

December 1, 2019

BORN IN HEAVEN!

BORN IN HEAVEN? A few days ago, I was visiting children at St Peter's School. I went to see first graders and second graders. I prayed with them for the healing of their classmate Naomi, the six-year old fighting a devastating brain tumor. Then I went to see the kindergarten class. Always a joy to be with the little ones. As I was leaving, I asked: "Does anyone know where I was born? If you are sure, raise your hand." Two or three hands went up and I asked the young boy in the front row. In an assured voice, he said: "YOU WERE BORN IN HEAVEN!" Though surprised, I immediately responded: "YOU ARE RIGHT: ALL OF US ARE BORN IN HEAVEN!" Yes! What an insight: our Creator and Father is in Heaven and so are we. To be in heaven is to be with God! We come from God and we return to God! Our souls are born in heaven. They are with God. Then their journey on earth is to return to be with the Father forever and ever in Heaven.

As you know, I am not a theologian nor a philosopher. I am a simple priest with a simple mind. However, I believe that God speaks to us in different ways at different times. Often, HE speaks to us through children. Little Children are pure and innocent. Some (not all) are like angels. They are close to God and we need to pay attention to what they say. I know that some children have changed the lives of their parents by asking simple questions, such as: "Dad and mom, why don't you get up and receive Jesus at Mass?" They may not know the Law of the Church (Canon Law) that says, "Married Catholics can receive the Eucharist only if they are married in the Catholic Church...and in a state of grace." However, this question may prompt their parents to get married by a Catholic priest (a civil marriage or one in a non-Catholic Church without the presence/blessing by a Catholic priest is not considered valid by the Catholic Church).

Can you recall having been touched by the words or actions of a child? Or do you recall when you were a child having asked some question that startled your parents or their friends? As children, we love to ask WHY? WHY? WHY? Many times adults find those why questions annoying but at other times they make us think...I am not saying that we should have a theological debate about whether or not we were born in Heaven. I am simply saying that to think about our own creation, our own birth may be helpful in our relationship with God. Yes, I believe that we all come from God and we are all created to go back to God. This is my faith. I cannot explain how this is possible.

However, IMAGES, ANALOGIES can help me to have a better understanding of God and of His presence in my daily life. Does it matter whether I was born in France, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Poland, or Germany? These are the most frequent guesses when people try to figure out the origin of my strong accent. It can be surprising that after 50 years of living in the United States, people still ask me "Where are you from?" Or "Where is your accent from?" These questions do not annoy me. On the contrary, they help me to enter into a conversation with a stranger I may encounter at Safeway, at the post office or in a train. That small talk may lead to deeper questions, including spiritual ones...and in some cases may help people to reconsider their relationship with God and lead them to change their way of life...

Sometimes, words or actions of a child can refresh our memories ... Not too long ago, on June 20, my classmates and I had a Mass of Thanksgiving on the occasion of our tenth anniversary of priesthood. It was held at St Phillip the Apostle in Camp Springs. Many of you were present and you may remember that my classmate Fr. Sass from Poland in the middle of his homily referred to his strong accent (still less strong than mine) and got a big laugh when he said that his response to people who ask him "where is your accent from?" is very simple: " MY ACCENT IS FROM HEAVEN !"

I have used many times as a reading at a funeral Mass or at the burial site a passage from St Paul's letter to the PHILIPPIANS (3:20): "But OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the LORD JESUS CHRIST." Yes, our citizenship is in Heaven— our baptism is the formal entry into Heaven. Let us pray that we all remain "good" citizens following the laws of Heaven! Let us pray that one day we will all be together again with our families and friends, reunited in Heaven.

May the Spirit of Advent enter into our hearts! Come Holy Spirit! Help us to anticipate the joy of Christmas into our daily lives! Come Holy Spirit! Help us to desire to RECONCILE with God as we prepare for the coming of our Lord Jesus!

One in Christ,
Father Alain

First Sunday of Advent



CCD Class Schedule

- Dec. 1/2- NO CCD Classes
- Dec. 8/9- CCD Classes resume
- Dec. 15/16- CCD Classes
- Dec. 22/23- No CCD Classes

Community Outreach

The OLHOC Holiday House is now in the Narthex for monetary donations to our Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets.

The next Shepherd's Table will be on Dec. 19, 2019. At Good Shepard Church.

Our next Outreach meeting will be Dec. 4, 2019 in the Fr. Martin Hall at 7 p.m. All are welcome!

Mary's Helping Hands Bake Sale

On Dec 8, Mary's Helping Hands will once again hold their bake sale and raffle. A variety of delicious holiday items will be available. The raffle this year is a "money Fiber Optic Tree, decorated with various denominations of currency worth \$250.00



FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

On Thursday, December 12, join your fellow parishioners, and Mariachis for Mass at 5 am here at Our Lady Help of Christians.. A light breakfast will follow Mass

GIVING TUESDAY

If you wish to donate to our parish for "Giving Tuesday", the web page is <https://washington.igivecatholic.org/organizations/our-lady-help-of-christians-catholic-church-waldorf>

Novena Masses

Save the dates and join us for our 7th Annual Christmas 9 Day Novena Masses beginning Saturday December 14 - Sunday December 22, 2019 at 7pm to prepare for the coming of our Lord at Christmas through the gift of Mary. December 14,15 and 22 Mass preceded by Posadas at 6:30pm.



Calling all school age singers! Would you like to sing at the Christmas Eve 5 pm Mass? Join the choir for rehearsals on Saturdays December 7, 14, and 21 from 2-3:30 pm. For more information, e-mail music@olhoc.org

Breakfast with St Nick:

Celebrate the feast of St Nicholas with us on Saturday, December 7th starting at 9:30 am. Enjoy delicious pancakes, eggs, sausage and more, plus activities for the kids and a visit with St Nicholas. Tickets are \$5 each (under 2 eat free) and will be available after all Masses, in the church office or on the website www.olhoc.org/stnick Please bring a NEW, unwrapped toy for the Children's Aid Society. All proceeds will benefit the Youth Fund.

Christmas donations/opportunities to give

Beginning November 25, we will collect NEW:

- Children's pajamas, socks, and slippers
- Socks, mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves for all ages, Small stuffed animals

All items must be NEW.

Thank you very much for your generosity!!

Wrapped collection boxes are located in the office narthex near the tree. Items will be distributed with the Christmas food boxes and donated to Children's Aid.

Looking ahead

- December 3- Parish Reconciliation Service- 6:30 pm
- December 5- Gift of Mary talk- 7 pm
- December 7- Breakfast with St. Nick-following the 9 am Mass
- December 8- Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- December 12- Our Lady of Guadalupe - 5 am Mass, Gift of Mary class at 7 pm
- December 14- Walk with Mary in Washington, DC, Christmas Novena and Posada begin
- December 22- Last day of Novena/Posada, reception to follow

We are asked to pray for:

Sandra Barrientos
Dennis Hook
Ana Maria Delmira Sibrian Escobar
Nestor Ermelindo Molina
Doris Chesley
James Thompson
Rebecca (Tess) Franch
Vicky Welch
Naomi Lilly
Sterling Greene
Aleli Puzon
Patricia Delgado
Rosano Wheeler
Larry McGraw
Vivian Truxon
Derrick Webster
Pat Fisher
Christ Goldhammer

Julie Davis
Dorothy Neal
Dunnie Proctor
Shirley Ehman
K.D. Dillard
Tabitha Barton
Maria Townsend
Chrystal Beauregard
Sheryl Carter
Alex Leon
Sharketer Butler
Steven Bowling
Edna Yarngo
Kathly Grimes
Sheny Padilla
Richard White
Mary Dooley
Victor Cordero
Georgiana Norgren

Marie Marie Bottorf
Joy Cooper
Dorian Webster
Dionne Gause
Patricia Sutton
Trenia Price
Michael Sofield Jr.
Norm Green
Mary A. Dyson
Jim Lavish
The Dixons
Louise Green
David DeMarr
Brandon Mack
Amelia Vinceguerra
and all our military and civilians serving in
harm's way.
*Please let us know if any names should be
removed from the list.*



Mass Intentions this Week

Saturday, November 30, 9:00AM: Christine, Gerald, & Edward Kubiak (+)
Saturday, November 30, 5:00 PM: Souls in Purgatory
Sunday, December 1, 8:30 AM: Our Lady Help of Christians Parishioners
Sunday, December 1, 10:00 AM: Marvin Broach (+)
Sunday, December 1, 11:30 AM: Pat Viets
Sunday, December 1, 1:00 PM: Jacqueline Tapsoba (+)
Sunday, December 1, 7:00 PM: Lorrin Green
Monday, December 2, 9:00 AM: Jessi Cowart (+)
Tuesday, December 3, 9:00 AM: Nicole Guest (+)
Wednesday, December 4, 9:00 AM: Anthony Andrews
Wednesday, December 4 7:00 PM: Regina & Richard Dubicki
Thursday, December 5, 9:00 AM: Knights of Columbus
Friday, December 6, 9:00 AM: Patiences Silvia Dako (+)
Friday, December 6, 8:00 PM: Father Benjamin Garcia

Parish Penance Service– Tuesday, December 3rd.

Our parish reconciliation service will begin at 6:30 pm in the Main Church on Tuesday, December 3rd. Several Priest will be available to hear confessions.

Father Dan Leary will give a talk before the penance service to help us prepare ourselves to receive God's forgiveness during this Advent Season.

Tuesday Scripture Study - Join us on Tuesday mornings after the 9 am Mass to study the readings for the next Sunday.

Wednesday Scripture Study– The Friday night scripture study has been changed to Wednesdays. They will be begin at 7:30, following the 7 pm Mass

First Friday– The first Friday of each month the evening Mass is said in Latin. This Mass is dedicated to promoting the Priesthood.

First Saturday—Join members of the Marian Group on the first Saturday of the month after the 9 am Mass. Learn more about consecrating your life to Jesus through Mary.

Divine Mercy– Join us on the first Saturday of each month as we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet as a community at 3 PM.

Mass Readings for December 8, 2019.

Second Sunday of Advent



***First Reading**
Isaiah 11:1-10
***Second Reading**
Romans 15:4-9
***Gospel**
Matthew 3:1-12

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS:

Youth Ministry: Questions, please contact Marlen marlen@olhoc.org

Life Teen: high school youth ministry (meets most Sundays 5-6:30 pm, December 8th; check website for other dates)

Edge: middle school youth ministry (meets monthly for All Youth Night)

FIAT: Faith in Action Team elementary school ministry (meets monthly for All Youth Night)

For more info and an updated list of our events please visit www.olhoc.org/yevents

To Join Our Youth Core & Support Team, please visit our website or talk to Marlen Coles. Together we can help lead our youth closer to Christ!

Breakfast with St Nick:

Celebrate the feast of St Nicholas with us on Saturday, December 7th starting at 9:30 am. Enjoy delicious pancakes, eggs, sausage and more, plus activities for the kids and a visit with St Nicholas. Tickets are \$5 each (under 2 eat free) and will be available after all Masses, in the church office or on the website www.olhoc.org/stnick Please bring a NEW, unwrapped toy for the Children's Aid Society. All proceeds will benefit the Youth Fund.

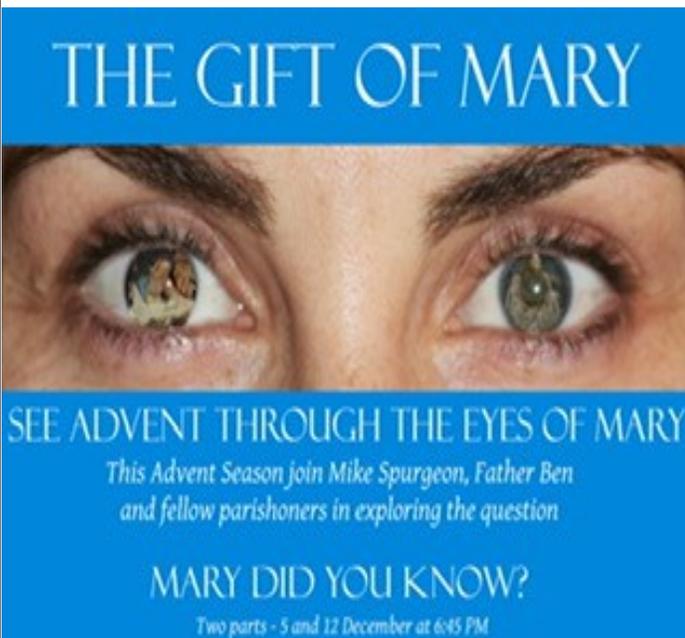
Time to Request Spots for Camp Covecrest - August 2-8, 2020 in Tiger, Georgia

For more details and a video on this transformative week of fun, activities, time with friends, prayer and growing in your faith visit www.olhoc.org/camp2020 Questions, please contact Marlen Coles marlen@olhoc.org

Christmas Flowers

All parishioners are invited to make a donation in honor or remembrance of loved ones this Advent. Your donations will offset the cost of the poinsettias used to decorate our church for Christmas. Please use the envelope provided in your monthly mailing or stop by the office. Suggested offering is \$15.

SAVING BABIES is a new Pro-life organization under the purview of Sacred Heart Church in La Plata. After Saturday/ Sunday Masses of Nov. 30/Dec. 1 at Our Lady Help of Christians, Saving Babies volunteers will be distributing brochures and obtaining signatures for you to **Go on Record** as being pro-life. These signature pages will be presented to Charles County and state representatives to effect legislation. Please bring your address labels with you to Mass to make it easy to put your contact information on the signature page. For more information about Saving Babies, go to www.sacredheartlaplata.org and click under "Get Involved" or send an email to Savingbabiesisright@aol.com.



THE GIFT OF MARY

SEE ADVENT THROUGH THE EYES OF MARY

This Advent Season join Mike Spurgeon, Father Ben and fellow parishioners in exploring the question

MARY DID YOU KNOW?

Two parts - 5 and 12 December at 6:45 PM



Walk with Mary

HEALING AND PEACE UNDER HER MANTLE

DECEMBER//DICIEMBRE 14, 2019

PROCESSION//PROCESIÓN 11:30 a.m. ROSARY//SANTO ROSARIO 1:00 p.m.
From Shrine of the Sacred Heart//Santuario del Sagrado Corazon
To Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception//
Basilica Santuario Nacional MASS//MISA 2:30 p.m.

Bus will leave OLHOC at 8:45 am. \$10 per person for Walk with Mary. Please sign up on line (www.olhoc.org)