

# Maneline

ST. MARK Catholic Community

## ST. MARK Joins Diocesan Pilgrimage to Emmitsburg

By Fran R. Smith

Parishioners from ST. MARK Catholic Church joined with approximately 1,250 Parishioners from 70 parishes in the Diocese of Arlington on Saturday, October 7, 2023, to make the pilgrimage to ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON BASILICA SHRINE, followed by a procession to the *Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes* for Eucharistic Adoration and the Rosary.

### St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

The day started out chilly, dark, and rainy, but the Pilgrims still came, and came, and came! The morning opened with a talk on the history of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's remarkable journey to Sainthood. Born in 1774 to a wealthy family in New York, she went from being a young lady of wealth who "had it all" with a loving husband and family to a young widow of 29 who "lost it all". In the darkness of the trials and challenges she endured, she found the light of the Catholic Faith.

When she converted to Catholicism, she lost many of her former friends, who had nothing but contempt for Catholics. As a mother, she experienced the loss of several of her children, further testing her faith and endurance. Yet through it all, she managed to found a religious community of sisters and create a school for young women. This school was the beginning of the Catholic school system in the new nation. Her story is one of enduring faith despite the numerous obstacles placed before her in her journey to build the Catholic faith in Maryland. We found that the time with the historian passed too quickly.

Bishop Burbidge celebrated Mass, assisted by many Concelebrants who managed to bring the love and spirit of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to the Pilgrims who filled the Basilica to maximum capacity. The new museum dedicated to this Saint had opened 12 days earlier; it presents the three stages of her life: from Seeker to Servant to Saint. The children who attended were mesmerized with the artifacts from Elizabeth's childhood, youth, and later years. We saw videos detailing her life that were well done and fact-filled. To be present in her rooms filled with her personal belongings was a spiritual and emotional experience.

By the time Mass had ended, the sun had manifested itself in full glory. We were able to stroll through the Stone House and White House, where young re-enactors told us what it was like to be day students and boarders at the school where the Sisters of Charity taught. The re-enactors were very knowledgeable in their discussions and spoke as though they were in school in the mid-1880s. Curators welcomed us in a way that made us part of the family as they answered so many questions from all of us.

### Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

Bishop Burbidge welcomed the Pilgrims at the entrance of the *Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes* and blessed everyone's Rosaries and sacred items before leading the procession to the *Grotto* for Eucharistic Adoration and the Rosary. Quietly and reverently, we Pilgrims were able to be part of a procession that allowed us to take in all the beautiful mini-shrines, fountains, and statues along the way. The *Grotto* was packed

with Pilgrims who actively participated in Eucharistic Adoration and recitation of the Rosary. Bishop Burbidge has a consistent message that reminded us always to love Our Blessed Mother and keep St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in our hearts as role models for perseverance and love of God when life sends us challenges and curve balls.

### Parishioners' Responses

Iris and Dante Gil attended from ST. MARK and had this to say about their experience about the pilgrimage: *When we first suggested a pilgrimage to Emmitsburg, we didn't know the experience was going to bring such joy and a sense of belonging as it did when we attended. What joy to see so many of our brothers and sisters from the different Parishes of our Diocese come together to honor our Lady! Our most impactful moment was seeing so many people walk behind the Monstrance for the procession to the Grotto. It was a sight to see. Being a witness to such much love and devotion touched our hearts immensely! It is our prayer that everyone gets to experience this sense of belonging as we both did!*

Another Parishioner, Jurek Grabowski, had this to say of his experience: *"Pilgrimages have always occupied a special place in my heart, offering a unique journey away from my home Parish to explore fresh opportunities for spiritual reflection, rejuvenation, and personal growth. My recent pilgrimage to Emmitsburg was a profound spiritual expedition. The life of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, America's first native-born saint, was characterized by humility and simplicity as she dedicated herself to serving others and the less fortunate. Witnessing her example inspired*

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me to reevaluate my own life and make a renewed effort to embrace humility and compassion. As I observed the resolute devotion of fellow pilgrims walking alongside me during the procession to the Grotto, I couldn't help but reflect on the profound

and enduring human need for faith in today's confusing world. Finally, I ended this transformative journey by praying the Rosary and asking for Mary's intercession, seeking not just spiritual healing, but also a deep sense of renewal in my faith and life."

We invite all young adults and adults to consider going on our next Pilgrimage to Philadelphia to visit the Shrines of Sts. Peter and Paul, as well as St. John Neumann, on Saturday, April 20, 2024. More information will be forthcoming in the coming months. **Stay tuned!**

## Celebrating the Season of ADVENT at ST. MARK

By Lynne Finta

*The blessed season of ADVENT is upon us once again. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord at CHRISTMAS, please take a few moments to review the calendar of events.*

### Calendar of Events

<b>December 2</b>	First PENANCE
<b>December 3</b>	First Sunday of ADVENT, Year B
<b>December 7</b>	<i>Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> (7:30 p.m. Vigil Mass)
<b>December 8</b>	<i>Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> (6:15 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 5:30 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. Masses)
<b>December 10</b>	Second Sunday of ADVENT (plus 6:00 p.m. Youth and Family Mass)
<b>December 12</b>	<i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i> (7:30 p.m. Mass and Fiesta)
<b>December 15</b>	ADVENT Festival of Lessons and Carols (7:00 p.m.)
<b>December 17</b>	Third Sunday of ADVENT
<b>December 17</b>	Communal PENANCE Service (7:00 p.m.)
<b>December 24</b>	Fourth Sunday of ADVENT (9:00 and 11:00 a.m.)

### ADVENT Festival of Lessons and Carols

According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) website, "The Festival of Lessons and Carols is a service of Scripture and song that dates to the late 19th century. In this service, we listen to nine Scripture lessons which recount the Fall, the promise of a Messiah, the Incarnation, and the Great Commission to preach the Good News. Each Lesson is followed by a Carol or other song that reflects on the Lesson's message and a brief prayer".

As Laura Cooman, Director of Liturgy and Music, describes, "We will hear all nine Lessons and have a variety of music that follows each Scripture reading. This includes congregational hymns, choral anthems, small ensemble works, solos, and instrumental music. This is a large undertaking and involves many worship ministries, most notably including all of the Choirs (combined) and the Lector Ministry. Deacon John Allen will be the Prayer Leader again this year. All are welcome!"

### Christmas Mass Schedule

<b>December 24</b>	CHRISTMAS EVE (5:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m., and 10:00 p.m.)
<b>December 25</b>	CHRISTMAS DAY (9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.)

There will be three simultaneous CHRISTMAS Eve Masses at 5:00 p.m. in the Church, Cassidy Activities Center, and Christian Formation Center Gym.

For more information, contact Laura Cooman at [lcooman@stmark.org](mailto:lcooman@stmark.org).



## Lessons in Joy: The Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia

By Jennifer Gmerek

- *Waking up every morning at 5am while enduring prolonged moments of daily silence and reflection*
- *Giving up all material wealth and possessions*
- *Limiting visits with family and loved ones.*

All of this, balanced with a lifetime of heartfelt devotion to Christ and a promise of eternal joy.

We are all called to live out the virtues of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Yet, The Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia make great sacrifices like the ones above in order to give themselves more fully and wholly to God. As part of a recent *ST. MARK* Adult Faith Formation program, Sisters St. Immaculata Marie and Ann Dominic shared their stories with Parishioners gathered in the Christian Formation Center Gym for a small group discussion.

Previously, my only experiences with traditional Sisters ranged from stories about the strict elementary school teacher archetype to the more outlandishly humorous character portrayed in the “Sister Act” movies.

Times have changed. Fortunately, the energy that radiated from the Sisters of St. Cecilia was warmer, more calm, and filled with a deeper sense of joy.

As the audience’s collective understanding about Sisterhood was fairly limited, it was an important step first of all to

clarify the term “Sister”—women religious who spend their lives in prayer and work serving *outside* in the world’s public spaces—as opposed to “nuns”—women religious who spend their lives in prayer and work *inside* a convent or monastery.

Through our discussion, the Sisters proceeded to share an eye-opening look at their day-to-day lives and what it really means to be a Dominican Sister in our modern world. It became evident how highly structured, yet carefully balanced, a Sister’s daily life must be in order to optimize fully moments of interior growth, shared enlightenment, and a nurtured personal connection to God.

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Given this level of required obedience, I was especially struck by how young many of the Sisters are during their periods of discernment—a period of time set aside to determine whether the call for consecrated life is the correct path for them. In most cases, women must discern before the age of 30. One Sister recounted her own journey of “knowing” that she was being called soon out of high school, and the care she took in convincing her parents—especially her loving, yet skeptical father—that her calling was true.

The path of discernment seems often challenging, yet fully enlightening. The journey to Sisterhood continues through years of formation, as each Sister learns to surrender herself fully and to serve with an undivided heart. The Dominican Order is rooted in a tradition built upon four pillars:

■ **Study:** a deep appreciation and education in the Sacred Truths, as well as working toward specialized degrees in education and other specialty areas, according to one’s own gifts

■ **Prayer:** time set aside each day at the beginning, middle, and end for prayer, the EUCHARIST, adoration, and meditation

■ **Apostolate:** serving as active and ever-present witnesses of God through teaching to over 15,000 students from preschool through college in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia

■ **Community:** driven by a charism of joy and deep connection to the students and families they serve.

Overall, it felt like a rare privilege to get a glimpse into how the Sisters of Saint Cecilia live out their days and quite literally glorify the Lord through their lives. Since the call to religious life can be likened to the call of marriage, it was especially valuable to attend this event with my husband. We both came away feeling humbled and heartened by the apparent spirit of Joy that the Sisters live by in their everyday lives. I am grateful for the experience of meeting the Sisters and honored to have witnessed their genuine “Sister Act” in real life.

## Parish Memorial Garden Expansion Nearly Complete

By Mike and Camy Geide

The *ST. MARK*’s Memorial Garden, which first opened in 1997, has expanded in several stages due to requests from Parishioners. The latest expansion, which will be completed in early December, will increase the number of niches from 368, with only 3 available, to 464. Only *ST. MARK* Parishioners are eligible to purchase and use these repositories.

Visitors may come to the Memorial

Garden 24 hours a day, but access through the Church is only from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily.

*ST. MARK* furnishes the Memorial Garden and religious services. The funeral home or cremator provides all other service. The Parish will provide perpetual care of the Memorial site, including appropriate landscaping. The Parish is in the process of forming a Beautification Committee. Anyone

interested in volunteering should contact Crystal Sheehan, Business Manager, in the Parish Office.

The Parish requests that only single live flowers be placed on the Memorial on celebration dates or times of prayerful remembrance. No other objects should be placed on the plaque, because they may harm the bronze finish that cannot be restored. *ST. MARK* will dispose of the flowers after a reasonable time.

# Incorporating Divine Renovation at ST. MARK

By John Mitchell

In 2018, a few Parishioners at ST. MARK noticed that it was getting easier to find a seat at Sunday Mass. A meeting was called to discuss how to reverse this trend. One of participants mentioned a book by Father James Mallon; Father Tuck Grinnell, who was part of this meeting, suggested, “Why not have a book study?”

Father Mallon had been noticing a similar trend in church attendance since his ordination. When he was assigned to a new Parish, ST. BENEDICT in Halifax, Canada, he decided to do something about it. Father Mallon’s success story at ST. BENEDICT became a best-selling book, *Divine Renovation—Bringing Your Parish from Maintenance to Mission*.

ST. MARK and ST. BENEDICT are not the only Parishes that have experienced decline. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops reported that 24 percent of adult Catholics were attending Mass weekly, and 43 percent were attending once a month. Pew Research reported that for every convert to Catholicism, six Catholics leave the Church. A year after completing RCIA and entering the Catholic Church, more than half of new Catholics stop attending Mass regularly. What can be done about this?

Fr. Mallon makes note of two key insights of Vatican II: *the universal call to holiness* and *the universal call to mission*. Both are rooted in our BAPTISM and are fundamental to the vision of parish life. A Parish is healthy to the extent that these calls are recognized and understood by Clergy and Parishioners. As he explains, “It is not so much that the Church of Christ has a mission, as that the mission of Jesus Christ has a Church.”

When preparing for renewal, Fr. Mallon notes that many Parishes spend a lot of time writing vision and mission statements; but it is often the case that a few years after posting these statements, nothing much has changed. In *Divine Renovation*, Father Mallon lists 10 common values that are found in a healthy

Parish. Among the most important to Parish renewal, he lists the following:

- an experience of the power of the Holy Spirit
- uplifting music
- great homilies
- the formation of small communities within the parish
- a hospitable culture.

## Three Keys to Parish Renewal

To learn more about Parish renewal, three members of the ST. MARK Evangelization Team attended a workshop last July at ST. AGNES in Arlington presented by the Divine Renovation Ministry Team. Over 80 people attended, including priests, staff, and volunteers from Parishes around the Diocese.

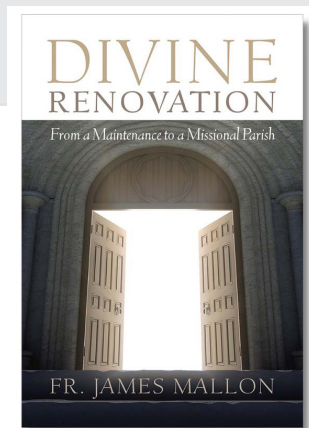
Three keys to Parish Renewal were presented at the workshop.

**The first key is “The Primacy of Evangelization.”** Father Mallon recounts that in 1984, Saint John Paul II gave a talk to the Congregation of Clergy. He said that evangelization must be *primary, preeminent, and preferential*.

Father Mallon says if evangelization is #1 on the Parish agenda, it will show in the way the budget and time are structured. In too many Parishes, evangelization gets pushed down the list by well-meaning, but busy, people. Parishes that are short-staffed often will not have the energy and willpower to make a priority of evangelization.

Father Mallon says, “If our Parishes are not on mission, we will not have a Church in the future.” Leadership needs to set evangelization as a priority.

**The second key is Leadership.** Father Mallon says one person “can’t do Parish Renewal alone. In fact, no person has all the gifts and strengths needed to single-handedly lead, let alone transform, a Parish.” We need a balanced *team*. He says that the Pastor needs to “partner with holy men and women, lay and ordained, to accomplish God’s Kingdom here on earth.”



Father Mallon stresses the importance of *vision*: “Where do we want to go? Where does God want us to go?” When there is a vision, the team shares a “God-given picture that inspires passion in us.”

He continues, “I believe it takes at least 12 years for transformation.” Without a vision, even good leadership will not be able to stay on course for the time it takes to move a Parish to renewal. Keeping a Pastor in place more than a few years is key to maintaining momentum toward this long-term goal.

**The third key is: the Power of the Holy Spirit.** Knowing and loving Jesus is not enough. Desiring to serve is not enough. Jesus instructed His own Disciples “not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for ‘the promise of the Father about which you have heard Me speak; for John Baptized with water, but in a few days you will be Baptized with the Holy Spirit’” (Acts 1:4-5).

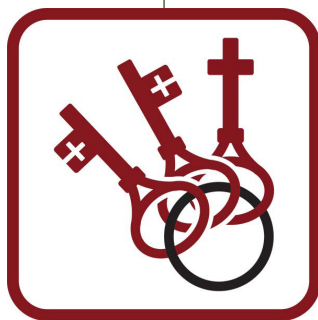
Father Mallon asks, “What would the Parish look like if miracles happened, if God showed up, if people’s lives were transformed, if people’s gifts were unleashed, if the community grew in the fruits of the Holy Spirit?”

He says to discover your mission, “Dream a dream for your Church. Go before the Blessed Sacrament and write it down (the Dream).”

## Alpha, the Engine of Parish Renewal

*Divine Renovation* is *only* a blueprint for Parish Renewal. Parish leadership needs to *implement* the **three keys** in a manner that works for each individual Parish.

Father Mallon says that **Alpha** is the “engine” of Parish renewal. Alpha is designed to offer an opportunity for people



## Incorporating Divine Renovation at *ST. MARK*

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to say “yes” to the Holy Spirit and experience new and strengthened gifts as the Holy Spirit empowers their lives. As people become “missionary disciples,” inviting friends and family who are not part of the Parish to life in Christ will become more natural.

To keep Parish renewal going, Alpha needs to keep running every season, every year. Yet Alpha is only the *first* tool. Every aspect of Parish life, from liturgy planning to religious education to RCIA to music to adult formation in the faith—everything—needs to be part of the bigger plan and vision. As missionary disciples become a greater part of every ministry, they will become more effective in attracting new people to the Parish, as well as enlivening the spiritual well-being of Parishioners.

### Alpha at *ST. MARK*

The first Alpha at *ST. MARK* was held in September 2019. When COVID shut down the *ST. MARK* Spring Alpha in March 2020, the Holy Spirit provided an answer in a new tool, Zoom, to continue the mission. Over 500 guests have participated in Alpha at *ST. MARK* since Fall 2019. Alpha has run continuously since September 2019: live, on Zoom, and now both using Zoom and live.

The *ST. MARK* renewal team is currently planning to bring enduring small groups to the Parish. The idea is for Alpha alumni to stay engaged in their faith with the friends they have made at Alpha. This includes people who have been attending *ST. MARK* and those who have not been part of Parish life.

Plans for the future include finding ways to include more young, busy people in our Parish life. Sunday morning Alpha is in its third season, a start in this effort. Monday evening Alpha has been well-attended for the past five years.

How can we invite more Parishioners now to become involved in a renewed *ST. MARK*? How can we include residents who are not currently attending *ST. MARK* into the life of our Parish? We hope to answer these questions as we move into 2024.

We hope you look for an opportunity to participate in the mission at *ST. MARK*. God wants us all to be part of building His Kingdom right here at home in the Arlington Diocese.

## Small Groups Foster Community

By Mike and Camy Geide

In the 10 years that we have been Parishioners at *ST. MARK*, we have had experienced ebbs and flows with our passion and focus on our faith. COVID had its negative impacts in many regards, but it did spark quite a bit of reflection in our family about our faith. It also instilled in us a newfound recognition of the importance of the Church: namely, our desire to learn about and celebrate Jesus Christ, not just individually but also as members of a community.

Coming out of the pandemic isolation, our kids returned to in-person Religious Education (RE) at *ST. MARK*, and my wife and I attended Alpha. As somewhat of an introvert, I initially had reservations about talking in small groups, particularly on what I had regarded as “private” topics: faith, struggles, and understanding of Jesus and Scripture. However, Alpha helped to ignite the spark that we had and opened us up to addressing seemingly “simple questions” with profound answers, such as, *what makes us truly happy, what do we prioritize in our life, why/how do we pray, and when and how do we see God in our lives.*

Following the 11-week Alpha course, we

continued attending the adult RE sessions, which included some interesting presentations, such as the science behind Eucharistic miracles. However, the presentation-format lacked in the interpersonal, collaborative dynamic that we had grown to like in our small Alpha group. During a RE session, a Parishioner at *ST. MARK* (Julie Scott) spoke on Small Groups that were forming for LENT. We ended up joining a Small Group, four families in total, meeting once a week. Our Lenten experience was enriched by our Group’s discussions of the Lenten passages and Bishop Barron’s reflections. Following LENT, our Small Group has remained together, continuing to meet once a week for dinner and lively conversation about the Weekly Readings and ongoing prayer requests in our lives. Our oldest daughter recently volunteered to lead the Bible study for the other kids in our Group.

Alpha and Small Groups have strengthened us and helped us to grow in our faith, have increased our interest in Scripture, and have fostered our love of Jesus and one another. We are all imperfect people struggling to walk the right path—and there is no need to go it alone!

## CHRISTMAS: God’s Love Made Flesh

“God is God-with-us, God Who loves us, God Who walks with us... Thus, CHRISTMAS reveals to us the immense love that God has for humanity. From this too derives our enthusiasm, our hope as Christians, that in our poverty we may know that we are loved, that we have been visited, that we are accompanied by God; and we look upon the world and on history as a place in which we walk together with Him... toward a new heaven and a new earth.”

—Pope Francis, *Angelus*,  
January 5, 2014



## A Ture Kodak Moment

By Peggy Kelly

In May, I was staffing the American Red Cross booth at “Camp Legacy” Welcoming Home Vietnam Vets near the Mall in Washington. This guy came into the tent and looked at the photos displayed. I told him he looked too young to have served in Vietnam. Then I noticed his 25th Division pin and realized he had indeed served there.



1970



2023

He had a handful of photos from 53 years ago and was wondering if anyone knew the “Donut Dollie” in the photo with him. I looked at the photos and said, “You are

looking at her”. He was at a firebase that I visited while I was stationed at CuChi with 25th Division March-August 1970. We had a nice chat. He said he was from Georgia,

but after the war he moved to Rochester, New York, (which happens to be my home town) and worked at Kodak Park. He named some buildings he had worked in, including Building 29 where my dad worked. Hence the “Kodak Moment” title!

He now lives in the DMV and we have been emailing each other. I invited him to come to the 30th anniversary in November of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial near the Wall. This meeting was the best part of the three-day event for both of us!

## Parish Prepares for Annual Giving Tree and Welcomes Volunteers

By Carolyn Peterson

The Giving Tree will go up in the Narthex on the weekend of November 25-26, and gifts will be collected in the Cassidy Activities Center the weekend of December 9-10.

Volunteers are needed to help organize the gifts in the Cassidy Activities Center on Sunday, December 10, between 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., or to deliver gifts on Sunday afternoon, December 10, or Monday, December 11, or Tuesday, December 12, during business hours. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact me at [cfpeterson@verizon.net](mailto:cfpeterson@verizon.net) or 703-281-3941.

The Giving Tree gifts will help the following charities this year:

- **Special Adoptions:** Gives a personal gift or gift card to Walmart or Target for an individual, family, or foster child in need. The names are given to *ST. MARK* by social service agencies in Fairfax County and Family Pass.
- **Bethany House:** Empowers women and children escaping domestic violence by providing safe, short-term housing and trauma-informed services.
- **Britepaths:** Provides food, financial assistance, financial education, and workforce development services to stabilize clients facing economic crisis, foster



personal empowerment, and support the needs of children.

- **CHO Clothes Closet:** Serves the poor in Vienna, Oakton, Dunn Loring, and Merrifield.
- **Fairfax CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates):** Provides trained volunteers who work at the request of the Fairfax County Juvenile Court, advocating for abused and neglected children to ensure they have a voice in court. Serves more than 300 children each year, 50 percent of whom are under age five.
- **HOPE in Northern Virginia and A Woman’s Choice:** Provides pregnancy support and material resources to women in crisis pregnancies.
- **House of Mercy:** Provides a food pantry offering more than 350 meals a week to local families, as well as a donation center and thrift store to give families free clothing and shoes.
- **Catholic Charities’ Migration and Refugee Services:** Welcomes those who are persecuted and forced out of their home countries and then are formally

vetted and approved for resettlement in Northern Virginia. Helps with housing and employment search, as well as English as a Second Language and child and adult education.

- **Mother of Light Center:** Gives food, clothing, and other support to those in need in Northern Virginia, seeking the face of Christ in all they serve. At CHRISTMAS, the Center distributes gifts to the children of the families they assist.
- **Shelter House:** Provides crisis intervention, safe housing, and supportive services to homeless families and victims of domestic violence. Last year, Shelter House served nearly 600 households comprised of 1,538 individuals—over half of whom were children.
- **Second Story:** Transforms the lives of children and youth by providing safe havens, opportunities to grow and thrive, and support at critical turning points in their lives.
- **Service Source—Long-Term Community Integration Programs:** Facilitates services and partnerships to support some 600 people with disabilities, their families, caregivers, and community members to build more inclusive communities through nine centers in Northern Virginia.

## Annual Festival Honors *Our Lady of Guadalupe*

**S**T. MARK will hold its annual Guadalupe Festival on Tuesday, December 12. The festivities will begin with Mass at 7:30 p.m. After Mass, people will gather for the Family Fiesta in the Cassidy Activities Center.

The Festival commemorates the apparition of the Blessed Mother to a humble peasant, Juan Diego, in 1531.

The dominant religion of the people was Aztec; 50,000 to 70,000 people were sacrificed in the pagan rituals each year. Within a decade after Mary's apparition, nine million Aztecs had become Christian, and human sacrifice had ended.



## Milestones

### BAPTISM

*ST. MARK welcomes the following new Parishioners to our Parish family:*

Evan Jameson Ashdon  
Calvin Alexander Hanna  
Levin William Jacoby  
Teagan Jane Kinney  
Zoe Wanda Lane  
Patrick Cormac McCabe  
Maverick Jaxson Navarrete  
Lena Clare Pomeroy-Martin  
Lucy Jane Weston

### DEATHS

*The following Parishioners entered into eternal life:*

Loretta Anderson  
Tim Collins  
Patricia Connarn  
Margaret Delaney  
Audrey DiSilvestre  
Vardea Dyer  
Theresa "Terry" Holmberg  
John Horejsi  
Phineas Lee  
John McGrath  
Roy McQueen  
Barbara Moen  
Alfonso Rey  
Bob Tardiff  
Mark Tummarello  
Rita Uncles  
Jan Verfurth  
Joanna O'Donnell Woods

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Writer:  
*Lynne Finta*

Editor: *Mary Fisk*:  
[maryfisk2@gmail.com](mailto:maryfisk2@gmail.com)

Artist: *Susan Scanlon*:  
[TSMosaics@hotmail.com](mailto:TSMosaics@hotmail.com)

*"We are not the casual and senseless product of evolution. Each of us is the fruit of a thought from God. Each one of us is wanted, each one is loved, each one is needed".*

—Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI,  
Homily, April 24, 2005

## M&Ms Activities

**T**he mission of the M&Ms to offer interesting and varied activities for senior members of the Parish continues with enthusiasm.

**November:** On November 8, Deacon John Allen provided an ADVENT talk at the After Mass Coffee. On Sunday, November 12, the M&Ms hosted Donut Sunday. On Wednesday, November 15, they gathered to celebrate a Thanksgiving Luncheon at the Pan Am Family Restaurant.

**December:** On Wednesday, December 6, they will enjoy an After Mass Coffee. On Wednesday, December 20, the M&Ms will have a CHRISTMAS Celebration Pot Luck Luncheon in the Activities Center.



**The M&Ms celebrated the birthday of long-time member Joe Kolasch with festivities in the Activities Center.**



**The group met for some Halloween festivities in the Activities Center.**

## ST. MARK Book Club's *Upcoming Selections*

**T**he Book Club meets on the second Thursday of the month from September to June at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. The sessions are moderated to ensure that everyone joins in. For more information, please contact Mark Morneau at [mark.morneau@gmail.com](mailto:mark.morneau@gmail.com) or 703-620-5101.

- **January 2024:** *The Hidden Manna* by James O'Connor
- **February 2024:** *Shadow of His Wings* by Fr. Gereon Goldmann
- **March 2024:** *Confessions of a Cafeteria Catholic* by Peter Kreft
- **April 2024:** *Eucharistic Miracles* by Joan Carroll Cruz

## Restroom Renovations Underway

**T**he long-anticipated renovation of the restrooms is underway, beginning with the Main Floor facilities. When this stage is completed, work on the lower-level rest rooms will begin. The complete project will be completed in early January and will provide new fixtures (toilets and sinks), new flooring and tile, new ceilings, new windows on the main level, new lighting, and the addition of exhaust fan systems.

**Maneline**  
**ST. MARK Catholic Church**  
**9970 Vale Road**  
**Vienna, VA 22181**

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## *Mark Your Calendar*

### **December 2023**

- 1 First Friday Eucharistic Adoration 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Middle School Friday Night 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- 3 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer and Benediction 5:00 p.m.
- 6 M&Ms Ministry breakfast 10:00 a.m.
- 7 Vigil of the *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception* Mass 7:30 p.m. Embry Rucker Food Delivery 10:00 a.m.
- 8 *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception* Masses 6:15 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 5:30 p.m., and 7:30 p.m.
- 9 Giving Tree Gift Collections in the Cassidy Activities Center 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- 10 Giving Tree Gift Collections in the Cassidy Activities Center and Blood Drive
- 14 Praying College Moms Meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 15 Movie Night 6:00 p.m.  
ADVENT Festival of Lessons and Carols 7:00 p.m.  
Middle School Friday Night 7:00 p.m.
- 17 Christ House Food Collection  
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Evening Prayer and Benediction 5:00 p.m.  
Communal PENANCE Service 7:00 p.m.

- 24 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Evening Prayer and Benediction 5:00 p.m.  
CHRISTMAS Eve Masses 5:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m., 10:00 p.m.
- 25 CHRISTMAS Masses 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
- 31 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Evening Prayer and Benediction 5:00 p.m.

### **January 2023**

- 1 *Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God* Masses 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
- 2 M&Ms Ministry breakfast 10:00 a.m.
- 4 Embry Rucker Food Delivery 10:00 a.m.
- 5 First Friday Eucharistic Adoration 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- 6 Creche Exhibit 6:00 p.m.
- 7 Creche Exhibit closes 12:00 p.m.  
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Evening Prayer and Benediction 5:00 p.m.  
Bereavement Group Meeting 3:00 p.m.

**Emily Coffee:** Please join us every Tuesday and Thursday mornings in the Cassidy Activities Center, following our 9:15 a.m. Mass for wonderful coffee, treats, and fellowship.