

PARISH CALENDAR

- Sun Jan 1 Holy Day, Mary Mother of God, **8:30am**
Holy Day, Mary, Mother of God, **11:00am**
- Thu Jan 5 Apologetics Class, **6:30 PM**, CC
- Fri Jan 6 First Friday Mass/Holy Hour, **9AM**, C
- Sat Jan 7 First Saturday Mass & Holy Hour for
Vocations **9AM**, C
Rosary Devotion, **4:30 PM**, Church
- Sun Jan 8 Youth Faith Formation, **9:30am**, CC
- Sun Jan 8 Fr. Barron's Catholicism, **9:30am**, CC
- Sun Jan 8 Parish Christmas Party, CC, **12:00 pm**
- Sun Jan 8 Youth Group, **5:00 PM**, CC

MASS INTENTIONS

- Tue Jan 3 9:00 am Joe Browne
- Wed Jan 4 9:00 am Ray Alba
- Thu Jan 5 9:00 am Maria Minh Pham
- Fri Jan 6 9:00 am Julius Owens
- Sat Jan 7 9:00 am Vocations
- Sat Jan 7 5:00 pm Rosa Torres
- Sun Jan 8 8:30 am Parishioners
11:00 am Patrick Hotkowski

LITURGICAL FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK

- Mon Jan 2 **Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen**
- Wed Jan 4 **St. Elizabeth Ann Seton**
- Thu Jan 5 **St. John Neumann**
- Fri Jan 6 St. Andre Bessette
- Sat Jan 7 St. Raymond of Penafort

WEEKDAYS LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Daily Lector: J.Blackwell; M.Goldsmith; C.Galli, Volunteer
Meals-on-Wheels: J.V. Royston; K.Owens; J&J.Lenderman
Altar Preparation: M.Goldsmith

REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS



Please remember the sick of our parish, and all in need of our prayers, especially those who serve our country and their families, and all who are listed in our Parish Book of Intentions.

Help us keep our parish records up to date. Please call the church office (301-994-0607) if you have recently changed your mailing address, e-mail address, phone number, or plan to be away temporarily.

New registrations are always welcome. Forms for this purpose are in the rack in the church front entrance.

STEWARDSHIP — FINANCIAL BLESSINGS

	12/25/2016	12/27/2015	
General Collection	\$1454.00 *Christmas	\$3383.14	-\$1929.14
Identifiable Gifts	50	112	
Maintenance	\$5.00	\$170.00	-\$165.00
Poor Box	\$370.25	\$485.62	-\$115.37
Donations	\$940.00	\$7695.00	-\$6755.00
E-Giving (Weekly)	\$817.00	(20 donors)	

* Christmas collection total were not available at time of bulletin preparation/transmission.

Thank you for your faithful parish support.

Stewardship Lesson from the Sunday's readings:

The blessing included in the First Reading from the Book of Numbers is one with which most of us are familiar. "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord let His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you..." In the Jewish culture this has been known for centuries as the Aaronic blessing as it was dictated by God Himself to Aaron. It is important to note that it begins with "The Lord bless you."

All blessings come from God. One error we make is to conclude that blessings always mean happiness or security or prosperity. God knows what blessings we need, even if we do not. They key for us is to be grateful for whatever blessings we may have. That mind set is at the hub of stewardship — knowing all blessings come from the Lord, and our need to be appreciative of them.

To be "kept" by the Lord is to turn our lives over to Him, to know that He is with us and that He loves us, blesses us, and does indeed "keep" us ever in His care. The truth is that to be blessed by God is one of the greatest gifts we can receive. It is available to all of us without exception.

During this continued Christmas season, it is well to remember and repeat the classic statement by the character Tiny Tim in Charles Dickens' immortal *A Christmas Carol*: "God bless us, every one," for certainly He does.

OUR PARISH NEWS

Special Thanks to all who made our Christmas liturgies beautiful. Our gratitude for those who decorated the church outdoors and indoors!

Thank you also, to all who participated in our annual **Giving Tree** project. We are grateful to those who coordinated this time consuming effort and those who assisted in any way. Our gratitude to all who made donations to make a happy Christmas for others!



*St. George Parish Family
Covered Dish
Christmas Party*

NEXT Sunday — January 8, 2017, 12:00 noon in St. George Community Center The parish will provide the main meat to accompany the covered dish you bring. Please Sign up today.

OUR PARISH FAITH FORMATION

Youth Faith Formation at St. George (YFF)

Happy and Blessed New Year!

YFF Classes Resume next Sunday, January 8, 9:30AM

“Journey around the World and Deep into the Catholic Faith” with Father Barron's Catholicism Series.
This program will take place on the **second and third Sundays each month in the Community Center, 9:30-10:45 AM.** All are invited to attend

Apologetics 101

Next Class: Thurs. Jan. 5, 2017 “Why does God act that way in the Old Testament?”
Thur., Jan. 12 “What happens after death?”

OUR YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Our Youth Group meets every Sunday, 5:00 PM in the Community Center.

2016 INCOME TAX PREPARATION

St. George Year-End Contribution Statements

Starting on January 8, 2017, you can get your yearly contribution statement without waiting!

Here’s how:

1. If you have not already registered a user name:

- a. In your internet browser, go to connectnow.parishsoft.com/washingtondc/
- b. Click on link for ‘New User?’
- c. Choose ‘St. George, Valley Lee from the drop down list
- d. Fill in all the areas with a red asterisk and click the ‘Submit Registration’ button. (If you have given us an email address, please use that address.)
- e. Once a temporary password has been emailed to you, you can sign-in with your user name and password to check your data.

2. Once you have registered:

- a. In your internet browser, go to connectnow.parishsoft.com/washingtondc/
- b. Enter your User Name and Password
- c. Click on “My Own Church” link
- d. Click on the “My Offering” tab
- e. Click on the “Giving History” link
- f. Click on the “Download Statement” link**
- g. Print or save as needed

****Please note – you will not be able to download until we release the statements January 8, 2017.**

OUR REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Little Flower School News

Dec. 22-Jan. 2 – Christmas Break; Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Tue., Jan. 3 – Advisory Board meeting, **6pm**
Fri., Jan. 6 – PreK Parent/Student Mass; **8am**
2nd Gr.Parent/StudentLunch, **11:20am**

Congratulations to the winners of the EZ Money Raffle:

- Grand Prize \$2500: Leticia Litchfield
- \$500: Randy and Bonnie Oliver
- \$250: Keith Fairfax
- \$125: Pat Bowes
- \$125: VanMeter Family
- \$125: Leah Sandor
- \$125: Kayla and Hannah Purcell

Congratulations to December’s 500 Club Winners:

- \$500: D. Gatton, California, MD
- \$250: K. Sebring, Valley Lee, MD
- \$100: S. Carter, Clements, MD
- \$50: R. Goddard, Valley Lee, MD

Bingo is back! Every Wednesday, doors open at 5:30 pm; early bird special starts at 6:45pm. Cash prizes! Food and drink will also be for sale.

Are you on social media? Don't forget to "like" us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/littleflowercatholic) and "follow" us on Twitter and Instagram (@LFS patriots)!

Don't forget to save your Box Tops and Campbell's Soup labels! They add up and help our school to be able to purchase supplies, gym equipment, technology, and other things to enhance our students' learning!

Interested in learning more about Little Flower School? email (LFSoffice@littleflowercatholic.org) or call the office (301) 994-0404 to schedule a tour! We'd love to talk more with you about how to make a Catholic education a possibility for your child!

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CORNER

Fr. Sebastien De Rose Council # 13091

Grand Knight: Dan Bogan
dan.bogan@gmail.com

FEED THE HUNGRY: Please answer Christ's call to "Feed the hungry" by regularly donating food items to the food bins in the vestibule. There are many in our community who need our help. The food collected in our food bins goes to food pantries that directly feed the hungry.

NEWS IN AND AROUND OUR AREAS

Retrouvaille: A Lifeline for Marriages in Trouble

Many marriages may experience four stages: (1) Romance, (2) Disillusionment, (3) Misery, and (4) Awakening. Marriages that end in divorce never make it to the 4th Stage of Awakening. Don't give up without learning about the 4th Stage of Awakening. If your marriage suffers from disillusionment or misery, please contact Retrouvaille (pronounced "retro-vie" with a long "i"). The next Retrouvaille weekend is **January 27-29**, and to register or obtain more information, please visit www.HelpOurMarriage.com, call 443-400-7017, or email 3015@Retrouvaille.org. All calls and inquiries are confidential.

Looking for the Longest Married Couple in 2017

Worldwide Marriage Encounter is searching for the longest married couple. One national winner and winners from each of the 50 states are recognized each year. This project is held to honor the commitment of married couples and to give hope and inspiration to younger couples that they too can have long and lasting marriages. Nominations must be received by January 10th, 2017. To nominate a couple you know, please visit us at <http://www.me.org> or contact us directly at [321-804-2310](tel:321-804-2310).

Men's Discernment Retreat

Friday, February 3 through Sunday, February 5, 2017, men in their 20s, 30s or 40s who are considering a call to the priesthood are invited to attend a discernment retreat at Saint John Paul II Seminary in Washington, DC (145 Taylor St., NE) led by priests of the Archdiocese of Washington. The weekend will offer time away from your daily routine and will provide an opportunity for prayer and reflection to examine God's call. There is no fee to attend. Registration is now open at www.dcpriest.org, or email vocations@adw.org for more information.

Men's Retreat: Discover a Courageous Spiritual Life

A men's retreat, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom," will be held on **February 10-12** and will be directed by Fr. Dave Wells and Fr. Rick Kramer at Priestfield Pastoral Center in Kearneysville, WV, which is a short drive from the Washington, DC area and provides space for quiet reflection away from all the distractions. Fr. Wells and Fr. Kramer will lead talks on living a courageous life in the Holy Spirit, and they will celebrate Mass and offer opportunities for spiritual direction. You will have the opportunity to go to confession and spend quiet time with our Lord in Adoration. Cost: \$225 for the weekend covers room, meals, including dinner Friday night; breakfast, lunch, and dinner on Saturday; and breakfast and lunch on Sunday. For more information or to register go to www.adwmenretreat.eventbrite.com.

URGENT REQUEST

Care Net Pregnancy Center of Southern Maryland is in desperate need of gently worn winter children's clothing sizes 18M, 24M, 2T, 3T and 4T, for both boys and girls. Our winter clothing supplies are extremely sparse, if not completely gone, and we are unable to meet the needs of our clients. If you are able to donate clothing, please contact any of our three centers to arrange a drop-off, as we will have limited hours for the Christmas holiday. You will receive a tax receipt, as well as the blessing of knowing you are helping children in need. Lexington Park Center, 301-737-4604; Leonardtown Center, 301-475-5333; Prince Frederick Center, 410-326-6866. Thank you.

Sun., Jan. 8 New Year's Choral Festival, St. Aloysius Catholic Church, Leonardtown, MD, 3:00 PM. Info: 301-475-8064.

Mon., Jan. 23 Southern Maryland Area Monthly Mass with Eucharistic Adoration and Healing Prayers. Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lexington Park. Mass: 7:00 pm; Confessions start 6:30 pm. Info: 301-863-8144.

Fri., Jan. 27 Annual March for Life. [information to follow]

2017 Pilgrimages

June 22 – July 1 63rd U. S. National Rosary Pilgrimage - Lourdes, France. Cost: Depart: Washington/Dulles \$2,879. Reservation deadline: March 15. Info: Catholic Travel Office, 1-877-276-7279, e-mail: lourdespilgrimageoffice@comcast.net.

Fatima Pilgrimage/Retreat, July 8 to 16, 2017

2017 celebrates the 100th Anniversary of the messages of Fatima, a very special time to go there on Pilgrimage! Join us on this trip as we fly non-stop out of Dulles to this special place of prayer at a time when we really need to pray for our country and each other. Father Michael Tietjen, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, will be accompanying us as Chaplain!. Cost: \$2,989.00, includes: Lodging, Breakfast and Dinner Daily, visits to many special places in Portugal and talks about the importance of living the Fatima Message in our world today. A \$500 deposit (airlines required) is due with your registration. For registration form, full itinerary or trip information email: pilgrimage@breadoflifecenterforpeace.org or call: (301) 475-9704.

11 Day Pilgrimage to Italy, November 6 – 16, 2017

Hosted by Msgr. Charles Pope and Fr. Aaron Qureshi. \$3,079/person from Washington D.C. Visit Venice, Schio, Padua. Florence, Assisi, Orvieto, Rome, Papal Audience. Information: Ms. Debbie Vanzego at dvanzego@cohenmilstein.com or 202-408-4641 Monday through Friday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm.

REFLECTING ON THE LECTIONARY READINGS

NM 6: 22-27; PS 67: 2-3, 5-6, 8; GAL 4: 4-7; LK 2: 16-21

Today is a double feast so to speak, but the two feasts are closely associated. This is the Octave Day of Christmas, or the eighth day of Christmas. It always falls exactly one week after Christmas Day; Christmas Day is of course the first day, and then when we count to eight we have today. "Octaves" have been celebrated in the Church in relation to Holy days and feasts almost from the very beginnings of the Church.

However, today is also the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. In Jewish tradition a male child was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. On that same day the child was officially given his name. Thus, it was on this day that the Lord received the name Jesus. The third connection of these two liturgical celebrations is the addition of calling our Blessed Mother the Mother of God. Among Vatican II documents it is clearly stated, "Clearly from earliest times the Blessed Virgin is honored under the title of Mother of God."

This feast is naturally a celebration of Mary's motherhood of Jesus. It stems from the Greek word *theotokos* that translates as "She who gave birth to God." That title was adopted at the First Council of Ephesus, held in the summer of 431 AD. Ephesus is in present day Turkey, and this was a gathering of Bishops; the Nicene Creed is another product of that Council.

Our First Reading from the Book of Numbers is familiar to most of us because of its inclusion of the prayer of Aaron that we may have experienced often within our lives as Catholics and Christians. Stewardship helps us understand and appreciate that we are gifted by God. What greater gift can we have beyond "The Lord let His face shine upon you"? To be aware that God may look upon us and be pleased, not because of who we are or what we may have done, but because we are in Jesus Christ, might be the largest source of peace and power in our lives. However, we need to realize that, and we need to live our lives as that is the reality.

Three times within this blessing we hear "The Lord." In the first it is God the Father who blesses His children; then it is God the Son whose face shines upon us and brings us grace; finally it is God the Holy Spirit who communicates to us the feelings of God, and Who gives us peace as a result. There are no accidents in Scripture, and this threefold blessing from our three Gods in One is no accident either.

In St. Paul's letter to the Galatians, our Second Reading, Paul states "God sent His Son, born of a woman." That simple statement ties together with today's feasts as well as to the initial reading and the Gospel message. Jesus came not just as God's Son, but also as one born to a woman. Being "born of a woman" is a somewhat veiled confirmation of our belief in a virgin birth represented by the Immaculate Conception. Although Jesus called Himself consistently the Son of Man, Paul never states that Christ was born of a man and a woman. He was born of a woman with God as the Father. Paul, too, seems to confirm that Mary is truly the Mother of God.

Everything we celebrate today is brought to completion and to coordination by the Gospel Reading from St. Luke. As is often the case in these reflections, this reading is so rich in content and meaning there is no way we can truly do it justice in this short space. However, focusing on a specific statement within it often helps us explain it. It is the last few verses that put it all together: "When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by an angel before he was conceived in the womb." There we find the Octave of Christmas (eight days) and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mother of God.

The next verse from Luke speaks to "When the days were completed for their purification"... What a strong reference to the Octave of Christmas as well as to the Motherhood of God by Mary. It does not say "his" purification, but "their" purification. Mary, the Mother of God, and Jesus, the Son of God, were both pure.