



THE MORNING STAR

OF SAINT MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

INTRODUCING AGNUS DEI ACADEMY OF SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Discover a fascinating world
of learning and play for your
pre-school child

SAINT MARY VACATION BIBLE CAMP

Tracking Mary: Mysteries
and Messages | p. 9

CATHOLIC VACATION SITES

A travel guide to sacred
spaces this summer | p. 12

UNDERSTANDING INDULGENCES

Learn about 3 ways to obtain
an indulgence for Fatima's
100th Anniversary | p. 4

FOSTERING VOCATIONS IN YOUR PARISH

Thinking about the
Priesthood? | p. 18



THE MORNING STAR

OF SAINT MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

SAINT MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



ESTABLISHED 1926



AGNUS DEI ACADEMY OF SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL



BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES

JOIN US
INTRODUCING
AGNUS DEI
ACADEMY

Promoting and nurturing the intellectual growth and talents of your child.

DISCOVER
COME AND
EXPLORE

Discover a fascinating world of learning and play by combining academics and structured play in a fun, safe environment.

LEARN
OUR
CURRICULUM

Embraces the development of the whole child; physical, cognitive, social, emotional and spiritual.

ENROLLING NOW!

At Agnus Dei Academy, we partner with you in developing the whole child. We foster a love of learning, and encourage independence and imagination to inspire your child to become a thinker, an explorer and above all, a life-long learner.

PRE-SCHOOL 3 & 4 YRS

- Discovery through hands on learning
- Learning through creative play
- Caring environment with affordable tuition
- Full and Part-Time 5 day programs to choose from

THE MORNING STAR

02

VETERAN'S REMIND US
THAT FREEDOM ISN'T FREE
KAREN MAZZIO

04

UNDERSTANDING INDULGENCES
FR. LOUIS P. BELLOPEDE

07

DON'T TAKE A VACATION FROM
GOD - TERRY LEICHNER

08

LEADING OTHERS TO CHRIST
TERRY LEICHNER

09

TRACKING MARY'S MYSTERIES,
VACATION BIBLE CAMP

10

SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
EDUCATING THE TOTAL CHILD
SUZETTE MOYER

12

CATHOLIC VACATION SITES

16

A GOSPEL REFLECTION
DE YARRISON

17

PRO-LIFE, GOD'S CHOICE
MARTHA LAPONE WASSON

18

EFFECTIVELY FOSTERING
VOCATIONS
FATHER STEPHEN DELACY

20

THE LOST CHILDREN OF REGRET
THERESA ICKINGER

24

THE PERMANENT DIACONATE
DEACON DON NICHOLS

SAINT MARY
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



SAINT MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

40 SPRING MOUNT ROAD
SCHWENKSVILLE, PA 19473
WWW.CHURCHOFSAINTMARY.ORG
610.287.8156



INTRODUCING

AGNUS DEI ACADEMY

OF SAINT MARY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ENROLLING NOW
FULL & PART TIME PRE-SCHOOL
FOR 3 & 4 YR OLDS

VETERANS REMINDE US THAT FREEDOM ISN'T FREE

On **Wednesday, May 24, 2017**, Saint Mary School will be celebrating its **11th Annual Memorial Day Celebration**. We are honored to host local Veterans and active duty friends from all branches of the military to help teach our students the true meaning of Memorial Day. All are welcome.

Often people think of Memorial Day as the unofficial start of summer; the weekend that pools are officially opened and noted with a picnic full of hamburgers and hot dogs. However, our Saint Mary community celebrates this revered day before the Memorial Day weekend; giving the children an opportunity to learn about Memorial Day through heartfelt educational speeches and lessons given by our military friends. The students soon discover that Memorial Day is so much more than a picnic.

The Memorial Day Celebration starts with a morning reception of coffee and donuts for all our honored guests, followed by the celebration of Holy Mass at 9:00am. Everyone is welcome to attend this special Memorial Mass celebrated for all the fallen soldiers who have passed away in service to our country.

The ceremony officially begins at 10:45am where the student body, veterans, and the entire community gather at the flag pole in front of the Saint Mary Religious Education Center for a Flag Raising Ceremony. Subsequent to the playing of the bagpipes, the procession solemnly moves into the church. Here our community gathers to listen to personal stories by our visiting Veterans. The students interact throughout, with song and the



distribution of poppies. Additionally, the reading of the Family Heritage is a wonderful opportunity for the students to personally share the names and pictures of their own fallen family members.

Veterans always play the most important role in this unique and educational Memorial Day celebration; assisting in the Presentation of Colors and presenting as guest speakers. Finally, the powerful conclusion to this distinct celebration is a special arrangement of a veteran performing Taps on the bugle.

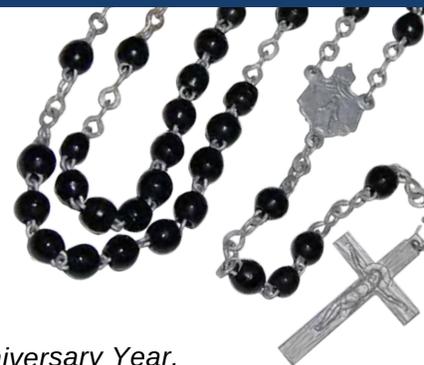
Each year brings something new and interesting that is always profound. Past Memorial Day celebrations at Saint Mary School have been honored with heroes from World War II, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War, as well as active duty soldiers currently home from deployment. Our Saint Mary School community also hosts many local veteran organizations such as the American Legion, the Marine Corp League, Catholic War Vets, and Camp Snoops.

Whether having served in peacetime or in war, our Memorial Day Remembrance is an event that our military friends have come to look forward to sharing with our school and community.

We cordially invite all of our military friends and their families to enjoy a catered lunch following our Memorial Day Celebration. **Call 610.287.7757 extension 1 to make your reservations.**



Understanding Indulgences



Dear Parishioners,

Pope Francis has granted a plenary indulgence opportunity throughout the Fatima Anniversary Year. Read further, in the article from the Catholic News Agency, to find there are three ways of obtaining the indulgence. To obtain the plenary indulgence, the faithful must also fulfill the ordinary conditions: Go to confession and Communion, be interiorly detached from sin, and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.

Love and Prayers,
Father Bellopede



Three ways to obtain an indulgence for the 100-year Fatima anniversary

By Maria Ximena Rondon Fatima, Portugal, Dec 1, 2016 / 06:32 am (CNA/EWTN News) - For the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal, Pope Francis has decided to grant a plenary indulgence opportunity throughout the entire anniversary year, which began Nov. 27, 2016, and will end Nov. 26, 2017.

The Executive Secretary of the Rectory of the Fatima Shrine in Portugal, André Pereira, explained to CNA that the plenary indulgence can be obtained during the entire Jubilee Year. There are three ways of obtaining the indulgence, detailed in a statement on the shrine's website.

To obtain the plenary indulgence, the faithful must also fulfill the ordinary conditions: go to Confession and Communion, be interiorly detached from sin, and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.

1. Make a pilgrimage to the shrine. The first way is for “the faithful to make a pilgrimage to the Fatima Shrine in Portugal and participate in a celebration or prayer dedicated to the Virgin.” In addition, the faithful must pray the Our Father, recite the Creed, and invoke the Mother of God.

2. Pray before any statue of Our Lady of Fatima. The second way applies to “the pious faithful who visit with devotion a statue of Our Lady of Fatima solemnly exposed for public veneration in any church, oratory or proper place during the days of the anniversary of the apparitions, the 13th of each month from May to October (2017), and there devoutly participate in some celebration or prayer in honor of the Virgin Mary.” Regarding this second way, the rector of the Fatima Shrine told CNA that the visit to the statue of the Virgin, “does not necessarily have to be only at Fatima or exclusively in Portugal,” but can be done anywhere in the world. Those seeking an indulgence must also pray an Our Father, recite the Creed and invoke Our Lady of Fatima.

3. The elderly and infirm. The third way to obtain a plenary indulgence applies to people who, because of age, illness or other serious cause, are unable to get around. These individuals can pray in front of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima and must spiritually unite themselves to the jubilee celebrations on the days of the apparitions, the 13th of each month, between May and October 2017. They also must “offer to merciful God with confidence, through Mary, their prayers and sufferings or the sacrifices they make in their own lives.” Editor's note: The original version of this article incorrectly identified André Pereira as the rector of the Fatima shrine.

What is an indulgence? COURTESY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven. There are specific conditions for receiving an indulgence. As a result of the communion that exists between Christ and all the members of the Church, the Church has a treasury of spiritual goods that is inexhaustible. The source of these spiritual goods is Christ. Through her union with Christ, the Church has the authority to dispense this treasury. When the Church does this, in order to spur people to acts of piety and charity, the Church requires those who seek an indulgence to perform some good work or act of devotion.

An indulgence does not confer grace. An indulgence is not a remission of the guilt due to sin. The guilt due to sin is ordinarily taken away by the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance (confession), in which we receive forgiveness for sins through Jesus Christ. Although guilt is taken away, and with it the eternal penalty that is due to sin, namely, damnation, the eternal loss of the presence of God, there remain consequences for sins that those who have committed them must bear. There is what is traditionally called the temporal punishment for sin. Every sinful act creates a disorder within the soul of the human person; it distorts our desires and affections, leaving us with "an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory." Furthermore, sin disrupts one's relationships with God, with the Church, with other people, and with the world as a whole. The communion intended by God is damaged or lost.

Those who have received forgiveness for their sins through the sacraments still have an obligation to undergo a difficult and painful process (the temporal penalty for sin) to be purified of the consequences of their sins and to restore the disrupted relationships. The necessary and painful process that brings restoration and purification can take place either in this life or in Purgatory, as whatever part of the process remains unfinished at death must be completed in Purgatory. Through an indulgence, God grants the prayer of the Church that the temporal penalty for sin due to someone be reduced [partial indulgence], or possibly eliminated [plenary indulgence]. By God's grace, participation in a prayer or action that has an indulgence attached to it brings about the necessary restoration and reparation without the suffering that would normally accompany it. The granting of an indulgence by the Church is "the expression of the Church's full confidence of being heard by the Father when, in view of Christ's merits and, by his gift, those of Our Lady and the saints, she asks him to mitigate or cancel the painful aspect of punishment by fostering its medicinal aspect through other channels of grace."

Journey with us on the 13th of each month from May through October as we gather by the Mary Monument near the Chapel to pray the Rosary and Fatima Prayers while meditating on each of the Fatima Apparitions. More details to follow.

(continued on page 6)

What is the difference between a partial and plenary indulgence?

An indulgence is partial or plenary according to whether it removes either part [partial] or all [plenary] of the temporal punishment due to sin.

What are the conditions for obtaining an indulgence?

In order to be capable of gaining indulgences one must be baptized, not excommunicated, and in the state of grace at least at the completion of the prescribed works. To gain an indulgence, one must have at least the general intention of doing so.

Plenary Indulgence

Furthermore, for reception of a Plenary Indulgence, which grants the remission of all temporal punishment due to sin, in addition to this good work or act of devotion, the Church specifies four conditions: (1) sacramental confession, (2) reception of Holy Communion, (3) prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, and (4) complete detachment from all sin, even venial sin.



Partial Indulgence

If the full disposition is lacking, or if the work and the four prescribed conditions are not fulfilled, [save certain specified exceptions], the indulgence will only be partial. Note on Partial Indulgences: In the past, partial indulgences were "counted" in days (e.g. 300 days) or years (e.g. 5 years). Catholics often mistakenly thought that this meant "time off of purgatory." Since there is no time in purgatory, as we understand it, it meant instead the remission of temporal punishment analogous to a certain amount of penitence as practiced in the early Church. This was a very generous standard, since the penitence required for sacramental absolution in the early centuries was arduous, indeed. However, with Pope Paul VI's 1968 revision of the *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum* (Collection or Handbook of Indulgences), this confusing way of counting partial indulgences was suppressed, and the evaluation of a partial indulgence left to God.

Can a baptized person obtain an indulgence for someone else?

The faithful can obtain Partial or Plenary indulgences for themselves, or they can apply them to the dead.

[Learn more about the Church's practice on granting indulgences by clicking here.](#)

Act of Contrition - O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

DON'T TAKE A VACATION FROM GOD

Summertime is a time to slow down and take a break from the full demands of life. It's a time to spend with family so we can re-connect and focus on our relationships. .

Maybe we might get some 'me-time.' Things such as school, sports, and all sorts of activities and commitments tend to slow down or altogether halt over the summer. Changing over to summer activities and anticipation of travel excursions with family are exciting reasons to leave the old schedule and commitments behind. So it's understandable why some may want to take a break from everything else – even from going to Mass.

But our faith isn't an organization that we can take a break from. Our faith is a relationship too. It's our most important relationship. It's the exact 'me-time' activity that we actually need to increase and nurture during this down time; since our relationship with God might not be getting the full attention it deserves and possibly may have been moved aside at times by our day-to-day activities and commitments. What would happen to our marriages if we took summers off? What would happen to our friendships if we did nothing to nurture them for three months? Our relationship with God is no different. Use the blessings of slower schedules, beautiful weather and longer days to nurture your relationship with God too.

It can be difficult for Catholics to find a Mass when traveling or when it's not practical to attend their regular

parishes. It's not always easy to find the right diocesan or parish websites.

MassTimes.org makes it much easier to search for a Mass by presenting all the possibilities in a geographical area on one page, providing worship times, church locations, contact information, website links and maps.

MassTimes.org cooperates with parishes, dioceses and bishops' councils and conferences to assemble the information about the churches. MassTimes.org only lists Catholic churches that are on diocesan web sites or information provided by dioceses.

[Traveling by air?](#) Click here to find an Airport Chapel worldwide with Catholic Mass.

[Going on a Cruise?](#) Click here to find Churches or Chapels near major cruise ports.



Need help getting to Mass while on vacation? [Click here.](#)
MassTimes.org can help find churches and worship times worldwide.

How do I lead others to Christ?

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” - Mark 16:15

Every believer is commissioned to bring people to Jesus. The Lord is not asking us to do something impossible or impractical. A faithful witness is one who is credible on a particular subject because of their experience, which shows in their convictions. A witness is also a spokesperson, someone who has something to say on the subject. The character of the Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit working through our lives will give evidence of our genuine Savior, Jesus.

Sometimes, it's as Easy as....Volunteering. If you would like to help spread God's word, but you just don't know where to begin, start simple.

Volunteer help is needed for Vacation Bible Camp this year, which will be held June 26th through 30th. If you think God is calling you to step up and maybe even a little out of your comfort zone to help others, then there are so many opportunities here for you.

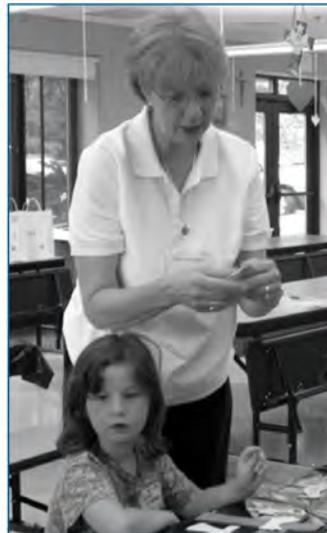
The week before the camp begins, help is needed to decorate the camp area. We supply the decorations. All you bring is the willingness to help. If you want very important tasks, but need something less physical, can you help distribute snacks that we provide for the children? Maybe you can oversee the crafts that we have for them to complete. Some of the smaller children might need a little assistance with gluing. Additionally, maybe you can be one of the adult leaders or assistants to stay with a small group of children all week as they move from activity to activity.

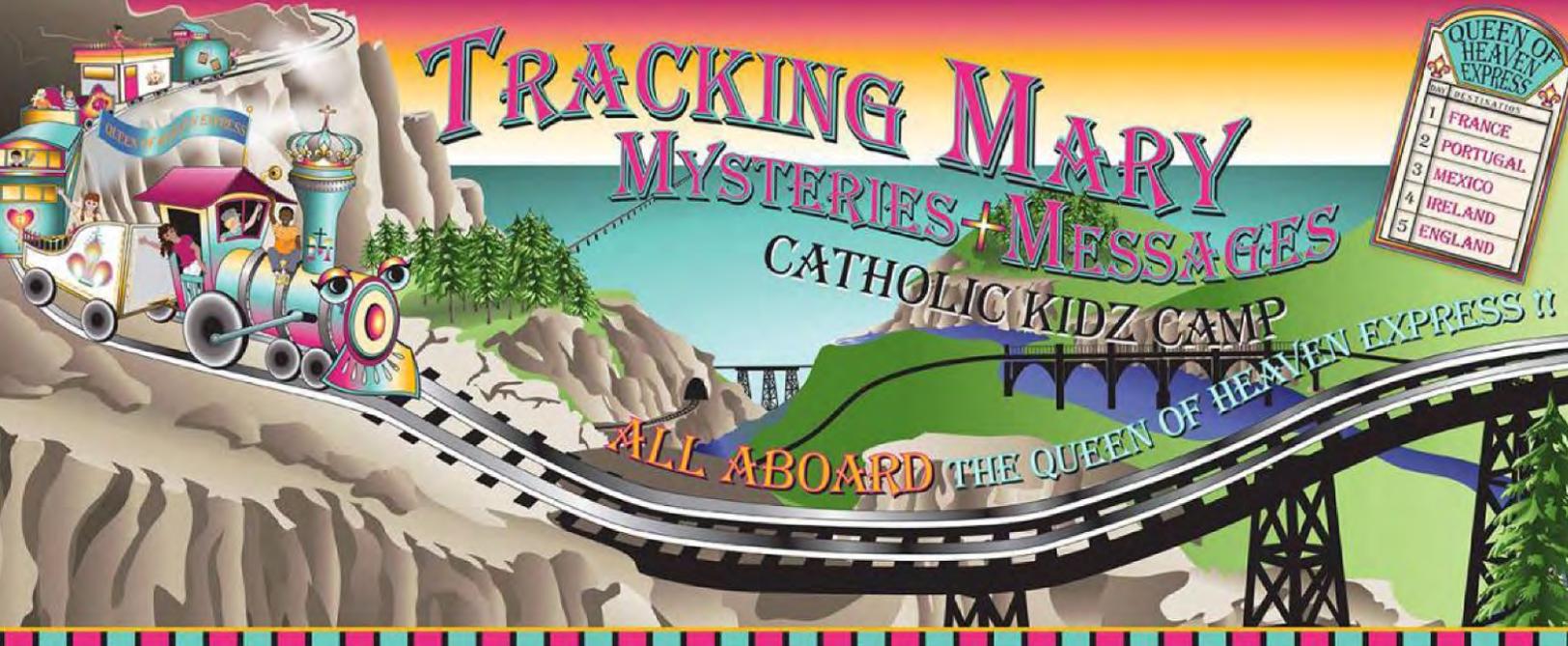
More specifically, maybe your area of interest is music. Then we have the perfect place for you. We need a music leader and an assistant to teach the children the songs we have for them to learn.

Maybe you like to run around and play games with children. If so, we need an activity leader and an assistant to coordinate the games and activities we have planned for the children. Most importantly, we need Catechists to teach the faith to the children. We supply all you need for you to teach the lessons.

We hope you can help us bring the faith alive to our young by volunteering your time. There is something for everyone to do from great grandparents to high school students. If you are interested in assisting, please fill out the **Vacation Bible Camp Volunteer Form** found on the Saint Mary Church website at www.churchofsaintmary.org. You must be 18 years or older, and you must have proper clearance to work with children.

If you have any questions about the camp or how to obtain clearances, please contact **Kathy Wasniewski** 610.287.8156 or e-mail kwaz@churchofsaintmary.org.





Mary always leads us to Jesus Fun is Chugging just around the Bend!

Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible Camp, June 26-30, 2017 from 8:45AM until 12PM every morning! Children ages 4-10 are invited to join us and the cost is \$30 per camper.

Fun is chugging around the bend with **Full Steam Faith, Boxcar Bible, Caboose Crafts, Gondola Games, Switchback Snacks and Steam Whistle Music!** Come and join the fun!

This year's program, entitled "**Tracking Mary: Mysteries & Messages,**" the children can ride the **Queen of Heaven Express with Catholic Kidz Camp.** This innovative program, developed by Growing with the Saints and Family Rosary, connects the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary with today's youth in a fun and spiritually moving way. It features the Queen of Heaven Express – a special holy train traveling to the faraway places around the globe visited by Our Blessed Mother: Lourdes, Fatima, Guadalupe, England and Ireland. Children discover how Mary brings us closer to Jesus through the power of the Rosary. Mysteries and Messages are revealed at each stop.

Catholic Kidz Camp is more than a vacation bible school. The program focuses on Catholic identity and teaches the Bible from the Catholic perspective. It introduces saints as faith heroes and heroines while encouraging family prayer through a daily Rosary.

Vacation Bible Camp has been a part of Saint Mary's summer activities for several years. Games, crafts, storytelling, singing and prayer have combined to encourage faith building in our younger generation during the summer. Each year there is a fresh new program that introduces new ideas and new ways to learn about Jesus.

We hope your children will join us during this wonderful week. **Click here** to register your child for Vacation Bible Camp, or go to Saint Mary Parish website at www.churchofsaintmary.org to download a form or for more information.

If you have questions about the camp or would like to volunteer, please contact **Kathy Wasniewski** 610.287.8156 or e-mail kwaz@churchofsaintmary.org.

We look forward to seeing your children there!



1961 **SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
CELEBRATES FIFTY FIVE YEARS!** 2016



Building the faith, one child at a time.



Saint Mary Catholic School, Educating the Total Child

SUZETTE MOYER, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

One of the first of many serious decisions that parents need to make comes about when their children are ready to enroll in school. ‘Where should we send our children to receive the academic rigor they will need to be contributing citizens of the twenty-first century?’ Other factors they might consider, ‘Does this school emphasize citizenship and leadership?’ ‘Does this school have teachers that recognize our children’s gifts and talents in art and music?’ Most parents are looking for schools that will reinforce the spiritual and moral values they practice at home. **Saint Mary Catholic School** practices these concepts daily in our school schedule and emphasizes it directly as part of our school mission statement.

We are very blessed to be celebrating 55 years as a “Parish School.” A few of our many academic successes for the school year 2016-2017 are:

- **Saint Mary’s students won four of the academic scholarships** that PJPII High School is awarding to its incoming freshmen class for the 2017-2018 school year.
- Two of our eighth grade students won the **prestigious Neumann Scholarship**.
- **Sixteen out of twenty seven students will be attending PJPII High School in the fall**, in addition to several other high schools including the Villa, the Hill School and Lasalle High School.

The best way to know if **Saint Mary Catholic School** is the right school for your children and your family is to visit us. This will give you an opportunity to meet the principal, faculty and staff. Perhaps you can talk to other parents that you might not know on a personal level but are aware they send their children to **Saint Mary Catholic School**. Take the time to ask what they think of our school. Word of mouth promotion is often referred to as the “least expensive and most effective form of advertising.”

When you and your family start your journey down the path to finding the right Catholic school for your most valuable treasures (your children), please consider other very important questions and facts about the school you are visiting. Ask how religion is incorporated into the daily lives of the students.



1961 SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL CELEBRATES FIFTY FIVE YEARS! 2016

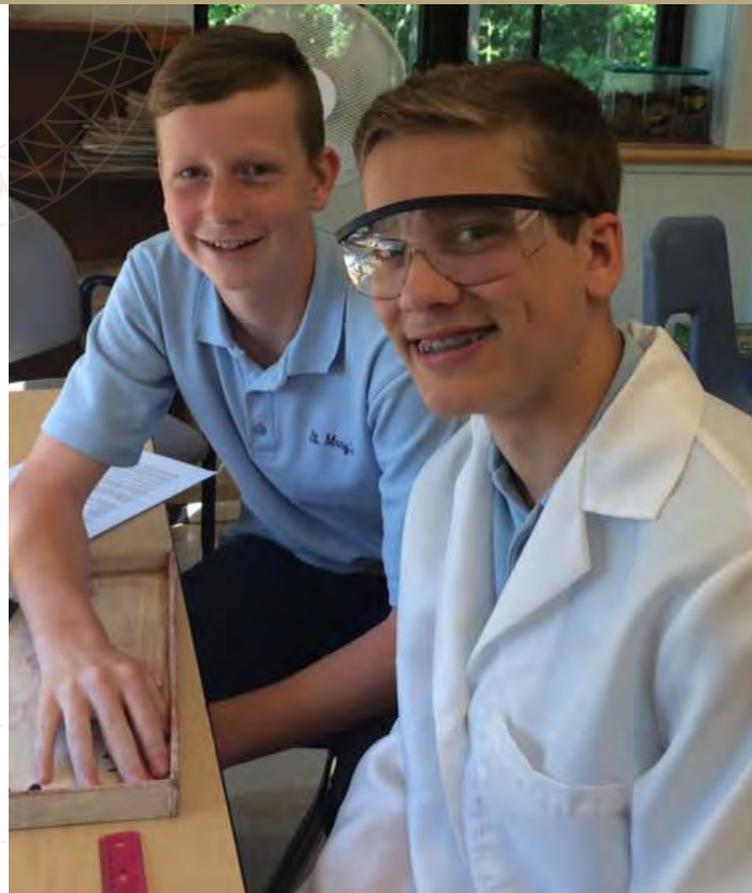


Building the faith, one child at a time.

Ask about the presence of a priest in the classroom. Hopefully you can attend a First Friday Mass and take note how the entire student body is participating.

Ask if Catholic values are practiced. Then see if they are outwardly visible. Saint Mary Catholic School can answer "YES" to each of these questions! At the end of the day, the best school for your children is a highly personal decision based on your family, your values, and most importantly, the special interests of your children. Please consider Saint Mary Catholic School as a significant partner in the foundation of the beautiful Catholic educational journey you have already begun with your children.

Call any time to arrange a tour for your family at Saint Mary Catholic School 610.287.7757 and ask for Suzette Moyer, extension 244 or e-mail smoyer@smsk-8.org. **COME AND SEE!**



Four of the seven students that will receive National Merit Scholar recognition this fall, attended Saint Mary School from first through eighth grades.

- Sydney Bucher (St. Mary)
- Michael Granito (Holy Family)
- Monica Rapchinski (Holy Family)
- Michael Pirrall (St. Mary)
- Susannah McHugh (St. Mary)
- Andrew Tuffillaro (Spring-Ford)
- Kerrin Dunlap (St. Mary)

CONGRATULATIONS!

7 PJP Students will Receive National Merit Scholar Recognition this Fall!

PHOTO COURTESY OF PJP II HIGH SCHOOL - WWW.HTTPS://PJP HS.ORG

CATHOLIC VACATION SITES

A travel guide to sacred spaces this summer

Going on vacation this summer? Or staying at home? Why not take a day trip and visit a local Catholic Shrine or Catholic historical site in our area. In case you can't get to Fatima, in Pennsylvania alone, there are many Catholic sites that you may want to visit for a day trip during this summer. Here are just a few.

Doylestown: National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa

Under the auspices of the Pauline Fathers, this shrine is focused on ministering to the Polish-American community in the United States in honor of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland. From humble beginnings in a barn in 1955, it has grown to include over 170 acres of land offering a retreat house, the main church, chapel, outdoor Stations of the Cross, Cafeteria and more. In the lower church there is a replica of Our Lady of Czestochowa, as it is in Jasna Gora, Poland. There are also four side chapels: St. Paul the First Hermit, Our Lady of Nazareth, Divine Mercy, and Our Lady of Guadalupe. There are daily Masses in both Polish and English, Confession, Novenas and many more spiritual exercises.



Philadelphia:

Central Association of the Miraculous Medal

One of the most popular Catholic devotions is to the Miraculous Medal as dictated to St. Catherine Laboure in Paris. For those who have the opportunity to visit Paris, we encourage you to visit the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal as your number one stop; however, for those living in the U.S. you have the opportunity to visit this shrine in the city of Philadelphia. Founded by Saint Vincent de Paul, the Vincentians have been in the United States since 1818 and the Eastern province was established in 1888. The Central Association of the Miraculous Medal was established in 1915 with the intent to spread devotion to Mary under the title of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

National Shrine of Saint John Neumann

St. John Neumann became Bishop of Philadelphia where he organized the first diocesan schedule of the Forty Hours' Devotion in America and also established the first unified Catholic school system in the country. He was also founder of a religious order for women, the Third Order of St. Francis of Glen Riddle.

The shrine, consisting of an upper and lower church, houses a museum and gift shop. There are scheduled Masses, Confessions, Eucharistic Adoration and devotions throughout the week. The Redemptorists at the Shrine regularly engage in preaching parish missions, retreats, and the 40 Hours Devotion.

The body of Saint John Neumann (*basically a skeleton, but with his face covered by a mask to preserve his look*) is on display in the lower church. His vestments have been changed several times over the years, most recently in 1989.



Saint Katharine Drexel Mission and Shrine

Our Mission

As Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, we believe God calls us to be a sign in the world of the power of the Eucharistic Christ to effect unity and community among all peoples.

Saint Katharine Drexel is honored here in the Philadelphia suburb of Bensalem. Canonized fairly recently (2000), she is the second American-born Catholic Saint (Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton was the first). Born into a wealthy family, she was given an excellent example of charity by her parents, who gave generously to those less fortunate, and invited them into their home.

National Shrine of Saint Rita of Cascia

Certainly one of the world's most revered saints, Saint Rita of Cascia is honored here in a special way. Known as a peacemaker, reconciler and healer, she is known as the patroness of impossible cases. After her husband's death, Rita, influenced by the peacemaking example of her parents, pledged to forgive her husband's killers. She faced a steep challenge, however, in convincing her sons to do the same. Tradition has it that she often pointed out to them the image of the crucified Christ and the fact that he forgave those who killed him. She is inspiring and her way of life is a model for us all.

Old Saint Joseph's Church

Old Saint Joseph's Church is located just two blocks from Independence Hall and is the Oldest Catholic Church in Philadelphia, founded in 1733. When we think of the early settlers of the English Colonies, which later became the U.S., we usually associate them with a quest for religious freedom. But such freedom did not extend to Catholics in the early 18th Century. In fact, it was illegal to hold a Catholic Mass in public in nearby Maryland up until 1718. Early English Jesuits fanned out from Maryland to Pennsylvania, where William Penn's "Charter of Privileges for Pennsylvanians" guaranteed religious and civic freedom to "all who worshiped one God" – not just Protestants. By 1733, the Jesuits founded the first Catholic Church in Philadelphia, and it was actually the first urban Catholic Church to be built in the British Colonies. There was some resistance from England, but Pennsylvania refused to obey, and the church was built. Old St. Joseph's sacramental records, among the earliest in the nation, record 8,850 baptisms before 1810.



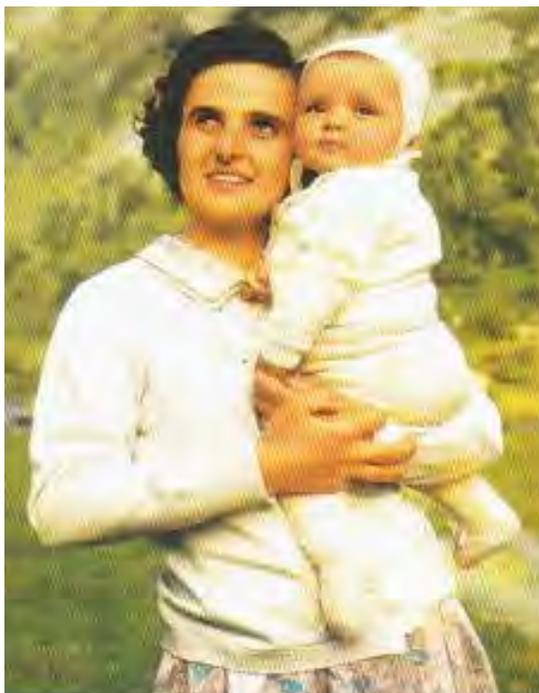
Old Saint Mary's Church

Built in 1763, this church pre-dated the Declaration of Independence by 13 years. Members of the Continental Congress attended Mass here on four occasions from 1777 to 1781. And George Washington, though an Anglican, attended Mass here on at least two occasions. Old St. Mary Church became the first Cathedral of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Philadelphia in 1810. In 1838, as the population had grown, it was replaced by the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. The church remains an active parish and its beauty is inspiring.

(continued on page 14)

Warminster: Shrine of Saint Gianna

One of our newer saints is honored here. Saint Gianna was a physician and one who gladly gave up her life for her unborn child. St. Gianna is an example that we truly need in an age when the proponents of abortion are so dedicated to the culture of death. For those unable to travel to the Shrine in Mesero, Italy we recommend a visit to the shrine here in Pennsylvania. For many women wanting to conceive a child, a trip to the Shrine to touch and venerate St. Gianna's gloves has been a true pilgrimage of faith. God has granted many of them new life. There have also been many other kinds of answered prayers.



*Saint Gianna Beretta Molla
1922-1962*

Pittsburgh: Saint Anthony's Chapel

Dedicated to Saint Anthony of Padua, the largest collection of relics in the world for public viewing (outside of the Vatican) is here in this small chapel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This chapel has over 5,000 relics from all over the world. It also houses one of two known life-sized Stations of the Cross known to exist in the United States.

SAINT MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

40 Spring Mount Road • Schwenksville • PA • 19473

PARISH OFFICE CENTER HOURS Monday - Friday: 9am - 5pm
Saturday and Sunday: 9:00am - 1:00pm

Parish Office 610.287.8156

Saint Mary School 610.287.7757

Religious Education PREP 610.287.8156 am 610.287.4517 pm

Saint Mary FAX 610.287.4226

Internet Website www.churchofsaintmary.org

St. Mary School Website www.smsk-8.org

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday - 7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00 Noon

Monday through Friday - 9:00am

Saturday - 9:00am and 4:00pm (Vigil)

CONFESSIONS: Sat. 9:30am - 10:00am and 2:45pm - 3:45pm

PREP 6:30 - 7:45pm Monday or Tuesday

CHILDRENS LITURGY OF THE WORD Sundays at 10:30am

YOUTH GROUP Lifeteen: Sundays 1:30 - 3:00pm

Edge: 1st & 3rd Sunday 6:30 - 8:30pm

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

is all day, every day in our chapel.

BAPTISMS - 2nd & 4th Sundays of each month at 1:15pm

MARRIAGE PREPARATION Registered members please contact the parish house at least six (6) months prior to the wedding date. A Pre-Cana session is required.

ROSARY The Rosary will be prayed daily before the 9:00am Mass and on Sundays before the 7:30am Mass.

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET Daily after the 9:00am Mass.

DIVINE MERCY HOLY HOUR The Thursday before the first Friday of the month from 7:00pm to 8:00pm

MIRACULOUS MEDAL NOVENA Mondays after 9:00am Mass

LIBRARY HOURS Saturday before and after 4PM Mass and Sunday 8AM - Noon

SCRIP ROOM HOURS 1st & 3rd Sundays: 8:15AM - Noon; 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays: 9:45AM - Noon

Rev. Louis P. Bellopede, Pastor

Rev. Brian Kean, In Residence

Deacon Donald O. Nichols and Deacon David Kolesky

Mrs. Renee Jacobs, Director of Operations

Mrs. Mary Beth O'Connor, Business Manager

Mrs. Anamaria Hazel, Administrative Asst. Business & Operations

Mrs. Sandra Olzinski, Administrative Asst. to the Pastor

Mrs. Kathleen Wasniewski, Principal of PREP

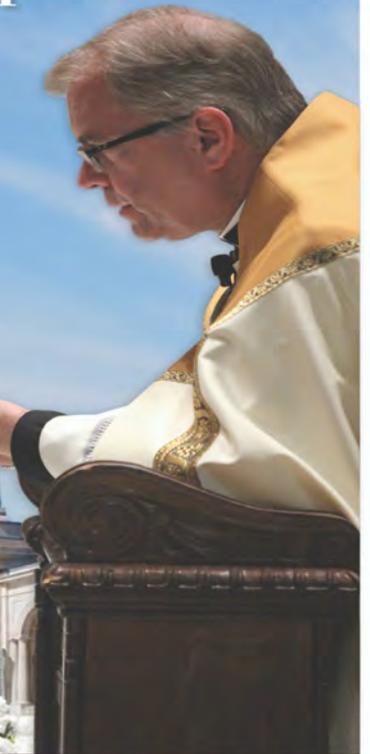
Mr. Kevin Conwell, Principal of Saint Mary School

Pilgrimage to

June 5 – 12, 2017

Fátima & Lourdes

With Fr. Dennis Gill
and the
Archdiocese of Philadelphia



(800) 653-0017

Pilgrimage Package Includes:

- † Round-trip airfare from Philadelphia (Including airport taxes & surcharges.)
- † Accommodations at 3 & 4 Star Hotels
- † Breakfast and dinner daily (special dietary needs available upon request)
- † Wine served with dinners
- † Transportation by air-conditioned motor coach
- † Assistance of a Professional Tour Escort & local Catholic guide(s)
- † Sightseeing and admissions fees as per itinerary
- † Catholic priest available for spiritual direction
- † Mass daily & spiritual activities offered

Canterbury Pilgrimages 

166 South River Rd. Suite 110, Bedford, NH 03110-6928 | 800-653-0017 | canterburypilgrimages.com | reservations@canterburypilgrimages.com

A GOSPEL REFLECTION

The crowd said to Jesus:

"What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

So Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

So they said to Jesus, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst." JOHN 6:30-35

As I reflected on this Gospel passage for May 2nd, these lines really spoke to me:

The crowd said to Jesus: "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat." (John 6:30-31)

What can you do? What will you give us in order for us to believe in you? The people in this Gospel passage wanted Jesus to DO something. Something they could see and be amazed by. They put conditions on their belief, desiring for Him to prove himself first.

We humans haven't changed all that much in the last couple thousand years, huh?

What if the miracle isn't about the "doing," but about the "being?"

What if the miracle happens when we strip away worldly thinking that values the doing? When we give ourselves the gift of simply BEING with Jesus? Quietening our minds and sitting still at His feet. Feeling the power of His incredible presence. Receiving His perfect love. Whoever comes to me will never hunger...

Being still and quiet is something we struggle with. Closing our eyes and letting ourselves feel Jesus may

raise discomfort in us. Allowing His powerful love to penetrate our hearts is a vulnerable stance for us humans to take. Which, I imagine, is what has us keep the focus on Him and what He might DO. Rather than on me and who I might become. Ponder: What would it be like for you to - fully and unreservedly - go to Jesus and receive the "life giving bread" He offers you? Prayer: Lord, Help me to come to you with an open heart and an open mind and simply be still in Your Presence. Help me to receive all that you wish to give to me today. I am ready.



De Yarrison, CPCC is a Professional Coach, Speaker, and Women's Retreat Facilitator

De is super excited about guiding women to discover the Truth of who they are - God's chosen and beloved ones! She offers insight and experiences for women to cultivate self-compassion and self-support, along with tools for claiming the freedom found only in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

De Yarrison, CPCC
www.ConversationRevolution.com

Pro-Life, God's Choice

In the village of Magenta located in the northern region of Italy, Dr. Saint Gianna Molla in 1962 surrendered her life so the child she carried in her womb would survive.

Bill Diss from Portland Oregon, a highly acclaimed high school math teacher with eleven years tenure was targeted and recently fired from his teaching position for refusing to allow Planned Parenthood entry into his classroom to administer a teen outreach program.

Octogenarian Jeanette Wynne, a great grandmother residing in Chalfont, Pennsylvania with unsteady limbs travels weekly to a Philadelphia radio station to chair a program titled, "Voices of the Unborn." Mrs. Wynne's efforts are often trumpeted at the annual pro-life convention held in Philadelphia.

We are called by our baptism to be prophets of God, who wants all of us to go where he wants us to go and say what he wants us to say. As Catholics, we share a common thread, a commitment to defend life, to be faithful to God's plan. We must not rebel against the order of creation. God gives life and calls us from life. Pope Saint John Paul II in a speech announced to the world that every human life was of transcendent value. Life is a gift not a threat. Abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace today because it is a war against the child. Roe v. Wade has deformed a great nation pitting mothers against their children and women against men. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love. Lives are being lost and in the most barbaric fashion. We have a Catholic duty to stand up against the pro-abortion, pro-choice machine and the providers who profit financially and who boast of shopping for a Lamborghini. Have we not learned from the heart of genocide in Eastern Europe? Cecil Richards, head king pin at Planned Parenthood has stated that those who oppose abortion are committing a misogynistic sexist crime. Murdering innocent children is a hideous grizzly business and Richards will say or do anything that will further her agenda. We must expose this evil, stop the carnage, become a driving force to

protect the unborn and their mothers and hold politicians accountable by our vote. This requires commitment and perseverance in prayer. Pro-lifers from Saint Mary and Saint Eleanor parishes persevered, and in solidarity with Father John Franey, stood together in prayer at the now defunct abortion facility in Collegeville, PA.

We have moved too far into the age of tolerance where acceptance of everything is a hallmark of intelligence and honest expression of unpopular views are considered a hate crime. We may never get back to that period of time when erecting stone crosses on private property (Villanova University) wouldn't have raised an eyebrow.

When Fr. Bellopede asked me to pen an article on pro-life, I froze. Did he not know the wounds are ever present or did the Holy Spirit intervene knowing that I of all people could bear witness?

Stillborn at fifteen weeks gestation, I held my child. She was not a "clump of cells." She was my daughter.



EFFECTIVELY FOSTERING VOCATIONS

FR. STEPHEN DELACY, VOCATION DIRECTOR

In my role as Vocation Director I have been paying special attention to parishes and ministries who are effective in fostering vocations. There are two types of success that lead to effective encouragement of vocations and help form a Culture of Vocations and effective discipleship formation.

The first type of success is seen in places where they have effectively established a Culture of Vocations. This occurs when there is a dynamic experience of the Church, an enthusiasm around priestly and religious vocations, where young people have access to happy priests and religious, and where there are substantial opportunities for prayer. When this culture is established there is a sense that vocations are normal and not something unusual. When someone within this culture steps forward and announces that they are entering the seminary or religious life, the vocation is celebrated by all.

VOCATION OFFICE FOR THE
DIOCESAN PRIESTHOOD

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

HEED THE CALL

FOR MORE INFORMATION
GO TO WWW.HEEDTHECALL.ORG

The ministry that has clearly established a Culture of Vocations is **Bishop Shanahan High School**. This ministry has had more seminarians enter the seminary over the past several years, than any other ministry in the entire Archdiocese. Some of the “key ingredients” of this ministry are intact families, good foundational parishes, and a school that has been blessed with good and holy priests who understand how to effectively foster vocations. Amongst parents, there is an enthusiasm for their children to have a priestly or religious vocation, and they actively encourage their sons and daughters to consider this calling. This community has several lay leaders who enthusiastically encourage vocations, so it is not only the priest’s “job” to foster vocations, but seen as everyone’s job. There is now an expectation that one or two members from this community will enter the seminary every year.



*"The world looks to the priest, because it looks to Jesus!
No one can see Christ; but everyone sees the priest, and
through him they wish to catch a glimpse of the Lord!"*

SAINT POPE JOHN PAUL II

COURAGE. FAITH. LOVE.

As wonderful as it is when a ministry establishes a Culture of Vocations there is a type of ministry that will produce an even greater yield for vocations. That is a ministry that effectively knows how to form disciples. Few ministries in the Archdiocese know how to form someone into full-blown discipleship. Every ministry makes you a better Christian, but often stops short in forming the individual into a full-blown disciple. A disciple can be described as someone who seeks the will of the Father above all other priorities. This can be shown by how people pray. A full-blown disciple schedules their day around prayer whereas someone who is merely a good Christian, finds him/herself fitting prayer into their day. A fully committed disciple is someone who takes up his cross daily and is animated by the Holy Spirit.

Temple University's Newman Center is an excellent example of a ministry that knows how to form disciples. By way of example, the Archdiocese has a discernment group that meets once a month. In the Fall of 2016, there were 9 men in this group actively discerning a call to the priesthood. This is not a bad number. Considering the size of Temple's Catholic ministry as it compares to the whole Archdiocese, it is remarkable that Temple's Newman Center ran a discernment group at the same time period that had 11 active discerners. I believe that the reason for this level of success in producing full-blown and committed disciples is the combination of a dedication to Eucharistic Adoration, a residential community, and the presence of **FOCUS Missionaries**. **The Director of the Newman Center, Fr. Shaun Mahoney**, has a very clear vision of the process that someone goes through, from merely being a baptized Catholic to being a full-blown disciple.



We see at the Newman Center all the key ingredients coming together when there is someone knowledgeable about directing the discipleship process. This process includes formation of an active and lively prayer life fostered primarily through Eucharistic Adoration, and a supportive and active community. Community is an important component of making disciples, and it is significant that our Lord formed the Apostles into a community when He was making them disciples. The presence of the FOCUS missionaries at the Newman Center has created a culture where everyone is sharing in the mission of the Church. It is my belief that Temple's Newman Center will be a regular font for Vocations for years to come.

Knowing Saint Mary to the extent that I do, I believe that a Culture of Vocations has already taken root and will blossom into a very fruitful ministry for vocations in the future. Saint Mary is a great parish, with terrific priests who are, and can continue to be, leaders in disciple formation. That is my challenge to the parish.

THINKING ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD?

CONTACT FR. STEPHEN DELACY AT 610.667.5778 OR E-MAIL FR.SDELACY@ARCHPHILA.ORG

Christ has no body now on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world. Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which He is to bless His people.

THE LOST CHILDREN OF REGRET

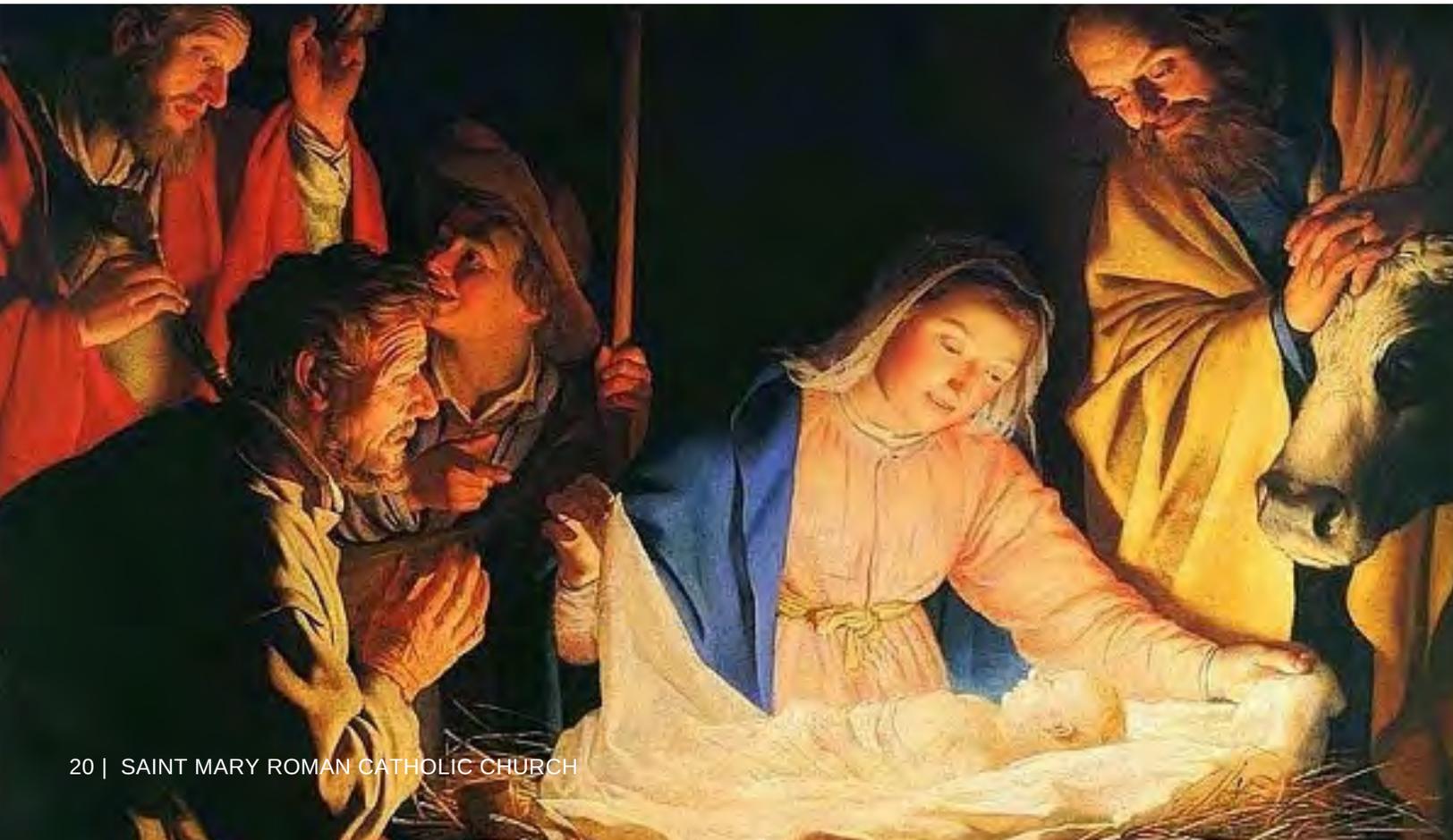
THERESA ICKINGER

There is a line from Nietzsche “in a night of dark trees” which, in a certain impulse to truth, describes so well the cold “God is dead” philosophy that best suits the lifeless, loveless, leafless land that shudders amid shrieks and shadows. This is today’s world, the post Christian era, cursing fertility, giving euphemistic titles to murder, the cruel outrage of abortion. Infanticide, euthanasia, assisted suicide are all described with sanguine, syrupy phrases like: “kindness”, “mercy”, “answers to the population problem”.

This is truly a forest of death with sweeping, strangling boughs, treacherous pits and briers; a dark, descending deep where no birds sing. Into this withered world, two thousand years ago, a little Child was born. He is the new dawn. A sunrise, golden and warm, to stir the dark trees, to fire the blood, to thrill the brittle limbs of despair, swaddling the earth with promise and burning vibrancy to proclaim life, radiant in its fullness. This is the Christ, God of gods, Lord of lords, King of kings!

A bed of straw, a night of wonder, a guiding star, Angels with harps of gold. Lambs attend a gentle young woman with her sleeping Babe. Across the earthen floor, from the flickering lantern in Joseph’s hand, the legs of the wooden manger, cast the image of a cross.

The thralldom of death is shattered, the predators of night banished to caverns endless. Frightened, weeping children leap with laughter, picking the flowers of forever in meadows lush with slender grass and crystal streams. Christ is born! Cry the mountains. Christ is born! Echo the everlasting hills. Every wind, every waterfall, every frost flower joins in the celestial song, Glory to God in the highest!



However, among the modern world's dark trees, the cry of the nighthawk is for blood. The demons rise from their barren tombs, perch upon the bare branches, draping themselves in winter's robes. They call for the death of the weak, the limited, the "too new", "too old", "too sick". Like prowling wolves they lust for body parts and organs of the "useless".

"Away with the drains on society," say the great gurus of population planning. We need more room for ourselves. We cannot feed, house and cloth the "worthless. Those who "quality of life" we deem inadequate. We could better use them in our own eugenic experiments. So say they all, but behind their rigid smiles, their mechanical gestures, peer the eyes of the serpent, eyes unable to cry. What is the worth of the "worthless?" "When I am weak," said St Paul, "then I am strong." Must everyone sing the same song? In any symphony, the pause, the silence, the soft, almost unheard note is as much a part of the beauty as are the great chords and soft melodies. Why? Because they are part of the whole; they belong to one another. Alone they are shallow tunes, together they are majesty.

Consider the high heavens. The black almost-nothingness of the winter sky shows forth the splendor of the stars.



Look at the sea. Not just the deep, rolling tide, but the meringue tipped waves that tickle the fleeting sand. See the wild storms, the quiet moorings, the caves, the massive cliffs, ablaze in the full sun and the moonlight that shades the tender shells.

Passion and stillness, joy and sorrow, the pangs of birth, the thrill of love, the pain of loss and the agony of death all touch us with fingers of fire and ice.

When it rains we want the sun; in drought we pray for rain. As children we desire to grow up; when we are old we see young faces in the firelight. What of the "worthless?" Too many? Too poor? Noise makers; space robbers; cutting down trees and cramping the spider monkey; poking holes in the ozone layer; draining the public coffers with their needs, so there isn't as much for the politicians to steal.

The world's troubles have been caused more by the brilliant than the slow; more by the gifted than the disadvantaged. Luxury has corrupted more than ever poverty. Idleness has withered more souls than overwork. Dictators, tyrants, moguls, tycoons are usually clever, talented people; sometimes geniuses. The litany of the miseries that they have caused is endless. On the other hand, the population " rejects" eat a little food, drink a little water, and seek a little clothing and shelter. Yes, they do require our time and our care. But, this not their debt; it is their gift to us. In their need they do the world a great service. They say, "If there is no room at the inn, make room, move over, and learn to share." They are the anti-lock brakes on human pride, arrogance, ambition which propels us to a dangerous precipice. "Beware ambition Cromwell, thereby fell the angels." They are the mirrors of our own vulnerability. From their cradles they say: "Help us; you were once like this." From their sick beds they speak of one-time health. The last words of farewell from their long grey hearses: "I go today; you tomorrow."

(continued on page 22)



THE LOST CHILDREN OF REGRET *continued from page 21*

They are the copper resistors that slow the burning currents of conceit. There is a wisdom which has always escaped the world: when the able stop to carry the weak, they become stronger, when the rich feed the poor, their true wealth increases. It is the everlasting message of Christianity: we only save what we give away.

Over the rotting dumpsters, the foul cisterns, the landfills which have become the nameless graves for the millions of innocents, slaughtered in their own mother's wombs, the night of dark trees descends. Fingers of their long reaches write their wicked curses in the dirt. Today, the new; tomorrow, the old. Scripture tell us: "If they do these things in the green wood, what will they do in the dry?" If they scruple not to stab the soft, warm breast of April, what will they do to the brittle brow of December? Must the feeble plead: "How sudden?" Must the healthy ask: "How soon?"

Pascal said that God has made perfection in nature to show us it is His imagine and imperfection to show us it is only His imagine. There is a balance, even a kind of antithesis, to all the order of life. Without the pauses, the soft trembling notes, half heard, little bells, low whispers, we would never experience harmony's design, never know the mystery of the seasons, the snow-capped mountains, the virtue of the spheres, the miracle of wonder in a little child's eyes. How beautiful are the flowers of the desert.

Christ our God was born in a stable, the lowliest of births, by today's standards, He was expendable; in the world's eyes, a teen pregnancy that should have been prevented or aborted. He was "unplanned", but to God, He was THE PLAN. In that glorious simplicity, the rigid night trees twisted and cracked. The shadows fled; eternal spring awoke in all creation. In the hushed casket of the earth, hidden in the cool stillness, the white wheat began to stir and grow; the vineyards throbbed with the fruit of a new wine. But, a world intoxicated with its idle pleasures, dull to mystery, slept through it all. The unthinkable had happened. A Virgin gave birth to God Himself!

A stable became a palace. All the tiny stars, the little fractured mirrors, distant and lost, were fused together to form a great and shining light, a herald of majesty to bring wise men to their knees. As in the children's fairy tales, the straw was turned into gold, the animals smiled and moonbeams danced like fireflies around a manger bed.

This was Christmas. Not simply toys and tinsel trees, over priced gifts or twinkling lights. More than that, this was Light Itself; this was Love Itself, turning the world back to its Maker, tearing down all the "no room in the inn" signs and writing welcome across the sky. Weeds became lilies, shepherds knelt with kings. Water would be turned to wine and there would places for everyone.

For today's materialists, the spoiled child to whom no excess is ever enough. Christmas has become an empty carnival of greed. All the fanfare and glitz have become hollow counterfeits of the true spirit of Christian joy and celebration. The real reason for music and laughter, color and song has been forgotten. Like the brilliant tree ball, it is a rainbow around nothing. The real Christmas was God wrapped in rags.

The Incarnation was the great imponderable gift of the Creator to us. It was the promise of Eden fulfilled. St Athanasius tells us that since nothing could be added to God when the Word was made Flesh, it was we who received the increase. The Blood of Divinity pulses in our veins; we are the birthday candles of Heaven.

The Father's gift to Christ, His Son, was the Blessed Mother. This was His "going away" present- the one touch of Paradise that would be with Him always. From the Crib to the Cross, His Mother was to be His comfort and joy. This gift was His alone. It was not asked of Him to yield this for the work of Redemption. In pure justice and charity, He could have said through all eternity: Mine alone.

But He did not. When everything had been done that could be done to satisfy for man's sins, when the last bitter wound was felt, the last drop of Sacred Blood about to be shed, in dying charity, with a Heart a burst with love and a generosity that we cannot even imagine, He shared with us His deepest treasure, His most beloved childhood Christmas present: "Son, behold your Mother, Mother behold your Son."

Calvary became our nativity; the Cross, our manger bed. We should not think that the Immaculate Virgin was somehow chosen for this honor at random, in a kind of divine lottery, without any unique merit of her own. For God looked down the tattered ages and previewed all His creatures to whom this great dispensation might be given. It was Our Lady, alone, whom God beheld as the perfect chalice to hold, in eternal elevation, the Christ. She, and no other, was the one new Eve who would not fall, not once. All the rest of us in some way appeared as pathetic sieves. Our Blessed Mother is the true Holy Grail. We cannot receive Christ unless we drink from this cup.

By the Crib and the Cross, the Chalice and the priest, through all the ages, the Body of Christ will be made present on the altar until, in some inimitable way, in some last final hour, every atom of creative matter shall have been touched by the Blood of God.

Through Him, with Him and in Him, all things will be new again; the night of dark trees will be over. The Spirit of God ever breathes life into clay, and the Light of Christ transfigures stones into jewels.

It was not to the snow leopard, the spotted owl, the killer whale that the Creator had said: "Increase and fill the earth and subdue it." It was to us. To all who cooperate with the Grace of God, the door is always open. There is always room for one more.

Of only one man did Christ say that it were better for him had he never been born. This man was Judas. Of all the rest, the poor, the sick, the downtrodden, He said that what was done to them was done to Him.

What, then, of the day when all stand before Him in the last judgment?

Shall the seeing see, except through blind eyes or the hearing hear, except through silent ears? When the mute, with the voice of thunder shall proclaim the glory of God, who shall speak for the learned, save the ignorant? Who shall help the stalwart stand, if not the lame? Who shall comfort the living, if not He who rose from the dead? For Christ has conquered death by dearth, and the tomb has become our triumph. In the arms of the Cross, no one shall be cold or sick, none broken, none "worthless," no one "over population".

The enemies of life are not content with destroying the physical order; they hunger to distort the form of the soul, willed for it by the Creator: "He made them male and female." Despite the irrefutable evidence of DNA and Chromosomes the mutilating sex change medics scavenge the land seeking whom they may devour. Leaving manhood to rot in the dust to the ghoulish delight of the godless.

A gaunt specter haunts the legacy of loneliness; women sitting by dead fires, rocking dolls, mourning the lost children of regret. Above all is the plaintive voice of innocent blood crying to Heaven for justice. "God is not dead, neither does He sleep" wrote the poet. Read the Bible: "and they said blessed are the barren and the womb that bears not and then the mountains fell upon them."

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PRAY FOR US

PERMANENT DIACONATE PROCESS

Here at Saint Mary's we are very blessed to have 4 members of the clergy participate in the life of our parish, 2 priests and 2 permanent deacons. Now we may have a general understanding of how men become priests, the process to become a permanent deacon may not be as clear. And although only men can be ordained, it can be just as important for everyone to understand this process, as we can better encourage men who we feel may have this calling. Encouragement from others is often the primary reason why men pursue a vocation.

While all of the baptized are called to share in the mission of Jesus Christ according to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, those who are ordained also offer service in a way proper to the Sacrament of Holy Orders. At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons, upon whom hands are imposed "*not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service.*" For strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests they serve in the diaconate of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity to the people of God. (*Lumen Gentium, 29*)

The diaconate has its origins in apostolic times and flourished during the first four centuries of the Church's history. Later, for very complex reasons, the diaconate went into decline until it became little more than a step on the way to the priesthood in the Western Church. When the Second Vatican Council restored the diaconate as a permanent ministry in the church, it did so for three primary reasons.

1

A desire to restore to the Church the full complement of active apostolic ministries

2

The desire to integrate and strengthen those who were, in fact, already exercising diaconal functions

3

To more fully serve the needs of the people

A deacon's ministry entails proclaiming, preaching and teaching God's Word, assisting the bishop and priest at the Liturgy, assisting at funerals, ministering to the sick and dying, leading the community in prayer and in sacramental liturgies, baptizing, witnessing marriages, and exercising administrative leadership in the Church. A permanent deacon, who may be married, is a member of the clergy and shares in the hierarchy of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the deacon is configured to Christ the Servant. It is Christ the Servant who acts through the ministry of the deacon.

In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, the Permanent Diaconate Division of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary has as its primary purpose implementing the four-fold dimensions (human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral) of formation of potential candidates for the diaconate of Jesus Christ in the Roman Catholic Church. Its guiding focus is the example of Jesus Christ, who came "not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for the many" (*Mark 10:45*).

In theological instruction and pastoral education, the Permanent Diaconate Division seeks to engage men in a process of reflection on the issues of life, to provide a better understanding of the Gospel message, a clear awareness of the historical development of the Christian faith and to impart a sensitivity to the human concerns and spiritual demands faced by contemporary men and women of faith.

Of particular emphasis is a strengthening of the man's personal ability to explain and articulate the Catholic faith to members of the Catholic community and to men and women of other Christian traditions and other faiths.



By means of its integration of the four components of formation the Permanent Diaconate Division has these as its primary goals:

1. The fostering of Human Formation consistent with the attainment of the maturity demanded for ordained ministry as a Roman Catholic deacon.
2. The deepening of Spiritual Formation to sustain a lifetime of diaconal service and to advance that continual conversion of mind and heart, so necessary for every baptized member of the Church and especially to be expected of its ordained deacons.
3. The sharpening of Intellectual Formation effectively to assimilate a graduate, professional theological education consonant with the ability to faithfully grasp, represent, and apply the Church's Tradition as an ordained deacon.
4. The broadening of Pastoral Formation to develop the specific capacities for ministerial and public leadership required for diaconal service.

The application process begins with an information night which occurs in the Spring. This first stage during the

application process is a period of Inquiry, where men and their families begin to more intentionally explore the possibility of a call to the diaconate. Just as the possible applicants begin to get to know the Church and the diaconate in a more specific way, so too, does the Church begin to get to know these men. The inquiry period includes participation in discernment groups and workshops and concluding with the man, with the consent of his wife, entering into the Aspirancy Year.

The Aspirancy Year is "primarily a time to discern the capability and readiness of an aspirant to be nominated to the bishop for acceptance as a candidate for diaconal ordination" (National Directory for the Formation, Life and Ministry of Permanent Deacons in the United States [National Directory] §182). In addition to classroom sessions that focus on spirituality, prayer, and discernment, time will also be spent participating in workshops and days of recollection. The aspirant will also begin meeting with a deacon-mentor and priest-spiritual director.

(continued on page 26)

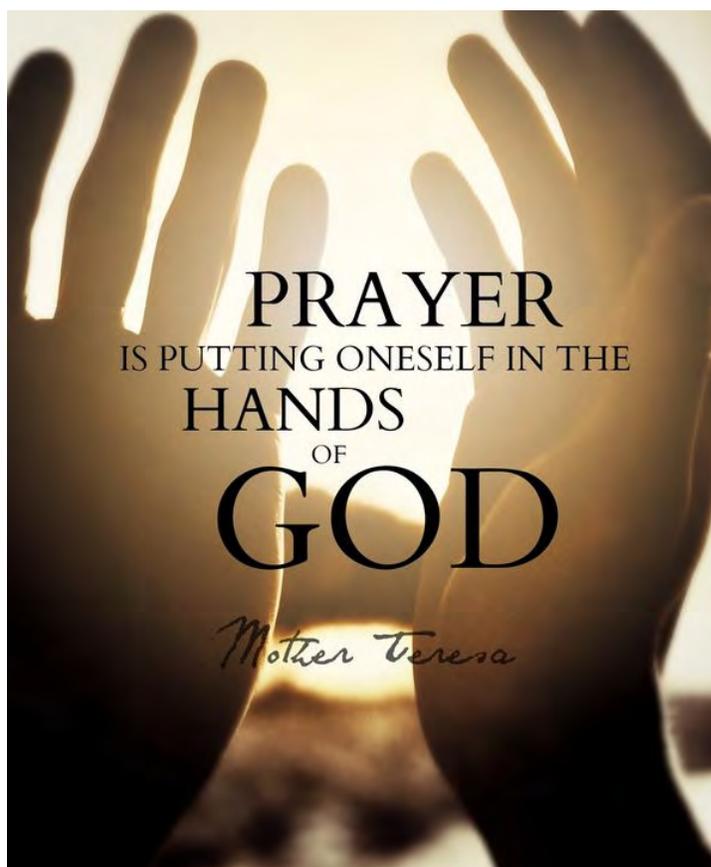
PERMANENT DIACONATE PROCESS

continued from page 25

The deacon is called personally and ecclesially to serve after the manner of Jesus. He is first and foremost a Christian man in his usual employment and lifestyle, trained and formed by additional study and prayer for a special ministry to the community as an ordained minister. Consideration is given to the following as to a man's suitability for the Diaconate Formation Program:

- **Age:** At least 29, and ordinarily no more than 55, at the beginning of the formation program.
- **Status:** The applicant must reside within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and possess financial security with a history of steady employment.
- **Faith:** A Roman Catholic Man who has received all the Sacraments of initiation, married or single, of sound moral character, mature faith and possessing a sense of vocation to service. If the applicant is a convert to the Catholic faith, he must be fully instituted for at least five years prior to admission to the program.
- **Family:** If married, the applicant must have been married for at least five years, have the expressed consent and full support of his wife, and whose children are of such an age and adjustment so as not to be unduly affected by their father's pursuit of a life that involves special apostolic commitments. If single, the applicant enjoys a stable, settled life with a history of healthy relationships and understands and is willing to order his life toward a commitment of celibacy.
- **Natural Gifts:** Demonstrates the basic potential to develop the ministerial skills of relating to people, speaking well and being a spiritual leader

- **Spirituality:** A man of prayer willing to make personal sacrifices to be a consecrated sign of God's love for others in his vocation to serve
- **Service:** The applicant must be willing and able to give the time required for study and service during his formation without detriment to his family and employment, and if ordained, is willing and able to serve the Archbishop of Philadelphia 10-12 hours each week in any pastoral assignment that may be given to him.



I think one of the best ways to think about this process is that it's not about recruiting, but about discernment. Is the Lord Jesus calling this man to this vocation? The question is not just for the man, but for the Church as well. I would ask that you please prayerfully listen to what the Lord is calling you to do! Our Perpetual Adoration chapel is a great place to go to "listen" to the Lord! Not only for possibly becoming a deacon, but for ALL vocations! Following the Lord's call is what will give you the ultimate fulfillment and happiness in your life!

The Rosary is the
weapon for these times.

– Saint Padre Pio –

Parish Spring and Summer Calendar, 2017

Our Lady of Fatima Rosary and Fatima Prayers: Journey with us on the 13th of each month from May through October, 2017* as we gather by the Mary Monument near the Chapel to pray the Rosary and Fatima Prayers while meditating on each of the Fatima Apparitions. *(in August we will meet on the 19th) More details to follow.

11th Annual Memorial Day Celebration sponsored by Saint Mary School:
Wednesday, May 24th beginning with the 9AM Mass. The ceremony officially begins at 10:45am at the flag pole in front of the Saint Mary Religious Education Center for a Flag Raising Ceremony. We cordially invite all of our military friends and their families to enjoy a catered lunch following our Memorial Day Celebration.
Call Saint Mary School at 610.287.7757 ext. 1 to make reservations.

Ascension Thursday Vigil Mass: Wednesday, May 24th at 7:00pm
Ascension Thursday Mass: Thursday, May 25th at 9:00am and 7:00pm
Memorial Day Mass: Monday, May 29th at 9:00am

Pentecost Vigil Mass: June 3rd at 4:00pm
Pentecost Sunday Masses: June 4th at 7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am and 12:00pm

Red Cross Blood Drive: Monday, June 5 from 9am-7pm in the Parish Hall

Corpus Christi Procession: June 15th at 7:00pm

Vacation Bible Camp: Tracking Mary: Mysteries and Messages
Monday - Friday, June 26-30th each day from 8:45am - 12:00pm

July 4th Mass: Tuesday at 9:00am





THE VOCATION OFFICE FOR THE DIOCESAN PRIESTHOOD PRESENTS:

QUO VADIS SUMMER 2017

BIBLE STUDY

RECREATION

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

HOLY LIVING

REGISTER TODAY!

AT: WWW.HEEDTHECALL.ORG

JUNE 26-29

HIGH SCHOOL AGED MEN

Early Bird Registration by April 1st: **\$20**

Register on and after April 2nd: **\$35**



**BLACK ROCK RETREAT
CENTER**

QUARVILLE, PA