

Saint Mary

ON THE HILL
CATHOLIC CHURCH



Getting to Know Fr. Vernon Knight, St. Mary's New Parochial Vicar

"The Whole Catholic Family is Connected Here"

Since his father was in the army, young Fr. Vernon Knight grew up in a variety of locations, including the Azores Islands off the coast of Portugal. It was there where he first considered a call to the priesthood.

"The first influence on my vocation I received was the military chaplain when I lived overseas at about 7 years old," says Fr. Vernon, our new Parochial Vicar at St. Mary on the Hill. "He was so kind to people, and I was very attracted to the ministry of the priesthood."

It wasn't until his second year of college that Fr. Vernon Knight reconsidered the priesthood. At the time, he was studying at Macon State College (now Middle Georgia State University), where he originally intended to major in history, but then switched to education.

"I really began to consider it," Fr. Vernon says. "I emailed the new vocation director and received an email back in about 10 minutes. He encouraged me to take the initiative and enter the seminary to see if it was for me."

With the support of his family, in 2006 Fr. Vernon took that step and began his studies at seminary. After eight years of discernment and preparation, on May 31, 2014, Fr. Vernon was ordained at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Savannah.

"I was very nervous and had butterflies in my stomach!" Fr. Vernon says. "Even though it was surreal, I remember certain details. I remember the bishop pouring the oil into my hands."

As in any new stage of life, Fr. Vernon has found that the past few years as a new priest have been full of "first-time experiences."

"These first experiences have shaped me and have been very helpful," Fr. Vernon says. "I've celebrated sacraments, from baptisms to marriages, and I've said my first funeral Masses."



Fr. Vernon Knight, St. Mary's new Parochial Vicar

Mass Schedule

Sunday, 7:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
12:15 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Monday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Tuesday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Wednesday, 7:00 a.m. and 5:15 p.m.

Thursday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Friday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Saturday, 9:15 a.m.,
5:00 p.m. (Sunday Vigil)

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday, 3:45-4:45 p.m.

Perpetual Adoration Chapel

Chapel is located at the corner of
Monte Sano and Bellevue.

continued on page 7

The Bowles Family: Reflecting on Over 80 Years at St. Mary on the Hill

As the first speaker in our parish's Summer Speaker Series, Dr. Allen Hunt, put it, "St. Mary on the Hill Catholic Church is looking pretty good for 100 years!" Indeed, the accomplishments that Dr. Hunt listed are all things we can be proud of – a beautiful renovation and rededication of our sanctuary in 1993, our transition to a stewardship school almost as long ago, and 20 full years of perpetual adoration. Yet, one of the greatest aspects of our church community's long history is the sense of tradition and family that characterizes our parish, as witnessed in the many families that have made St. Mary on the Hill a central part of their life over multiple generations.

The Bowles family is one of the many examples of longtime parishioners who have special stories to share as they walk down memory lane with us during our Centennial year. Ralph Bowles can trace his family's ties to St. Mary on the Hill back to three of his grandparents, Johnny and Marguerite McDonald and Nellie Bowles, all of whom began attending church here in the 1930s. His parents, Richard Bowles and Mary McDonald Bowles, grew up going to Mass at St. Mary on the Hill and attending school at Boys Catholic and Mount St. Joseph, respectively.



(From left) Ricky, John, Mary, and Ralph Bowles ready for a day at St. Mary on the Hill School in 1965

Richard and Mary were married in our church in 1952 and went on to have 10 children – Richard Jr., John, Mary, Ralph, Ellen, Kevin, Patricia, Martha, Gerald, and Joseph. Richard Jr. began attending St. Mary on the Hill School when it opened in 1960, and the Bowles family would have their children in attendance there for the next 25 years, concluding with Joseph's graduation from the school in 1985.

Like so many of our other longtime parishioners, Ralph Bowles points to the May procession as one of his favorite traditions growing up in the St. Mary on the Hill faith community.

"Some of my earliest memories are of the May procession, and the way we would leave the school and go down Monte Sano full of excitement, searching for family as we would walk in the procession on the way to Mass," Ralph recalls.



The Bowles family – (back, from left) Kevin, John, Ralph, Ricky, and their father, Richard; (middle, from left) Ellen, Patricia, Martha, and Mary; (front, from left) The Bowles siblings' grandmother Marguerite McDonald, Gerald, Joseph, and their mother, Mary

continued on page 3

The Bowles Family *continued from page 2*

Ralph also has fond memories of his days as an altar server when he was in middle school, and of attending the many openings and dedications of churches that his grandfather had a hand in building and dedicating throughout our diocese.

These early years of faith formation in the school and sanctuary of St. Mary on the Hill –as well as the example of his mother, who was once awarded a plaque for 25 years of service to the Senior Citizens group at the church – had a lasting effect on Ralph. He is still very active in the parish, attending Mass weekly and serving as a Fourth-Degree Knight with the Knights of Columbus and a member – and past president – of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Carrying on his family’s tradition, Ralph and his wife, Alane, have sent their five children through our parish school and Aquinas High School, and many of Ralph’s siblings have done the same. While Ralph sees some differences in the parish school – the atmosphere today is not quite as strict as it was in the days of the Mount St. Joseph nuns! – he is thankful for the support of the excellent teachers and the students’ families who all pitch in to make the school such a wonderful place for our children to learn and grow.

Given this rich family tradition in our parish, the answers to any questions Ralph may have had about how and where to raise and educate his children have always come easily.

“Growing up Catholic and attending Catholic school at St. Mary’s, my life just seemed to migrate to the fact that this is the right thing to do,” he explains. “So, when it was my turn to send my children to school and church, the Catholic Church and schools were the right place to be.”

How wonderful to be part of a parish that has been considered “the right place to be” by generation after generation! We are grateful to all of our longtime parishioners, like the Bowles family, who helped to create such a special faith community here so many years ago, and who continue to make this a great place for so many people to live and worship together!



Grandmother, Nellie Bowles, with one of her great-grandchildren in the early 1980s



A typical Sunday lunch gathering of the Bowles family, early 1990s

“Growing up Catholic and attending Catholic school at St. Mary’s, my life just seemed to migrate to the fact that this is the right thing to do. So, when it was my turn to send my children to school and church, the Catholic Church and schools were the right place to be.” – Ralph Bowles

A New Beginning at St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School

Though we equate the end of summer with last-minute vacations and our final days of “fun in the sun,” for teachers and school administrators, the end of summer is filled with the hustle and bustle of school preparations. Teacher planning days, professional development, and classroom preparations are just some of the tasks that keep educators busy as they work to welcome parents and students alike for the new school year.

This school year is a particularly exciting one for St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School as we welcome our new principal, Mrs. Laura Webster. Mrs. Webster’s summer has been spent meeting with faculty members and learning every possible detail about the school. And now, as the new school year approaches, she looks forward to meeting the parents and students as they begin this new journey together.

“I’m just so excited to gain a new family,” Mrs. Webster says. “It’s already been an extremely wonderful month with everybody being so welcoming and helpful. I’ve spent July meeting with faculty members, learning about them, their unique gifts, and why they are here. And I’m just thrilled to count down the days until I can meet each of the students and parents.”



Mrs. Laura Webster, Mrs. Ashley Fisher, and Mrs. Chris Sweeney working together to update welcome packets for new and prospective students.

Though the academic year doesn’t officially begin until Thursday, Aug. 10, the school’s schedule is packed in the days leading up to it with preparations, orientations and socials – the schedule begins Thursday, Aug. 3, with a parents-only Kindergarten Orientation. During this time, parents, who are mostly new to the school, have the opportunity to meet their child’s teacher while also learning general information about St. Mary’s.

Then on Tuesday, Aug. 8, the school will be busy with multiple events. The day begins with the New Family Picnic at 5 p.m. Presented by the school’s Welcoming Committee, this is an important way for new



Mr. Vic Bailey, Computer IT Manager, working hard to update school computers.



A group of students who participated in St. Mary on the Hill's CyberCamp.

A New Beginning

families to meet one another and get acclimated with the school. Following the picnic, the New Parent Orientation will take place while their children are supervised on the school playground.

"Similar to the Kindergarten Orientation, these two programs are great opportunities for the new families to learn everything that they need to know about St. Mary's, from uniforms to important dates on the calendar," says Mrs. Ashley Fisher, Assistant Principal.

Meanwhile, a Kindergarten Meet and Greet will also occur on Aug. 8 at 5 p.m. During this time, young kindergartners will be able to meet their new teachers and explore their classroom environment. Finally, the evening will conclude with the Junior High Orientation at 7 p.m.

The remaining grade levels will participate in Back to School Socials after the school year has begun, with first through third-graders gathering on Tuesday, Aug. 15, and fourth and fifth-graders on Thursday, Aug. 17.

Beyond the back to school events, both Mrs. Webster and Mrs. Fisher are looking forward to seeing some of last year's endeavors continue to develop and grow, such as the school's new Chess Club and its participation in the Air Force Association's CyberPatriot program. Sponsored by the school's computer teacher, Mrs. Karmen Lowery, the CyberPatriot program is a unique way for our young people to learn about the importance of cyber security in both a competitive and fun-filled atmosphere.

The school's leaders are also hoping to find ways throughout the year to create community outreach opportunities for their students, teaching them in a hands-on manner the importance of service and giving back to the community.

"We don't have anything specific set up yet, but we are hoping to explore needs in the area," Mrs. Fisher says. "This would also be a great way to further involve parishioners in the school. Maybe some of them have ideas on how we as a school community can further serve. Our hope is that this will teach our students about the importance of service while also helping us reach out to others beyond our school walls."

As the final days of summer vacation wrap up, we invite parishioners to continue supporting this important ministry through their prayers. Parishioners are also always welcome to come and get involved, assisting the school in its important mission to form "faith-filled servants of Jesus."

"I invite all parishioners to call and schedule a tour any time they want, to come and see what we do here and understand better the connection between the church and the school," Mrs. Webster says. "And if anybody feels like they have a particular talent, skill or gift that they are willing to donate, we are always looking for ways to further include the parish in our mission here."



Students collaborating on a cyber project.



Youth working together to create their masterpieces at St. Mary's Art Camp.

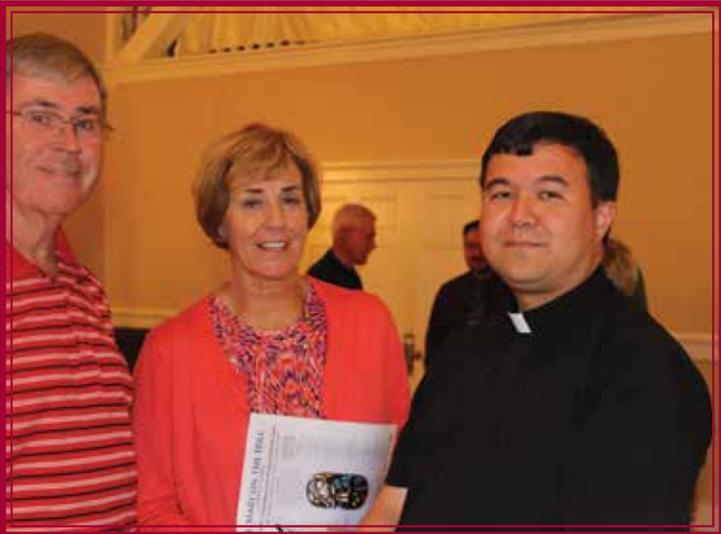


Debra Ryan, St. Mary on the Hill's Administrative Assistant, talks with the cleaning staff.

If you would like to learn more about St. Mary on the Hill School, please contact the school office, 706-733-6193.

A Look Back on a Wonderful Welcome

Thank you to all who came out on July 1 to warmly welcome new St. Mary on the Hill School Principal Laura Webster, new Parochial Vicar Fr. Vernon Knight, and new Music Director Andrew Barnick.



Getting to Know Fr. Vernon Knight *continued from front cover*

On June 14, Fr. Vernon began his new assignment here at St. Mary's. For him, this appointment is actually a return to the area, as Fr. Vernon served our faith community as a seminarian in the summer of 2008.

"At that time, I helped with the homebound ministries, hospital visits, young adult formation, and serving the Masses," Fr. Vernon says. "I got to know the city and the people."

Fr. Vernon, a self-identified "bookworm," enjoys reading everything from science fiction to autobiographies. Some of his favorite authors include C. S. Lewis, Agatha Christie and Alexandre Dumas.

"I think the whole Catholic family is connected here," Fr. Vernon says. "I'll try to be there to serve and to be present in important moments with you."



Parochial Vicar Fr. Vernon Knight

"These first experiences [as a priest] have shaped me and have been very helpful. I've celebrated sacraments, from baptisms to marriages, and I've said my first funeral Masses."

– Fr. Vernon Knight

Ad Placement



Saint Mary

ON THE HILL

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Augusta, GA
Permit No. 475

1420 Monte Sano Avenue
Augusta, GA 30904
Phone 706-733-6627
www.stmaryonthehill.org

100 Years at St. Mary on the Hill! Events and Activities

Sept. 1 – All-school first Friday Mass
9:15 a.m., followed by 100th Anniversary
Reception in Parish Hall

Sept. 17 – CCD 100-Year Celebration
9 a.m. in the church, Reception to follow in
Parish Hall

**Oct. 10 – Dr. Richard Elliott, Mormon
Tabernacle Senior Organist**
Organ recital in the church, 7 p.m.

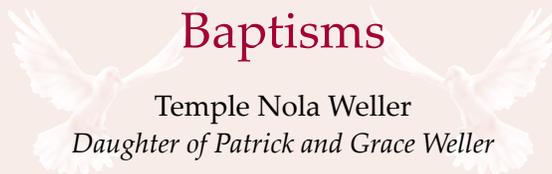
**Oct. 21 – Summerville Tour of Homes,
featuring our church, 12-3 p.m.**

**Oct. 22 – Summerville Tour of Homes,
featuring our church, 2-5 p.m.**

**Nov. 15 – 20th Perpetual Adoration
Anniversary Benediction**
With reception to follow in Parish Hall

Dec. 8 – 100th Anniversary Mass, 6 p.m.
Inaugural ringing of the 100th Anniversary
Carillon Bells followed by Gala Ball in the
St. Mary on the Hill School Cafeteria

Baptisms



Temple Nola Weller
Daughter of Patrick and Grace Weller

Carey Vincent Rountree
Son of Scott and Michaelann Rountree

Mary Noelle Newton
Daughter of Joseph and Lauren Newton

Recent Donations to St. Mary on the Hill

St. Mary on the Hill Church

Grant from the Kiwanis Club Bryce
Newman Scholarship Fund of the
Community Foundation for the
Central Savannah River Area

*In Memory of Fr. Ed Frank
Michael Rucker*

*In Memory of Harry Bachelder
Ross, Emily Ann and Hyatt Carrigan*

*In Memory of Betty Brand
Mary Drew
Jane Bolger*