

Saint Mary

ON THE HILL
CATHOLIC CHURCH



News and Notes from Fr. Jerry

Making the Most of this Lenten Season

Dear Parishioners,

Pope Benedict has asked us to observe a Year of Faith. Catholics believe that the gift of faith is planted in our being at baptism. But it needs to be nurtured and developed if it is going to have a tangible impact on the way we see and live our lives. Today, the world has become a very secular place. It is difficult to retain a sense of the sacred in such a world. Yet without the sacred, and without a sense of the transcendent, life is bleak and one-dimensional. So I would hope and pray that every person who is a member of this faith community would see Lent as a special time of grace to get rooted once again in the basics of a good strong faith life.

We protect and nurture our faith most of all through practicing it — and it is the same with love. We practice our faith when we seek God's guidance with decisions, seek his strength in time of weakness and fear, and seek his help to forgive when we are hurt. We practice our faith by regular participation in the Eucharist, sharing our financial resources with our parish and the poor, and sharing our faith with others. Every time we witness to our faith, we strengthen it.

Fidelity to personal prayer and spiritual reading is also key to a strong faith. If good communication is the key to a healthy relationship, then we can say that honest prayer is the key to a good relationship with God. Many also find spiritual reading to be an effective way to nurture our relationship with God.

We protect and nurture our faith by belonging to a community of believers who will support us and help us grow in faith. At St. Mary on the Hill, there are so many opportunities during this Lenten season to grow in faith. Some families during March have revisited a great Friday night tradition of having a fish dinner at the Knights of Columbus and then walking up the street to church for the Stations of the Cross. And it is still not too late to join us for our special program, "Fast, Pray, Give — Making the Most of Lent." This hour-long program encourages some basic faith practices that can lead to a deeper appreciation of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The program takes place at 9 a.m. on Sunday mornings at St. Mary School, and is repeated on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the St. Joseph Chapel at the church. Before the Wednesday session, a special Lenten meal of soup and salad

Mass Schedule

Sunday, 7:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
12:15 p.m. and 6:00 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.

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Building Team Players Through Our Sports Programs



School sports programs are a time-honored tradition with a number of benefits to the school, community and the students.

"It teaches you how to be part of a team, where it's not just about you," says Sarah O'Neill, who coaches volleyball and soccer. "You can't just do it by yourself — you have to have your teammates supporting you and helping you to win the game. It also gives the students an opportunity to build healthy, Christian relationships with their teammates, while being positive and supportive, and working together to try to win."

St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School has a number of sports programs for its students. There are some sports offered exclusively for either boys or girls, and some for both. Each season during the school year has its own sports programs, thus allowing the students to participate in sports throughout the year. All sports programs are coached, staffed and supported by volunteers.

Tennis, golf and cross country programs are offered in the fall for boys and girls. Girls may be active in softball, volleyball and cheerleading, while boys also have football. In the winter, girls and boys can play basketball, and girls also have cheerleading. Then in the spring, there is baseball for boys, as well as soccer for boys and girls.

The sports schedule is posted on the parish website so that parishioners and parish families can keep up

with the programs and attend the many sporting events throughout the year.

"It is a great way for them to see how wonderful the school is and what a tight-knit group we are," says Annmarie Noegel, athletic director for St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School.

St. Mary on the Hill is part of the Central Savannah River Area Private School League, and our school competes with other area schools like Episcopal Day School, St. Mary's of Aiken and Augusta Christian.

The sports programs help build strong relationships among the schools in this league, and they are a great benefit to each of the students who are involved.

"I feel that it gives them a sense of belonging and pride in representing their school," Annmarie says. "It develops and tightens the bond that the students have with one another. It teaches them the team concept and is great exercise."

Participating in organized sports is a great way for children to learn valuable lessons that they will use throughout their lives.

"There's tryouts and not everybody makes the team — that is a life lesson that you don't always get everything you try for, even if you do want it," says Sarah. "The tryouts are relatively hard, so you do have to prepare for them. And once you make the team, that's a commitment they have to make to come to games and practices."

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As a parish, we have an opportunity to give our support to these students in these teams and sports programs, all while fostering our sense of community and parish family.

“The priests come and support the games, and the kids really get excited when they see the priest,” Annmarie says. “They also talk about the sports programs in the weekday Mass. The students that don’t play on a sports team come out and support their friends and have a really good time. We have been fortunate to have several winning seasons in various sports, and all of the students take a great deal of pride in that their school has been successful.”

For more information about the sports programs at St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School, please call Annmarie Noegel at 706-733-6193, or visit the parish website at www.stmaryssaints.org.



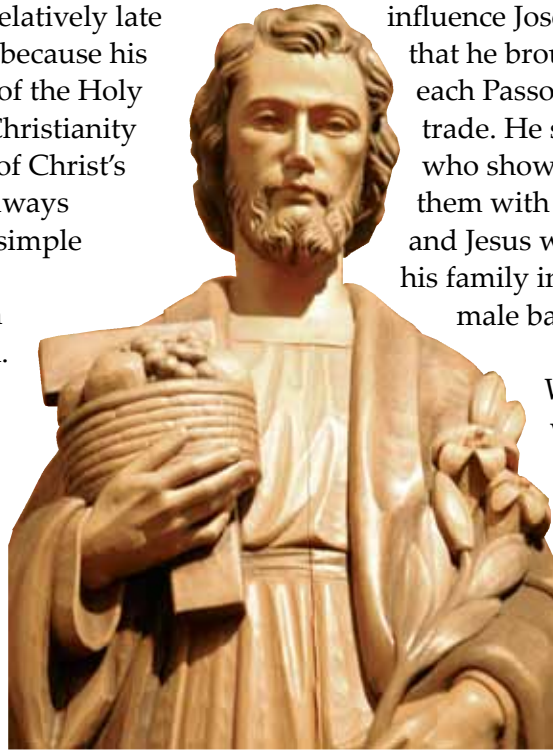
Feast of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary

March 19

Devotion to St. Joseph began relatively late in Church history, primarily because his role of husband to Mary and head of the Holy Family was underplayed in early Christianity by many unauthenticated legends of Christ’s childhood. These legends almost always portrayed Joseph as an old man, a simple guardian of Mary and Jesus.

Modern theology places Joseph in a much more important position. Because of his true, sacramental marriage to Mary, Joseph shared in Mary’s parenthood — Joseph was a father to Jesus in every way except physical generation. Joseph appeared publicly as the natural father of Jesus, thus shielding the virginity of Mary and the reputation of Jesus. Joseph’s fatherly love, authority, and watchful service were all necessary circumstances in God’s plan for the Incarnation.

Joseph was born in Judea or Galilee in the first century B.C. Little is stated in the Bible about the



influence Joseph had on Jesus. History tells us that he brought Mary and Jesus to the temple each Passover and taught Jesus the carpentry trade. He seems to be the silent family man who shows his love for his family by providing them with security. The very safety of Mary and Jesus was guarded by Joseph when he took his family into Egypt to avoid the massacre of male babies ordered by King Herod.

In the history of the Church, Western veneration of Joseph began with the introduction of the Feast of St. Joseph in the late 15th century.

In 1870, at the end of the First Vatican Council, Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph to be the patron of the Universal Church. He is also the patron of carpenters, workers, fathers, and a happy death given that he died in the presence of Mary and Jesus. The title of Joseph’s March 19 feast day

is “Husband of Mary.” Pope Pius XII later declared May 1 to be the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, to counteract the Communist May Day holiday.

Teens Commit to Protect



A group of 43 high school students and 12 chaperones from St. Mary on the Hill Church attended the 2013 March for Life.

For the last 40 years, the date of Jan. 22 has given pro-choice supporters cause to celebrate as they remember the historic Roe v. Wade Supreme Court victory that legalized abortion in the United States. By the same token, for the last 40 years, Jan. 22 has given pro-life supporters cause to celebrate the gift of human life.

Celebrating life was a central theme for the youth of St. Mary on the Hill Catholic Church as they traveled from Augusta to our nation's capitol to participate in the recent March for Life, which took place Friday, Jan. 25.

Arriving in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, Jan. 24 after a nearly 12-hour bus ride, 43 teens from St. Mary's Church and Aquinas High School, along with 12 adult chaperones — including Youth Ministers Michael Lammers and Joanna Watwood — spent the following 48 hours engaged in prayer, praise and protest.

The first stop on the itinerary was to attend a Holy Hour at St. Catherine Labouré in Wheaton, Md., just outside of Washington. Led by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, the teens had the opportunity to sing and pray before the Blessed Sacrament alongside hundreds of youth from throughout the United States. Following Adoration, the teens attended a concert at the parish by Catholic worship leader Matt Maher, who played songs from his most recent releases.

The following morning, the group attended a pre-march Youth Rally and Mass for Life at the University

of Maryland's Comcast Center, home of the Mighty Terps. Surrounded by thousands of youth, the massive sports complex became a holy sanctuary for the next few hours as the crowd participated in a special Mass celebrated by Cardinal DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Fr. David Wells of the Archdiocese of Washington, an alum of the University of Maryland, delivered a moving homily and encouraged the youth to be heroic and stand up for life, not just on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, but every day. His message touched on the gift of life, and reminded the youth to celebrate and protect life at every stage — not just life in the womb.

"To be pro-life means that we affirm that life is good, that life is a blessing," Fr. Wells said during his homily. "Life is a joy. Life is a gift. In spite of all the evils in the world, which we are not blind to — in spite of the sadness, tragedies, and darkness which can seem overwhelming, we affirm with all of our hearts, life is good! Life is worth living."

Following the Youth Rally and Mass for Life, the teens from St. Mary's joined more than 600,000 other pro-life supporters as they marched up Constitution Ave. to the Supreme Court building on Capitol Hill. Surrounded by fellow marchers — some marching in silence, others chanting or cheering for life, others praying or even visiting with friends from elsewhere in the country who

ing Life at Annual March



Alanna McArdle, Alexis Wagner, Catherine McManus and Olivia Ramage at the 2013 March for Life.

also happened to be present – the teens weaved their way through downtown Washington in frigid sub-freezing temperatures and amidst falling snow. The signs with catchy pro-life slogans, music from portable loudspeakers, the presence of hundreds of thousands of fellow pro-life supporters – even the cold weather itself – became vivid reminders of how precious human life truly is.

That evening, gathered in the warmth of their hotel, the teens participated in a Bible study exercise that required personal reflection on a number of pro-life Scripture verses, such as Exodus 20:13, “Thou shall not kill.” Mr. Lammers challenged the teens to reflect upon the verses in light of what they witnessed earlier in the day during the March for Life. Afterwards, the group discussed their reflections as well as highlights from the event.

The following day, Saturday, Jan. 26, the group had the opportunity to visit a number of memorials and other historic sites on and around the National Mall, including the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam and Korean War Memorials and the new World War II Memorial. Impressed and awed by the magnitude of the memorials, and also humbled by the sacrifice of the men and women in whose honor the memorials were erected, it was hard not to meditate upon the gift of life being celebrated by those who preserved and protected the freedom of the American people.

The final stop for the St. Mary’s youth and chaperones was a visit to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the largest Catholic church in the Americas. Before participating in Mass, the teens had the opportunity to explore the Basilica’s crypt, or lower church, which housed a gift shop, confessional, crypt church as well as numerous smaller chapels dedicated to the Blessed Mother. Enjoying front-row seating, the group participated in Mass alongside thousands of other Catholics before hopping back on the bus and beginning an overnight drive home.

The experience was eye-opening and invigorating for many of the teens.

“I wanted to go on this trip because I knew it was something that was right, but I wanted to better understand what we were fighting for and how we were fighting,” says Johnny Murphy, a teen who attended the March for Life. “This trip has set me solid in my conviction that abortion is an abomination.”

Many returned home with the conviction to stand up for life.

“If you know abortion is wrong – do something about it,” says teen Catherine McManus. “You can pray at the abortion clinic or even say a Rosary for life.”

“The fight that we fought can be done every day,” says Liam Globensky. “You can make a difference with one step, one word, one action – to change the future.”

“A dedicated group of people can truly rise up and change the world – that is one thing that I learned on this trip,” says Olivia Bernard.

“I am adopted, so I am living proof that instead of taking away that joy of life you can give it to someone else who is willing to accept it,” says Shannon Fair.

Arriving back in Augusta eager to continue the fight for life, the youth will be challenged to act upon their convictions. Whatever their future pro-life endeavors may entail – whether large or small actions, simple prayers at home or silent protests in front of Planned Parenthood – the teens’ experience in D.C. gave them the confidence needed to live as zealous supporters of the pro-life cause for the duration of their lives.

The group plans to next year’s March for Life in January 2014, and would love to have you join them!

Be sure to keep an eye out for details in the bulletin starting next fall!

Christ is Risen: *Let Us Rejoice!*

Christ redeemed mankind and gave perfect glory to God principally through the paschal mystery. By dying, he destroyed our death. By rising, he restored our life. The Easter Triduum of the passion and resurrection of Christ is thus the culmination of the entire liturgical year.

We celebrate the saving work of Christ through a series of seasons. Through Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Ordinary Time, we celebrate the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus — who is, of course, the center of our lives as Christians. All of our liturgical celebrations point to Him and, in truth, they all point ultimately to the paschal mystery — Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection — which is celebrated as the highest feast of the year!

During Advent, we prepare through prayer to celebrate the birth of Jesus, who was born of a virgin to bring about the salvation of all. In the Christmas season, we celebrate the miraculous incarnation. The Son became a man out of complete love for us so that, through His passion, death, and resurrection, we could gain eternal life.

The Ordinary Time in the Church serves as a period of time for us to reflect on the fullness of the Christian mystery. We concentrate on the lives of the saints, who pointed us to Christ through their examples. They lived as witnesses of the Gospel, and we are all called to do the same.

Lent readily prepares us to celebrate the Lord's paschal mystery. We spend 40 days fasting and praying, just as Jesus did in the desert those many years ago. We prepare to walk the road to Golgotha with our Savior in a very real way during Lent. Jesus fasted in the desert for 40 days, tempted by Satan. When he emerged, strengthened in His Spirit, He proclaimed, "The Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the Gospel." He was preparing to live His public ministry, which preceded His passion, death and resurrection. In the same way, we rejoice in the paschal mystery. During the Easter Triduum, we celebrate that for which Jesus came to Earth! His mission has been fulfilled, and He has affected the salvation of the world!

What a cause for celebration! Because of Jesus' selfless act, we are made adopted sons and daughters of the great high priest! We can now, by no merit of our own, enjoy eternal life with God in heaven — the life for which we were originally created.

In an effort to celebrate the high point of the Christian mystery, the Church has designated time — during what we call the Easter Triduum — for us to reflect upon each of the most significant aspects of Christ's salvific act.

On Holy Thursday, we celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper. Here, we celebrate the institution of the priesthood and the first celebration of the Eucharistic meal.

Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and giving it to His disciples said, "Take and eat; this is my body." He then took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father."

After celebrating the Eucharist with His disciples, Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives to pray and prepare for the gruesome events that would follow.

On Good Friday, we celebrate the crucifixion of Jesus. Our Lord and Savior was put to death for our sake. But there is a beauty in this suffering, for even though Good Friday is commemorated as a solemn celebration, it is truly a cause for great joy. Through Christ's passion and death, He entered into the realm of sin, only to conquer it three days later!

On Holy Saturday, as we await the glorious resurrection, we commemorate Christ's descent into hell. Christ descended to hell to deliver the souls of the just who had died before His coming. Scripture tells us that He went into the depths of Hades so that the dead might hear the voice of God and so that all who would hear Him would live. Yet again, every action of Jesus is aimed toward the salvation of mankind, which we see, in the great Easter celebration!

He has risen! He has conquered sin and death — rising from the dead, Christ has brought new life to all who believe! "We bring you the Good News that what God promised to the fathers this day, He has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus from the dead" (Acts 13:32-33), so that "as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

We are called to share this good news with those around us, for Christ has risen so that all may find newness of life in Him. Let us rejoice!

Lenten Season *continued from front cover*

will be served at 6 p.m. in the Parish Hall. And at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, “The Light is on for You” after our sessions to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

As Bishop Hartmayer pointed out in his Lenten letter, “The Light Is on for You” is a reminder that God is waiting for us to arrive at a new awareness of his love for us through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This Year of Faith is a wonderful opportunity for entire families to experience growth in their spiritual lives by a greater infusion of God’s grace by the forgiveness of their sins. If you haven’t been to Confession in a while, I want to welcome you back, and invite you to participate in this beautiful sacrament of healing. If I or anyone in the church has hurt you in anyway, I would beg your forgiveness and hope that you might take this step in faith. You will be surprised about how free you feel after taking part in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Finally, Lent exists so that we can prepare ourselves for the Easter Triduum. The three-day observance begins

with the Mass of the Lord’s Supper in the evening of Holy Thursday, on March 28 at 7 p.m. This observance continues through Good Friday, March 29 with the celebration of the passion of the Lord at 7 p.m., and reaches its high point on Holy Saturday, March 30 in the Easter Vigil at 8 p.m. They are the holiest and most important days of celebration in the Catholic Church! There is no better way to protect and nurture your faith than to take part in these celebrations. I pray that all parishioners will take seriously their obligation to participate in the liturgies of the Triduum — it just won’t be the same without you. Seriously, a crowd of faith-filled Catholics adds so much meaning to these liturgies. I look forward to celebrating the joy of Easter with you. God bless you,



Fr. Jerry

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