



Dear Friends in Christ

In the Star Wars movie "The Empire Strikes Back," the young Luke Skywalker asks the Jedi Master, Yoda, if the dark side of the Force is stronger than the light, and Yoda answers, "No, no, no. Quicker. Easier. More seductive."

Quicker, easier, more seductive. Isn't this the inherent challenge of the Christian life, struggling against the allure of the quicker, easier path. Today's first reading draws attention to this desire: Early and often, it says, did the Lord, the God of their fathers, send his messengers to [his people], but they rejected them. Why? Because to accept the message would mean to change, to grow, to face their own wickedness. The people preferred the quicker path, the easier path. They chose their ways over God's ways.

In John's Gospel, Nicodemus has come to Jesus to ask him about the signs he is doing. What we do not hear today, but what John writes a few verses prior to this, is the time of Nicodemus' visit to Jesus. He did not come in the daytime, when anyone could see him. He came at night, under the cover of darkness. He could not step fully into the light, because he had not yet chosen God's way over that of his own religious cohorts.

Jesus says to Nicodemus: This is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. The people preferred their way; they preferred darkness to light; and their behaviors and works were evil. Quicker. Easier. More seductive.

Evil thrives in darkness. Everyone who does wicked things hates the light, because light exposes those deeds. But shadows and darkness make everything unclear and hard to navigate, and God's people were never going to find their way back to God without help. And so God sent his only Son into the world – as the light of the world – not to condemn it but to save it. For only light can lead us to truth; only light can show us a path to follow; only light can dispel darkness.

In the quote above, Yoda did not say the darkness was stronger, only that it had more allure. This is analogous to the Christian life. All of us are familiar with the temptation and allure of sin. But Jesus Christ as the light of the world saves us from the darkness of sin and death. Freedom comes in knowing that the light is stronger; the yoke is lighter. The saving power of God brings love and mercy, healing and salvation, to the world.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Fr. Marco

IHM DRIVE THRU LENTEN SEAFOOD DINNER We are having Lenten Seafood Dinners Drive-thru on March 19th and 26th from 4:30 until 6:30 pm. All Dinners are \$15 with a choice of Fried Rockfish, Baked Haddock, and Steamed Shrimp Dinners. Each dinner includes French fries, green beans, and cornbread slides. Soft drink or water and two brownies will also be sold for \$5.

LENTEN MISSION at St. Mary's Bryantown Sunday-Wednesday March 21-24 7-9pm Presented by nationally known speakers, presenters will be Dan and Caroline Dirkes. The theme of the mission is "There Is More" – as in, there is so much more that the Lord wants to do for us if we will only open our hearts and minds. The mission is free and open to all. Virus safety protocols will be observed. For more information contact Father Conley at frconley@comcast.net

MEN'S DISCERNMENT RETREAT Cardinal Gregory invites men in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, who are interested in learning more about the priesthood, to attend a discernment retreat led by priests and seminarians of the Archdiocese of Washington. The retreat will be held the weekend of March 26 to March 28 at Saint John Paul II Seminary and the Washington Retreat House in Washington, D.C. The retreat will be an opportunity to pray and reflect on God's call, meet priests and seminarians, hear their stories, and learn more about the Seminary and priesthood. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required. Please register at <https://dcpriest.org/young-adults>. For more information, contact Fr. Mark Ivany at 202-636-9020. Please note that all COVID-19 protocols will be in place to ensure everyone's safety.

CRS LENTEN RICE BOWLS There are new ways to donate this year! Along with the usual boxes that are available at the parish, you can submit your tithe over the phone at 1-877-435-7277, by mail at Catholic Relief Services CRS Rice Bowl P.O. Box 17090 Baltimore, MD 21297-0303, or online at <https://www.crsricebowl.org/>.

MASS IN TAGALOG You are invited to the next Mass in Tagalog (Philippine language) to be celebrated by Fr. Ryan Pineda on Sunday, March 14 at 4PM at the Saint Francis Xavier Church, (21370 Newtowne Neck Road) Leonardtown. A Tagalog Mass is held every second Sunday of the month. For more information or to support this county ministry, please email janet.harmon@gmail.com.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

MOWING SEASON IHM Cemetery will begin to be mowed on March 15th. Our cemetery policy is that during the mowing season no artificial decorations may be used. Thank you for your understanding.

GARDEN AND GROUNDS MINISTRY We have various projects around the church that need to be completed. Any adult or child would be welcome. If you want to volunteer, please contact Martha Davie by phone or text at 240-434-3510. Thank you!

HELP OUR MARRIAGE Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue, or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse? Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi with a long i) helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. This program has helped many couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. For confidential information or to register for the upcoming program, please visit: www.HelpOurMarriage.org, call (443) 400-7017, or email: 3015@HelpOurMarriage.org

GOLF TOURNAMENT St. John's School is hosting its annual golf tournament on Thursday, May 6, at Breton Bay Golf & Country Club. Check-in begins at 8 a.m. Shotgun start at 9 a.m. Scramble tournament. \$125 per individual or \$500 per foursome. \$30 cheat packages (mulligans, throw, and string). Food and beverages included. Sponsorship opportunities available. Register at www.sjshollywood.org.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OF IHM Our food pantry provides food to those who need assistance. We'd like to have you help us bag groceries from the food in our food pantry for our clients, or to pick up food from grocery stores in our area that donate to us. We do this throughout the week, excluding weekends. We have meetings just once a month. If you'd like to volunteer in our food pantry, please call 301-863-8193 on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays from 8:30 to 11:30 am, which is when the pantry is open. Leave your name and number and we will work to get you started as soon as you'd like.

MASS AT ST. INIGOE'S Father William George, S.J. will celebrate Mass on Saturday March 20 at 4 pm at historic Saint Ignatius church in Saint Inigoes. You are invited to bring your family and friends, praying for the needs of our Church, State, and Nation in 2021. Masks will be required and current State Guidelines will be followed.



If you or someone you know is inquiring about the Catholic faith, please let them know to email our RCIA coordinator at RCIA@ihmrcc.org.

SPRING OYSTER FEST St. Francis de Sales Church in Benedict will host our annual Spring Oysterfest on Saturday, March 20th from 12 -3 pm, or until sold out, at the hall, 7209 Benedict Avenue. Come enjoy local oysters fried, scalded and on the half-shell at outdoor raw bar, shrimp, smoked brisket, variety of homemade salads & sides. Drive-thru takeout. This year featuring Saint Joseph's Table. \$25 per adult; reserve table for six and one person eats free. Call for family rates: 301-274-3416. Checks to "Saint Francis de Sales Church", mail to: SFDS, PO Box 306, Benedict MD 20612."

BASKET AND BAG RAFFLE St. John's School is hosting a weekly bag and basket raffle through March 17. Each week, new designer bags and fun gift baskets are available. View the weekly options and purchase tickets at <https://www.auctria.com/auction/SJSBagFundraiser>. Raffle winners are announced every Friday at <https://www.facebook.com/sjsbagbingo>.

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE ABUSED Domestic violence refers to a pattern of violent and coercive behavior by one adult over another in an intimate relationship. It can consist of repeated severe beatings or subtle forms of abuse, including threats and control. If you experience any form of abuse, please know that there is help. Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233. To learn more about domestic violence, please visit www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/familypeace.

LOYOLA ON THE POTOMAC, A Jesuit Retreat House in Faulkner, MD is open for various retreat weekends, for both men and women. Directed and Private Retreats are also available. See our complete Retreat Schedule at: www.loyolaonthepotomac.com (301) 392-0800

IHM MUSIC MINISTRY If you are interested in sharing your musical talents with the parish, there is a place for you in this ministry! Please call Mary at 240-434-8876 (leave a message!).

PERPETUAL ADORATION Did you know our very own Immaculate Heart of Mary offers you the opportunity to participate in Perpetual Adoration? Some may ask "What is Perpetual Adoration?" Perpetual Adoration is a Eucharistic devotion whereby members unite in the adoration before the Most Blessed Sacrament with the goal of adoring The Blessed Sacrament perpetually (24 hours a day). If you are interested, please call our adoration coordinator, Jeff Harmon, at 240-538-5017 or email adoration@ihmrcc.org for more information.

MARCH 13 & 14, 2021



March 15 — March 21

Monday	2 Kings 5:1-5/Ps 42:2-3; 43:3-4/ Lk 4:24-30
9:00 am	Clay Sonford (D)
Tuesday	Dan 3:25, 34-43/Ps 25:4-9/ Matt 18:21-35
5:30 pm	Kelly Cutchember (D)
Wednesday	Deut 4:1, 5-9/Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20/ Matt 5:17-19
9:00 am	Jack Grubber (D)
Thursday	Jer 7:23-28/Ps 95:1-2, 6-9/ Lk 11:14-23
5:30 pm	Sarah Crecelius (D)
Friday	Hosea 14:2-10/Ps 81:6-11, 14, 17/ Mk 12:28-34
9:00 am	Ernest, Henriette and Bud Makin (D)
Saturday	Hosea 6:1-6/Ps 51:3-4, 18-21/ Lk 18:9-14
9:00 am	Madeline Fontain (D)
4:00 pm	Sarah Crecelius (D)
Sunday	2 Chron 36:14-17, 19-23/Ps 137:1-6/ Eph 2:4-10/Jn 3:14-21
8:30 am	Charlie Jeffcoat (D)
11:15 am	Kelly Cutchember (D)
1:00 pm	All IHM Parishioners

MASS WITH HEALING PRAYERS Mass with Healing Prayers is on Tuesday, March 16th. Confession starts at 5 pm, with Mass at 5:30 pm. Healing Service with Eucharistic Adoration starts at 6:15 pm.

LIVESTREAM MASS Join us for our livestream Masses: the 4 pm Mass on Saturdays in English, and 1 pm on Sundays in Spanish at mass.ihmrcc.org.

ALTAR FLOWERS/SANCTUARY CANDLES If you would like to donate the Altar Flowers or Sanctuary Candles in memory or for special intentions of a loved one, please call the Parish Office or email at cindy@ihmrcc.org.

SING ALONG DURING MASS For those attending Mass in church, online, or in the parking lot, please join us in song at songs.ihmrcc.org.

BULLETIN DEADLINE Please email your submission to bulletin@ihmrcc.org by Wednesday at 10:00 am prior to the Sunday of publication. All entries are subject to editing.

APOLOGETICS CLASS The next class is on March 15th from 7 pm to 8:30 pm at St. John's in Hollywood, in the St. Jude Room, of the Msgr. Harris Center. The next class will be "Why Evangelize?" Class is also available via Zoom: see the St. John's parish website.

LENTEN YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY The Our Lady Star of the Sea Young Adult Group is beginning a Lenten Study using Bishop Barron's Conversion series. This series illuminates six biblical stories of conversion, demonstrating how six ordinary people, just like you, were met by Jesus where they were and called to a better life through Him. The common theme in each story is the turning of all one's attention and energy toward an ever deeper, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Young adults in their 20s and 30s are invited to participate. Meetings will be every other Thursday via Zoom. Join us for the first session Thursday, March 11th at 7:00PM. Email olstar-sea.md@adw.org for additional information.

CHESTERTON CHAT You are invited to join us for an informational meeting about a new high school, The Chesterton Academy of St. Mary's. The meeting takes place on Tuesday, March 16th from 7pm-8:30 pm at St. John Francis Regis Catholic Church, Hollywood, MD (and on Zoom). Chesterton Academy Offers a strong Catholic identity, a classical Liberal Arts Education, and other benefits. For more information and for a Zoom link, visit: <https://www.ChestertonStMarys.org>

PLEASE PRAY FOR

THE SICK

THAT THEY MAY BE RESTORED TO FULL HEALTH

Audrey Somers, Louise Shafer, Helen Daye, Kathleen Floyd, Mary Oliver, Judith Ann Allgood, Vince Guerin, Regan Corliss, Jack Makin, Belle Riddell, Corrine Geraty, Jane Keyon, Linda F. Gieser, Jim Brown, Ralph Gough Sr., Betty LePore, Adele Bavani, Dinnette Briscoe, Bill Wagoner

Please note: names will remain on these lists for two months, unless otherwise notified. To keep a name on the list, please resubmit by contacting bulletin@ihmrcc.org, or call the Parish Office.

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH

Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

Follow us on

