

April 15, 2018

GOD, THE FATHER OF MERCIES

*God, the Father of Mercies,
through the death and the resurrection of His Son
has reconciled the world to Himself
and sent the Holy Spirit among us
for the forgiveness of sins;*

Last week at the 10:00 and 11:30 a.m. Masses, I began my homily by reciting the above five lines and asking you, "When was the last time you heard those words?" At both Masses, there was total **silence**. Nobody responded...with the exception of Deacon Bill ... Either nobody was listening (too early on a Sunday morning), or nobody pays much attention to the **formula of absolution** used by the priest at the end of every Confession-Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, or the priest says this Formula too softly. I began with the above quote because we were celebrating **Divine Mercy Sunday**. That Sunday all readings pointed to the **immense Mercy of God**, including the Gospel (John 20:19,22-23): "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week," the day of His Resurrection, Jesus appeared to his apostles, who had locked themselves in a room for fear of the Jews. He greeted them, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when He had said this, **He breathed on them**, and said to them, "**Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.**" This is the very moment when Jesus establishes the powerful **Sacrament of Reconciliation**.

The formula of absolution said by the priest in the confessional "expresses the essential elements of the Sacrament of Reconciliation: **The Father of Mercies is the source of all forgiveness. He effects the reconciliation of sinners through the Passover of His son and the gift of His spirit, through the prayer and ministry of the church.**" (quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1449). Below is the end of the formula of absolution:



*Through the ministry of the Church
may God give you pardon and peace,
and I absolve you from your sins*

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

One of the greatest blessings Jesus gave to the Church is this Sacrament of Reconciliation. We believe that God, the **Father of all Mercies**, through the priest who represents Jesus Christ in this Sacrament, will forgive all our sins if we are truly sorry for having offended Him, and if we promise through His help (since we cannot do it alone) to do everything possible to avoid the near occasion of sin in the future.

Fr. Santiago and I have agreed to increase the weekly sessions of Reconciliation so that it is no longer limited to the 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm time slot on Saturdays. When there is still a line for confessions at 4:45 pm, the confessor priest will stay in the confessional until **everyone** has had the opportunity to receive the **absolution of their sins**, even if that implies that confessions continue after the Mass has begun. In addition, we have recently added 6:30 pm confessions Sundays, and if there is still a line when the 7:00 pm Mass begins, the confessor Priest will stay in the confessional as long as there are still people waiting. As in the past, you can always call the office and ask for an appointment with a priest for your individual confession. We would appreciate receiving your feedback on these initiatives.

One of the greatest blessings of being a priest is to represent Christ in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In my first nine years as a priest (ordained June 20, 2009), I have heard thousands of confessions, and every confession is special, providing so much **grace to the penitent**. Over this last weekend, as we celebrated Divine Mercy, (and including two hours I spent hearing confessions in jail), our parish flock together dedicated close to 10 hours of reconciliation! I pray that this is a sign that more and more parishioners are coming to avail themselves of this **great sacrament**.



As we continue our Easter Journey through Pentecost (May 20), I invite you to continue to celebrate the **Joy of the Risen Lord**. You are invited to renew, or do it for the first time, your individual Consecration to Jesus through Mary, beginning this Wednesday, April 18, and continuing for 33 days through to Pentecost. Please visit our website and click on Marian Consecration for the prayers and meditation of each of these 33 days. The Consecration itself will take place on **Monday, May 21; the New Marian Feast** recently established by Pope Francis called **Mary, Mother of the Church**: From this point on to be celebrated every Monday following Pentecost Sunday - Anniversary day of Jesus' institution of the Church.

May the Holy Spirit guide each one of us on our journey of faith during this Easter Season!

*One in Christ,
Fr. Alain*

Third Sunday of Easter

CCD Class Schedule

- April 15/16: CCD Class
- April 21 (12:30-6:30 PM): Youth Retreat w/NET Ministries (required for Confirmation Year 1 students)
- April 22/23: CCD Class (Monday 8th grade attend Sunday classes)
- April 23 (6:45 PM): Confirmation rehearsal
- April 24 (7:00 PM): Confirmation with Bishop Bevard
- Contact Therese Thiedeman at 301-645-7112 or dre@olhoc.org
- *****
- FIAT: Elementary school Faith in Action Team (meets monthly)
- Edge: Middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)
- Life Teen: High school youth ministry

All-Youth Night is April 22

Begins with 4:00PM Mass followed by pizza and gatherings for FIAT, EDGE and Life Teen



** Youth Summer Retreat **

Rising 9th graders-seniors, join us for **Camp Veritas** August 12th-18th at Camp Lakota in Wurtsboro, NY. It will be an amazing week of outdoor fun, prayer, time with friends, and growing in your faith.

For more information and youth opportunities, please visit www.olhoc.com/ym or contact Marlen Coles at marlen@olhoc.org.

NET Ministries Retreat

On Saturday, **April 21st** 12:30 to 6:30 PM, a NET Ministries team of 12 young adults will lead a retreat for Middle and High School age youth at OLHOC. Theme: **Risen - "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." 1 Cor 15:14**

Drama, music, games, small group discussions, and large group presentations are all used to present the Gospel in a dynamic way. Middle and High School youth are encouraged to join us for this Spring Retreat and invite some friends! **Confirmation Year 1 students are required to attend**, as this is your Spring Retreat experience. Visit www.olhoc.org/lifeteen to register.

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

<http://www.olhoc.org/preschool.html>

Now Open – Registration for Fall 2018

For more information, send an email to preschool@olhoc.org or call the office and ask for Nieda, Preschool Director.

Community Outreach

The next **Shepherd's Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, April 19, 2018 at Good Shepherd Church**. We need menu planners for May.

Our next Outreach Committee Meeting is **May 2** at 7PM in the Social Hall.

All are welcome!



Sharing Sunday – Non-perishable food donations are always welcome and can be left in the Social Hall. All donations will go to the local food bank, managed by Catholic Charities, on Irongate Drive in Waldorf.

2018 Annual Jubilarian Mass

Cardinal Donald Wuerl will celebrate the annual Jubilarian Mass honoring couples married 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 51+ years on Monday, June 17, 2018 at 2:00 PM at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Please call or email the parish office to register by Monday, April 16.

Divine Mercy at OLHOC

Continuing through May 4, the Divine Mercy Ministry invites us all to come and pray the chaplet each **1st Saturday at 3:00 PM**.



Prayer Requests *

We are asked to pray for: Robert, Brooks, Angel Morgan, William Graham, Fred Kowaleski, Kaylie Fowler, Ernest Mack, Derrick Webster, Brandon Mack, Gregory Marciano, Johnné Webster, Dionne Gause, Dorian Webster, Alfred Brown, Doris Chesley, James Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dunham, Tom Casey, Connie Miller, Windsor Family, Jessica Holt, Sue Holt, Wilbur Etbauer, Todd Iddings, Michael Proctor, Edmund Madden, Abigail Poole, Sarah Parker, Dennis Forgash, David DeMarr, Joseph Mason Proctor, Larry McGraw, Sonia Knapp, Lynn & Ronald Henrion, Ebony Jenkins, Tina Gallagher-Detwiler, Judy Studds, Pearl Green, Fr. Robert Pittman, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.



*Names will remain on our list for 3 months. Please call the parish office to re-request a name after 3 months or to remove a name when the person has regained health.

OLHOC offers its heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Carolyn Eckler and Patricia Trefry

Mass Intentions this Week

- Saturday, April 14, 9:00 AM: Fr. Yves Dejean (+)
- Saturday, April 14, 5:00 PM: David Norgren (+)
- Sunday, April 15, 8:30 AM: Cerena Williams
- Sunday, April 15, 10:00 AM: José & Anna Maria Gonzáles (+)
- Sunday, April 15, 11:30 AM: OLHOC Parishioners
- Sunday, April 15, 7:00 PM: Maria Santos (+)
- Monday, April 16, 9:00 AM: Peter Songui
- Tuesday, April 17, 9:00 AM: Everlina Cordner
- Wednesday, April 18, 9:00 AM: George Cordner
- Wednesday, April 18, 7:00 PM: Ernestine Cordner
- Thursday, April 19, 9:00 AM: Victor Cordero
- Friday, April 20, 9:00 AM: Marcos Williams

The Vocations Tree

God, our Father, please send us holy priests. All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all for the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, in union with St. Joseph.



The Vocations Tree project invites our parish community (English and Spanish) to offer prayers to our Seminarians. Each year the Archdiocese Vocation Office generously prints out Seminarian cards. Each card has the photo of a seminarian and a bit of information about him along with a suggested prayer on the back. We ask parishioners to pick a card from the "tree-wall" in the Narthex, and commit to praying for that seminarian every day until Pentecost Sunday, May 20.

Mass Readings for April 22, 2018

Fourth Sunday of Easter

First Reading * Acts of the Apostles 4:8-12,50

Second Reading * 1 John 3:1-2

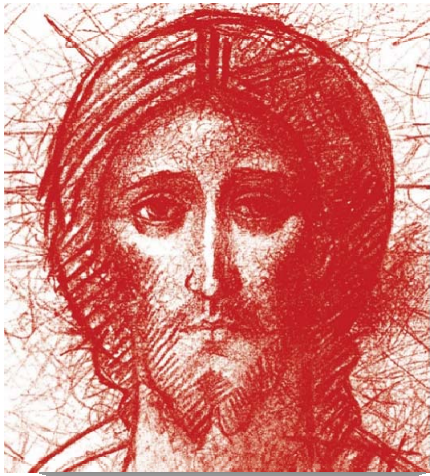
Gospel * John 10:11-18

Lost yet Found

Various items (wedding rings, watches, cell phones, etc.) have been found in and around our church building. If you or anyone you know has lost anything, please stop in or call the church office during business hours to claim.



OLHOC invites you to attend The Catechesis for Adults and Teenagers on Mondays and Thursdays at 7:00 PM, beginning this Monday, April 16th, in the Social Hall.



To be a Christian is to have an encounter with the person of Christ. Jesus himself affirms: “... *I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.*” (John 10:10)

The catechesis will be given by a team from the Neo-catechumenal Way composed of one priest (Fr. Santiago), two seminarians from the Archdiocese of Washington, one widow, and two married couples.

This catechesis is an announcement of the Good News of the Gospel aimed to introduce people to a journey of mature Faith. The catechesis will help you deepen your Faith, encounter Jesus Christ through the scriptures, and find in Christ the answer to your daily sufferings.

We also encourage you to pass on this invitation with family members, friends or anyone that may be in need of rediscovering Jesus Christ. Take one or two cards located in the narthex to pass out and evangelize.

Come with an open heart - You won't be disappointed!

Adult Faith Formation Class:

Evangelization and the Acts of the Apostles

SUNDAYS at 9:30 AM, beginning APRIL 22, 2018

Ten sessions - Come when you can!



As we approach Pentecost and our OLHOC “Year of the Holy Spirit” (Pentecost 2018-Pentecost 2019), there is no better place to look for guidance in the New Evangelization than the Acts of the Apostles. This chronicle of the Church in action gives us the blueprint for the life and mission of the Church today. In *Evangelization and the Acts of the Apostles*, Dr. Mary Healy combines Bible study with Church teaching and practical wisdom to show us how modern Catholics can effectively lead people to Jesus Christ. Join us for this exciting study!