.

We celebrated our parish feast day, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, on June 18th. This celebration called on us to reflect on the gift of the Body and Blood of Jesus as He gives us the gift of Himself to be the source and summit of our lives. Jesus feeds us and nourishes us as we make our journey home through this world to the Father's house. As we believe with all our hearts that Jesus is present in the Eucharist, we ask Him to help us to readily recognize Him in the faces of those around us especially our family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and even strangers.

As we search out His face in those around us, we become the ambassadors of His mercy as we serve the spiritual and corporal needs of our sisters and brothers.



Artwork by Penelope Koutrouvelis, Second Grade

Please remember Deacon Harry Prieto in your prayers as he begins his vocation as a priest; he was ordained on June 24th at the Cathedral in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He served here at Blessed Sacrament during the past year while completing his studies at Theological College.

As was announced at the weekend Masses earlier this month, Cardinal Wuerl has asked me to take on a new assignment as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Bowie, Maryland, effective July 12th. Father Bill Foley, the pastor of St. Patrick's Parish, Norbeck, Maryland, will be your new pastor. He is no stranger to Blessed Sacrament since he grew up here in the parish.

I am grateful for the many kindnesses extended to me during my six years here at Blessed Sacrament especially by the priests, deacons, staff, and you, the parishioners. Your example of generosity to our parish and so many others is a testament to your commitment to Jesus and the work He calls us to do each day. By sharing your gifts and talents and supporting and participating in 95 ministries, you truly live the corporal and spiritual works of mercy as you reach out to serve our community and especially our less fortunate sisters and brothers and particularly those with special needs. Personally, I will always remember the kindness and support that you gave to me when my Mom died in March 2012 after her brief battle with lung cancer.

Once again, thank you for all you do for our parish by sharing your time, talent, and treasure. Be assured of my daily prayers for you and your families as I move on to Sacred Heart. Have a blessed and safe summer. Continue to draw closer to Jesus and deepen your relationship with Him by allowing some extra time for the renewal of your heart and soul. Along with attending Mass on the weekend, set some time aside for prayer, spiritual reading, daily Mass, and visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Peace,
Father Ron

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Artwork: Blessed Sacrament School students under the guidance of their art teacher, Judy Kearns

A SALUTE TO OUR PASTOR

In June, 1989, Ronald A. Potts, a native of Leonardtown, Maryland, who grew up as a member of Our Lady of the Wayside Parish in Chaptico, was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Washington. For the next twenty-eight years, he has faithfully ministered to God's people, bringing Christ to them daily and living the Gospel that he preaches.

After serving as parochial vicar at St. John, Hollywood, and St. Jane de Chantel, Bethesda, Father Ron served as pastor at Sacred Heart Parish, La Plata, at Mother Seton Parish, Germantown, and, since 2011, at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Now Cardinal Wuerl, the Archbishop of Washington, has assigned Father as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Bowie.

An outstanding role model to his flock, Father Ron truly lives his conviction of constantly being open to what the Lord is calling one to do each day. During his time as Blessed Sacrament's pastor, the parish increased the number of ministries

and activities as new ideas complemented many long-cherished parish traditions. Father Ron has given new meaning to the term, "pastoral", always being there for the requests and needs of his flock for consolation, inspiration, ideas, and suggestions, always providing a new and different way of interpreting events. His generous and devoted service includes countless Masses, baptisms, marriages, funerals, meetings, spiritual guidance and counseling.

A man of subtle humor, we will also remember many lighter moments and fun times. Father's role as tour guide on the many local pilgrimages (see poem on the next page) evidenced yet another of his many talents.

As Father transitions from the "church on the circle" to the "church with colonial roots" (Father's newly-assigned parish began in 1741) the parish salutes and thanks him for his dedicated and caring service and wishes him many blessings, graces, and joys.

SISTER MARIETTA RETIRES

FORTY-FIVE YEARS AT BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL



She broke all records for educational longevity at Blessed Sacrament School; she is a Holy Cross Sister whose devoted and loving service to the children and their parents imprints her in the minds of her students. She is the unforgettable Sister Marietta.

It was the eyes; no, it was the smile; no, it was the genuine caring manner that made Sister so special. Students directly affected by Sister testify to her unique patience, her loving spirit, and her generous assistance. She taught them about God, she taught them about learning; she taught and lived real Love.

First grade is a tough year for many students, but Sister Marietta always made serious learning into

a fun activity. Fellow teachers attest to Sister's unbelievable patience, her cheerfulness and her strong Faith. Her religious habit changed with the Church; her room changed with the school, but Sister was unchanging in her commitment. Now, after teaching for four and a half decades and even teaching some of the children of her former students, Sister will not have to check the clock, her gradebook or the day's schedule of activities. She will have some time without bells and school books, boots and mittens. (Can you imagine how many thousand mittens she has put on in 45 years?)

No one forgets their first grade teacher, and so both recent Blessed Sacrament students and those from 45 years ago will always remember Sister Marietta. Indeed, the entire parish salutes and pays tribute to Sister. We wish her many well-deserved happy and healthy years of retirement.

ONE DOOR OPENS, ANOTHER CLOSES

“HOPE” IN MARY’S LAND HOLY HOUSES

POEM AND PHOTOS BY JOE BOZIK

To our dear, dear Fr. Ron,
Leaving us much too, too soon.
But not before one more Faith Journey,

To Carmel of southern Maryland,
And to St. Clement’s Island,
With famous crab cakes at Captain Billy.

Unique amongst us pilgrims
Is the “hope” we each affirms,
For no rain on this cloudy Monday!

Regardless; hope, still so filled us,
As Fr Ron lead prayers to Jesus,
For clearing skies and a safe journey.

Seems this journey’s full of symbolism,
Of many doors opening, some closing -
And happening each step of the way.

Yet the beauty of this irony
Is the hope-filled quality,
Of each “door” symbol of our journey.



Like Fr. Ron holding doors open well,
For our Mass at the Chapel Carmel,
On the site of the original building.

With nine Sisters in a side area,
Attending Mass in heartfelt prayer,
Sweetly adding their voices, singing.



The original four Carmelite Sisters,
Were the first of any women orders,
In original thirteen colonies.

Started in seventeen ninety,
At Maryland’s Port Tobacco city,
Moving to Baltimore in eighteen thirties.

And so another door was closed...yes,
Then in nineteen seventy-six,
Sisters returned “home” to Port Tobacco.

After Mass, we toured two restored buildings,
Of nine original, these last two standing -
And Fr. Ron closed house door for us to go.

Lunch at Captain Billy restaurant,
Was delicious and very pleasant,
Closed on Mondays, but opened just for us!

Our next stop was St. Clement’s Island
At rainy Colton’s Point, Maryland,
And no tour boats due to slipping issues.

Yet another “door” closed due to weather,
But on-site museum opened their door!
We visited local, picture-filled rooms.

Knowledgeable docents were eager,
With us, their facts and history, to share,
So, not all was lost and gone to ruins.

We learned how Mary’s Land came to be,
Though, not named for our Blessed Mary,
But for one of the English King’s own.

Meditating on our journey’s event,
We returned to Blessed Sacrament,
Reflecting on those doors closed and open.

Cherishing the Holy sites on our tours,
Realizing the faith of early settlers -
Their “hope” in Mary’s Land’s holy houses.

Of many doors opening, some closing,
Their faith and hope so sustaining,
As one door opens, another closes.



Artwork by Lauren Conely, Seventh Grade

*It is with gratitude and thanksgiving,
Fr. Ron, for us, in these journeys, giving,
Your “home-spun” passion for these sites.*

*We wish you many more open doors,
Filled with hope, health, and more,
And perhaps, more Faith Journey trips.*

SCOUT COURT OF HONOR

By KEITH MORRISON

On May 31st, the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacramento's Boy Scout Troop 90 celebrated its spring Court of Honor at the parish center. The Court of Honor is a ceremony where the scouts honor their fellow scouts for rank advancement and merit badges earned since January. Mark Anderson served as the Master of Ceremony. Christopher Morrison, Troop 90's Senior Patrol Leader, started the ceremony with the Color Guard, followed by a special presentation of the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Scouts earned four different rank advancement levels and 13 merit badges and awards.

Troop 90 scouts and parents also recognized five scouts who earned their prestigious rank of Eagle Scout this school year: Ryan McCarragher, Jack Schwartz, Jack Mendenhall, Jimmy Bailey, and Kassian O'Keefe.



Photos courtesy of Sharon Talbott

Blessed Sacramento's Boy Scout Troop 90 meets on Wednesday nights at 7:30 during the school year and has monthly campouts and hikes. This year's activities included campouts at the Shenandoah River State Park and Deep Creek Lake and a weekend ski/snowboarding trip at Seven Springs, Pennsylvania.

The scouts continue their adventures over the summer with a week-long camping trip at Goshen Scout Reservation, Virginia, and a week-long canoe trip at the Northern Tier High Adventure Base in Boundary Waters, Minnesota. Troop 90 has already scheduled a 60 plus mile, week-long backpacking trip in Philmont, New Mexico, during the summer of 2018.

Congratulations to all the scouts of Troop 90 for another successful year!!

STUDENT SUMMER ART STUDIES



Student artists inside the Art Studio
@ Blessed Sacramento School; Photo by Judy Kearns

Art Camp for students of all faiths has begun! Below is a list of the remaining sessions being offered from 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. in the Blessed Sacramento art studio. The program's focus is on creativity and exploration. Students will learn about variety of art materials and artists while having fun and making new friends! Cost includes all supplies and a snack.

Session 2: July 3-7 (no class July 4); \$192

Session 3: July 10-14; \$240

Students of all ages who attended past summers' camps have reported having great fun while learning and enjoying creative experiences developing their own art in various mediums. For more information, contact Judy Kearns: jkearns@blessedsacramentdc.org.

BULLDOGS CELEBRATE A DECADE OF RUNNING



Over three hundred runners and walkers began their early May 20th Saturday morning under a cloudy sky—read, runners' talk: ideal weather—with a prayer led by Father D'Silva on the Blessed Sacrament School playground.

Runners then gathered on Brookville Road, and with the sound of a police car siren, they were off! With the support of a Montgomery County police team who controlled traffic, runners ran a 5K race through the both flat and hilly terrain of the Chevy Chase neighborhood. They finished at Blessed Sacrament School where winners were announced and everyone partook in light refreshments.

Another team of walkers began forty-five minutes later. Generally younger, and slower paced, these walkers, nevertheless, proved to be excellent Bulldog supporters and future running candidates.

A spirit of pride, fun, and excitement pervaded as members of many generations gathered to support the school and its famous mascot.

If you missed this year's event, mark your calendar for next May and check out the Blessed Sacrament School calendar. It's a scene not to be missed, even if you are running!



Photos by Pat Watson

MIX MATCH DAY

SPIRIT WEEK 2017 @ BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL



Photos courtesy of Nancy Ryan

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

GROW YOUR FAITH: UPCOMING FALL PROGRAMS TO CONSIDER

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

By MARY DONOVAN

This fall, the Wednesday Evening Bible Study will again use selections from the Great Adventure video and discussion series produced by Ascension Press and narrated by theologian, Jeff Cavins. These programs provide a simple Catholic approach to Scripture study that treats the Bible story in its historical, cultural, and literary context. Each student also has independent Internet access to the videos for any sessions they may miss or want to repeat.

Back by popular demand: in September, we will repeat the four-week program, *Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible*, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the school auditorium. This “quick journey” makes reading the Bible not only easy but exciting! You will learn about the leading people, places, events and themes of the Bible – the “big picture” of salvation history. Mark your calendar for September 6, 13, 20 and 27, and come learn more about the “greatest story ever told.” Feel free to join us for a refresher if you have already participated in this program.

On October 4th, we will begin the eleven-week course, *Revelation – The Kingdom Yet to Come*, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the school auditorium. In this fascinating program, Jeff Cavins demonstrates how the Church on earth is connected to the Kingdom of Heaven. He also explains what the mysterious figures and symbols in the Book of Revelation represent, and their connection to our own time. You can register at: www.ascensionpress.com. Your registration includes the materials and access to stream the online study videos at your convenience.

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Artwork by Alex Simal, Second Grade

THAT MAN IS YOU

By DAVE BYERS

That Man Is You (TMIY) is a program for men interested in refreshing their spiritual life. TMIY offers a Catholic response to the vacuum of authentic male leadership in the modern world. It is an opportunity to develop and deepen friendships with other parishioners. More importantly, TMIY is a practical way to more fully integrate your faith with your daily life, whether at work or in the family. A core team of Blessed Sacrament parishioners run the weekly sessions, which include a hot breakfast, a video presentation, and small-group discussion.

The first year of TMIY at our parish ended in mid-May and will resume after Labor Day. For a real taste of what the program is all about, please visit our Facebook page, TMIY at Blessed Sacrament, where summaries of many of the discussions are posted. During the summer, check the bulletin and parish Facebook page (BlessedSacramentDC) to keep current on our plans for fall.

Contact:

Dave Byers, 301.681.7014 or dbyers4@verizon.net

WALKING WITH PURPOSE

By PAM KELLY

Walking With Purpose completed its first year at Blessed Sacrament on April 11th with 34 women registered for the foundational course entitled “Opening Your Heart.” This Catholic Bible study for women of all ages applies Scripture to the challenges they face in their daily lives.

The national organization’s annual survey results for the women at Blessed Sacrament were very positive overall. A significant majority agreed that “my prayer life has improved, my relationship with Christ is stronger, my Catholic faith is stronger, and my appreciation for the sacraments has grown.”

Many of the women find that the time devoted to studying the Bible and sharing their insights with one another has had a significant impact on their relationships. Family pressures that once seemed overwhelming have become more manageable due to a stronger faith. Some women cite an improvement in communicating with their spouses. Many women value the perspective they gain in seeing more clearly what is really important in their lives. Another benefit is having a supportive group of Catholic women and the friendships that develop as a result.

Plans for the fall include again offering “Opening Your Heart: The Starting Point” as a guide to deep, lasting transformation of the heart for women new to Walking With Purpose. For those women continuing in the program, the next course will be “Keeping in Balance,” designed to find help based on Scripture in balancing the demands placed on our time and ways to deal effectively with the pressures that result.

Contact:

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MADE ANEW

BY CONOR EDMUND HARDY



Artwork by Bridget Christian, Third Grade

The biting winds have gone away
Memory of Dark is left to lay
Trembling eyes are given rest
Hearts are lighter in the chest.

Trees and flowers spread a look
Different from that of when they shook.
In the sway a sound is heard
A new chorus begun now sung the bird.

Many may wonder at the sight
When found in each a subtle light
From a spark that sprung hope aflame
Ignited by the sick and lame.

What was tried and made to bend
Now echoes, "Day shall come again!"
Makings and movement are all around
The Carpenter's Son wears His crown.



Artwork by Charles Cleghorn, Kindergarten

Editor's Note: Conor is a long-time Blessed Sacrament parishioner who attended Blessed Sacrament School and now teaches at The Heights School.

CORBETT MEMORIAL LECTURE DRAWS LARGE AUDIENCE

The annual Corbett Memorial lecture, held this year on the evening of March 19, drew a crowd of over 300 parishioners and friends who gathered to hear noted writer and philosopher, Peter Kreeft, Ph.D., discuss "Love and the Pursuit of Happiness." Employing syllogistic reasoning, Kreeft reviewed the Beatitudes, reminding his audience that the Beatitudes contain paradoxical, counter-cultural ideas, and that happiness consists of peace and contentment. However, seeking contentment as an end in itself, produces discontent.

The audience, who later participated in a question and answer short session, left with many reminders and spiritual take-away's that included: suffering is redemptive; hope provides us with a future destination for our journey; lust blinds reason; and Christ IS heaven.

If you missed this year's Corbett Lecture, mark your next year's Lenten calendar and join fellow parishioners for a memorable discussion of a timely topic. TBA.



Artwork by Henry Smith, Seventh Grade

Great appreciation to all who contributed articles, verse, and photos to this year's Parish Newsletter. Special thanks to Delphine Clegg, our designer, who magically turns simple words and pictures into attractive, professional communication.

Pat Watson, Editor



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