

Left to right: Fr. John Vidal,
Russell Maske, Wanda Maske,
and Patrick Delaney



ST. LUKE'S ORDINARIATE PARISH ✠ WASHINGTON DC

The Epistle

ST. LUKE'S COUPLE CELEBRATES 70TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY WITH APOSTOLIC BLESSING

Although Father Vidal hadn't officially taken the reins at St. Luke's yet, he paid a special pastoral visit at the end of the summer to present longtime parishioners Russell and Wanda Maske with an Apostolic Blessing from Pope Francis to celebrate their seventieth wedding anniversary. Our former pastor, Father Lewis, had requested the blessing before he left for his new parish in San Antonio. The Maskes were married July 18, 1947 in the Fort Lincoln Cemetery Chapel in Prince George's

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County in Maryland. They joined St. Luke's in Bladensburg in 1953 when it was time to have Russell Jr., who died in 2009, baptized. The Maske family were stalwarts of St. Luke's for many years. Russell and Wanda, now in their nineties, were among those St. Luke's parishioners received into the Catholic Church by Washington Archbishop Donald Cardinal Wuerl during a Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in October 2011. Parishioners Patrick and Carmen Delaney accompanied Father Vidal and Helene Vidal to present the Apostolic Blessing to the Maskes. Russell and Wanda's son Larry said his parents were "very thrilled" with the Apostolic Blessing and delighted to meet our new pastor. Though Russell and Wanda live too far away to make it to St. Luke's regularly, they remain part of our St. Luke's family.



What is an Apostolic Blessing?

An Apostolic Blessing (or papal blessing) is a blessing imparted by the Pope, either directly or by delegation through others. A particularly solemn form of imparting the Apostolic Blessing is as an *Urbi et Orbi* blessing, but it can be given also by letter or by a parchment scroll granted to individuals for some significant occasion. Some of these Apostolic Blessings, which come directly from Rome, include a colorful parchment stating that the Holy Father "cordially imparts" his blessing for the recipients; they can be requested for baptisms, First Communion, marriages, ordinations, and other milestones in the life of a Catholic. Requests can be made by letter or fax to the [Office of Papal Charities](#) within Vatican City. A small donation goes to the Papal Charities Office.



OUR NEW PASTOR IS HERE

By the time you read this, Fr. John Vidal and his wife Helene will have arrived here in DC to join our parish family. We had a first chance to meet them in early August, when they visited St. Luke's to start planning their move from their home in Corpus Christi, Texas. We are all excited about the new journey St. Luke's is on under Fr. Vidal's leadership and care.

TABITHA WALKER RECEIVED INTO COMMUNION

On Sunday, September 17th, the feast of St. Hildegard of Bingen, Tabitha Walker was received into the Catholic Church and confirmed with the name of Hildegard. If you were not there for that happy occasion, be sure to introduce yourself to Tabitha at coffee hour some Sunday and help her get better acquainted with her new parish family.

*Left: Fr. Richard Kramer seals Tabitha with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
Right: A cake for Tabitha to celebrate the day.*



EVENING PRAYER AT THE ABBEY: OCTOBER 7TH AT 4 PM

Once a month, on Saturday afternoons during the school year, a group of former Anglicans now Catholic gather at St. Anselm's Abbey Chapel to say together the resonant words of the service of Evening Prayer. Four laymen from St. Luke's take it in turn to lead the congregation through the prayers, while a schola guides the service in the canticles and appointed psalms.

Last month we resumed our monthly Evening Prayer at the Abbey. We gather on one Saturday a month during the school year in the chapel of St. Anselm's Abbey [4501 South Dakota Avenue NE] to offer to God our prayers and thanksgiving using the familiar words formed in us by the Book of Common Prayer.

If you haven't come before, mark your calendar to join us in singing hymns, chanting psalms, and meditating on the Scriptures. And linger afterwards for coffee hour in the Abbey's Fort Augustus Room.

A volunteer schola leads the hymns, psalms, and canticles.

After the service, we retire to the Fort Augustus Room for refreshments and fellowship.



FR. PHILLIPS' SEPTEMBER VISIT

Father Christopher Phillips, pastor emeritus of Our Lady of the Atonement in San Antonio, visited St. Luke's again over the weekend of September 24th. He toured the Basilica Shrine, celebrated Mass with us on Sunday morning, met with the transition team Sunday afternoon, then headed to New York to accept, on behalf of Atonement Academy, a Hall of Fame Award from the Catholic Education Foundation.

As always, it was wonderful to spend time with Fr. Phillips. Come again anytime, Father!

THE DEACON-CANDIDATE'S DESK

by Mark F. Arbeen

My brothers and sisters,



During the past few months, we have been without a full-time pastor. However, with the wonderful priestly ministry of Father Rick Kramer and our altar team, led by David Lewis, the sacraments have continued to be celebrated. Through our parish administrative manager, Susan White, our bulletins have been written, our newsletters have gone out on-time, and our parish administration has been kept up to date. By the hard work of our parish treasurer, Karen King, and financial team of Patrick Delaney, Ada Okafor, and Jim Guinivan, our weekly giving has been counted and deposited, so our bills could be paid. We have proved, time and again, that St. Luke's is a strong, loving, and stable parish that comes together to ensure that God's Word is preached to all who have ears to hear. To each of these parish transition team members, we say "Thank You." Randy and I have been in awe of your hard work and dedication. You are truly "laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

As of this month, we have a new pastor, The Rev. Fr. John Vidal. We have met Father Vidal when he visited with us in August, and he has contributed to our monthly newsletter during our own version of an "interregnum." Now, we have a Father who will be with his people, guiding us, teaching us, comforting us, and ensuring that we continue to grow in love of Jesus Christ.

So, where do we go from here? As Father Vidal stated in August, we really need to look within ourselves and within our parish, and decide what we need to keep, and what we can set aside. We are like the Israelites wandering in the desert, looking for a homeland. They had to leave behind some of their luxuries and keep only that which was necessary for their survival. God provided the actual food and water needed to survive. But He also did not show them the path to the Promised Land until they had prepared themselves to follow His commandments and laws. God-made-manifest, Jesus Christ, through His Church, provides His Body and Blood for our spiritual food and drink. The rest is up to us to evaluate and decide what is truly important to our history, and to our future, so that we can find a place of our own, where we can grow and bring more souls to Christ.

We have to look deep within and strip out our prejudices, our misgivings, and our hurt and anger so that we can open ourselves up to hear God's call for us. We must empty our internal warehouses of all our vices and superfluties of life, so that God can fill them again with His love and the tools necessary to build up our parish.

Let this new beginning for St. Luke's be your opportunity to re-commit yourself to your parish. Find a committee on which to serve. Develop a ministry concept that you feel called to serve and ask others to join you. See yourself, not as a solitary Christian that sits in the pews, but as an active Child of God that wishes to fulfill your baptismal covenant, to build up the Body of Christ.

Oremus Pro Invicem

by Randy King

Brothers and Sisters,

Over my first couple of articles I talked from the heart about my calling to be a deacon in the Catholic Church and then provided some history of the diaconate. This article will give you an understanding of the formation process for deacons. First, I must say that the Order of Deacons is the Order of Deacons regardless of type: permanent or transitional. The



formation program particular to the two types of deacons is different, though. Transitional deacons are destined for priesthood, so their formation is clearly a Divinity program designed for the priesthood and the rigors of that order. Permanent deacons clearly are meant to permanently serve as deacons, which is, except for very rare circumstances, a different office altogether from the priesthood. Therefore formation for permanent deacons is very different than that for those destined for priesthood.

The Second Vatican Council consigned the decision of how the diaconate would be re-established as a permanent order to each episcopal conference. The Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter, in establishing its diaconate formation program, adopted with modification the prescribed formation program of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, ensuring that Ordinariate candidates receive proper instruction to effectively engage in the life and ministry of the Church both in line with the dioceses of the US and particular to the pastoral needs of Ordinariate communities.

This particular Ordinariate formation program, which initiated its first iteration in January 2017 with a cohort of seven deacon candidates (including me), features a program that emphasizes four formational aspects:

Human dimension – Each candidate comes to formation with a history of relationships, and those relationships must be cultivated toward a view to ministry through diaconate formation.

Spiritual dimension – This aspect is designed to, through frequent participation in Mass, prayer, and other spiritual aspects, deepen the content and experience of liturgical and devotional prayer of the candidate in preparation for his office.

Intellectual dimension – The USCCB’s “National Directory” for the formation of permanent deacons prescribes an entire academic program that includes all aspects of Catholic doctrine, theology, history, patristics, and other Catholic topics which provide the candidate with full knowledge of the deposit of faith and the whole life of the Church.

Pastoral dimension – Focusing on field work and practical application, this aspect has to do with ministries of the Word, liturgy, and charity of justice...all areas of emphasis for the deacon within a vibrant parish.

These aspects are taught and experienced in several ways. For me, because I’ve already experienced academia at the graduate and postgraduate level, the primary intellectual means is a distance learning Master of Arts for Pastoral Studies program through the University of St. Thomas (Houston) through its partnership with Houston’s St Mary’s Seminary. This program is part-time, over four years and 12 semesters of (I can now attest) grueling academic, philosophical, and theological endeavor. That academic toil is joined by annual trips to Houston for a week of intensive training for the cohort of candidates, focusing primarily on liturgical and canonical issues central to Ordinariate liturgical practices. Other distance-based events are also planned throughout the year to reinforce the cohort and our diaconal duties. We also must identify deacon mentors and priestly advisers to guide us through our diaconal formation paths and provide for practical exercises of our liturgical, pastoral, and preaching and teaching roles.

Overall the program is designed to form deacons properly ordered, not only for service to the Bishop and priests, but also especially to service to the parish and the wider community surrounding the parish that is in need of spiritual and pastoral care.

Brothers and sisters, I hope I have faithfully conveyed the care with which the Catholic Church has again entrusted to you the Order of Deacons. My great hope is that Brother Mark, and I in my time, will serve you in the way our heavenly Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Apostolic Fathers designed our service to you.

As always in Christ,

Randy

CORPORAL ACT OF MERCY: LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR HOME FOR INDIGENT ELDERLY

Saint Mary of the Cross—who is generally remembered by her given name as Jeanne Jugan—was the daughter of a fisherman in Brittany; one night she encountered a shivering woman alone on the streets in cold weather. Jeanne, a nurse and domestic,



took Anne Chauvin, who was blind and elderly, home with her and gave Anne her own bed. Over time, Jeanne Jugan brought home many elderly people in need of shelter. To support the endeavor, Jeanne begged on the streets. It was the beginning of the homes for the elderly poor run by the Little Sisters of the Poor, the order Jeanne Jugan founded. Today the Little Sisters of the Poor operate the Jeanne Jugan Residence and St. Joseph's Villa, located near Catholic University of America, to provide a home for the indigent elderly.



At present, about a hundred residents, who require various degrees of help, live at the residence. The Sisters need to raise \$3.5 million this year for renovations to the residence. Sister Jeanne Veronique, who is “a begging sister”—she goes to parishes and begs alms in the tradition of the order's foundress—says that the main requirement for living at the residence is being poor. Not all residents are Catholic, but Mass is celebrated daily and Sister Jeanne laughs and says that the non-Catholic residents seem to enjoy showing up for Mass and singing hymns and manifest a particular fascination with the use of holy water. Sister Jeanne encourages St. Luke's parishioners to visit the residence or attend this

year's Fall Bazaar, November 18, 10 am to 4 pm, where household and baked goods and Christmas decorations will be sold to raise money.

We urge you to send the Sisters a small check; or bring your donation to Mass, drop it in the plate and we will forward it to the Sisters. Their address is: Little Sisters of the Poor/Jeanne Jugan Residence/4200 Harewood Road, NE/ Washington, DC 20017-1554. Donations are tax deductible.

Saint Luke's at IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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St. Luke's at Immaculate Conception is a parish of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter, which was established on January 1, 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI in response to repeated requests by Anglicans seeking to become Catholic. Ordinariate parishes are fully Catholic while retaining elements of their Anglican heritage and traditions, including liturgical traditions.

**THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE
OF THE CHAIR OF SAINT PETER**

That we all may be one

At long last, the wait is over.

By the time you read this, Helene and I should be in Washington DC and will have celebrated our first Mass together (well, second really) as a new parish family.

But, alas, things do not always go smoothly.

First we were struck by Hurricane Harvey, and while we were lucky that the brunt of it was just 14 miles north of us, we were lucky enough not to get the dreaded surge that we would have and were spared great difficulty. Nonetheless, our chapel on the Naval Air Station did suffer some damage, even though it is still useable. But more importantly than that are the people in the southern coast of Texas who were largely forgotten with the flooding in Houston and its environs. The town just north of us was pretty much totally flattened. The small regional hospital where Helene worked lost its roof, and is out of commission and will be so for some time to come. People lost everything they had, including their employment. We have to make sure we pray for them. Of course, that does not lessen the impact on people from the following two hurricanes and the earthquakes in Mexico.

As a Christian community that is looking to grow as we share the beautiful Divine Worship Liturgy, we have to remember that we are called to share God's blessings with those less fortunate than ourselves. All these suffering people are certainly some of those. A church that looks inward will never grow, because it is not living out the Gospel. I hope in the months and years to come we can find new and needy areas where we can dedicate our time, talents, and treasure to love and charity for our neighbors.

Secondly, the renovation of St. Luke's rectory has also had some hiccups with occupancy delayed at least until October 16. Helene and I will be living in a small apartment at great expense. If any of you feel so inclined, you may make a special offering to help defray these added costs.

Our Lady of Walsingham, Pray for us.

Father John

CORRECTION: In last month's Epistle, we incorrectly identified Fr. James Wiseman as the prior of St. Anselm's Abbey. Fr. Wiseman is the abbot. Our apologies to Abbot James for the error.