



# The Marian Messenger

Newsletter of the Sodality of Our Lady of the Annunciation

St. Hugh of Grenoble Catholic Church

Greenbelt, Maryland

“Come Holy Spirit! Help us to give ourselves entirely  
to Jesus through Mary.”

## Prefect's Perspective

Dear Sodalists,

**“All public Masses in the diocese are cancelled until further notice.”**

Amidst all the panic over the corona virus, this email late Thursday night hit me the hardest. No Sunday Mass, no daily Mass, until when? No Eucharist on any day until when?

No, I didn't take full advantage of daily Mass and Communion, but I took comfort in knowing it was always available. I felt in a way abandoned, cut loose from the major mooring of my life. It happened so quickly, so quietly, without discussion, without push back, without alternative. The availability of daily Mass and Eucharist was much more fragile than I had ever contemplated, especially in an urban area of this country. Could this happen again so quickly, quietly, in conformance with secular authorities? What happens when maybe the “further notice” never comes?

I am surprised at how bereft I feel. What do we do with our Sunday?

Maybe I can use this time to explore this loss and what it means. What is so special about coming together as a community in prayer at the Mass? Let me meditate on the meaning and realness of the consecration and the reception of the Holy Eucharist. If I feel a loss I must value what is lost.

Maybe when “further notice” does come I will not take this great gift so much for granted.

To Jesus through Mary,

Rita Radich

**Photo:** Prefect, Rita Radich addressing the members of the Sodality Union of the Archdiocese of Washington at their monthly meeting on Saturday, March 7th in Grenoble Hall.

The other Sodality Union officers pictured are, from left to right:

Vice President, Lisa Williams;

Moderator, Rev. Pawel Sass;

President, Margaret Johnson; and

Recording Secretary, Marti Galvin.

—Photo by Barbara Ford



**BOOKS, APPS, AND WEB SITES FOR THE SOUL*****The Day Christ Died* by Jim Bishop**

This is a great Lenten read describing the Passion of Our Lord from the entry into Jerusalem until 4pm on Good Friday. Based on the Gospels, Bishop adds scenery, politics, manners and traditions of the times that enrich both the meaning and our understanding of the passion.

***Church of Cowards: A Wakeup Call to Complacent Christians* by Matt Walsh**

Just published this year by a mid-thirty-something Matt Walsh, this book raises some hard questions about Christians of today, especially in our country. For instance, Walsh says “the issue is not ‘whether’ we believe—believing is easy, especially if you don’t think about it much. The question is rather: How ‘essential’ is our belief to our lives?...Is Christianity sort of like a hobby, or a mild interest, or a contingency plan for a rainy day? This, I think, is how we have ended up as a ‘Christian’ nation that looks, acts, and functions nothing like a Christian nation.” This is well worth reading, thinking about, discussing and perhaps acting on.

**Maryland Right to Life; [mdrtl.org](http://mdrtl.org)**

This website has detailed information on legislation, including what particular bills mean and where they are in the process in the Maryland legislature. It also provides a good list of pregnancy aid centers.

**National Right to Life; [nrlc.org](http://nrlc.org)**

Here you will find lots of information about the various issues surrounding abortion, infanticide and euthanasia, as well as, lots of downloads, fact sheets to print and use, and answers to pro-abortion arguments.

**Maryland Catholic Conference; [mdcatholic.org](http://mdcatholic.org)**

Website contains brief overview of issues, notices of legislative actions on pro-life issues and other issues of interest to the archdiocese.

**“Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words”**

This documentary features black, Catholic, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and his wife telling the story of Justice Thomas’ life and thoughts. During his early years he was raised by his single mom in poverty. Then he was sent to live with his grandfather where he received the discipline that he needed and a parochial school education. From there he eventually made his way to the Supreme Court, but not without many struggles. This is a great story about the American dream, not only in career, but also in faith. It is in some theaters now, but is planned for broadcast on PBS in May2020.

## SODALITY ACTIVITIES, January - March 2020

**Cardinal Hickey Scholarship Fund Raffle:** We successfully sold all our raffle tickets from the Sodality Union to benefit the Cardinal Hickey Scholarship Fund.

**Bake Sale and Catholic Education Week:** In February we hosted the coffee social for the parish, while also putting on a successful bake sale and hosting a representative from St. Joseph's Regional School in Beltsville, Joelle Taylor, who brought materials and spoke with parishioners about the school. She said many who talked to her did not have children as possible students for the school, but asked how they could help, including financially. She was very pleased and volunteered to come back next year.

**Host for the Sodality Union March Meeting:** In March, we hosted the monthly meeting of the Sodality Union, an umbrella group for all the Sodalities in the Archdiocese of Washington. After a beautiful Mass, we went downstairs to Grenoble Hall for a buffet brunch and meeting. We did well on our basket raffle and received many compliments on the day including the set up of the hall and tables. Thanks go to Cindy Perry, Barbara Ford, Kathleen McFarland, Suzanne Lomax, Betty Triplett, Rohanie Bacchus, Mary Wade, Franca Onunkwo, Mary Bitter, Candy Culhane, Ellen Hanyok, Monica Huber and Marti Galvin among others.

**A Taste of Home:** We were scheduled to coordinate the parish for our annual Taste of Home dinner at the University of Maryland Catholic Student Center. This year we were expecting over 240 hungry students, but the event was cancelled due to the corona virus. We are looking into providing food for a smaller group in early April for those CSC students who will remain on campus during the spring break.

Thanks to everyone for their hard work.

—by Rita Radich



Photos by Barbara Ford: Grenoble Hall before and during the March meeting of the Sodality Union. Simply elegant and welcoming. Cheers to all who helped make it so!

## Special Needs Ministry and Adaptive Finding God

**Rita Radich:** Could you tell us what you are doing at the School of Religion with the special needs children?

**Mary Wade:** Before I answer that question, let me give you a little personal background. I am number four of nine children raised in a very faithful Catholic family. My older sister was diagnosed, at age 6, with a form of autism and it was recommended by her teachers and doctor that she receive her education in a residential home for girls in Washington, DC that was run by Catholic nuns. When she graduated (aged out) her disability was severe enough that she was not able to hold a job or live in a community home. Though there were times growing up when I avoided her, I felt for my parents and wanted to be sure my sister was taken care of when my parents could no longer do so. That said, let's fast forward.

In 2009, I was talking with a neighbor who left the Catholic Church because her son was refused religious education at St. Hugh's. That was painful to hear. I immediately thought of my sister and parents and imagined how that women felt. Soon afterward she moved away, but our conversation stayed with me. I knew I would welcome families who wanted religious education for their child with special needs, but there were no such families asking to register.

In 2014, parishioner and parent of two older children with disabilities challenged me on the way I worded the bulletin notice for parents to register their children for religious education classes. With her help, I rephrased the wording of the bulletin announcement and shortly afterwards, two families called the rectory about registering their children who have autism. During the next two years, we had two other families register their children, one with autism, the other with down syndrome.

In 2015, a parishioner volunteered to help the School of Religion as a classroom aide and was assigned to provide one-on-one help for our kindergartener with autism. Our attention now moved from letting families know that we welcome their children with special needs, to finding the appropriate classroom environment, volunteers and training, and resources that we would need to teach these children. We thank the Lord for the kindness of so many people who have made the *Adaptive Finding God* program possible at our parish. They include our pastor's approval and adult volunteers who assist as catechists, resource consultant, and family support group facilitator. They also include the help from our Archdiocese of Washington Department of Special Needs, Mother Seton in Germantown, St. Rose of Lima in Gaithersburg, and Holy Redeemer in Berwyn Heights. We have received our funding through donations from the *Growing in Community* fundraiser of the School of Religion, the *Alternative Christmas Program* sponsored by the Ladies of Charity, and a grant through Catholic Charities.

Our vision for these children is to prepare them to receive the sacraments by offering them their religious education in the learning setting that best suits their needs. Our parishioner and resource specialist, **Lauren Wisniewski**, works full-time at Holy Redeemer. She meets with our families in August to review their children's IEP's (Individualized Education Plans) and to help determine the best setting and method for catechesis. The options are: inclusion in a regular classroom setting with accommodations that may include the help of a teen faith mentor, or in a separate room with a teen faith mentor who uses the lesson plans prepared by an adult catechist. Our current catechist, **Jamie Chandler**, is a parent of three children in our regular religious education classes. She has volunteered from the beginning, visiting other parish programs and attending training sessions to help us get the *Adaptive Finding God* program started.

When we opened our doors in 2018 to our first year of *Adaptive Finding God*, we had three teen faith mentors, and two catechists. One special needs student attended her age appropriate class with the help of a teen faith mentor and then received catechesis on a handful of Saturdays by catechist, **Rossana McKenzie**, who prepared her to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist in May 2019. Her teen faith mentor asked to be her mentor again this year.

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We ask our teen mentors for a service commitment of one year that can be renewed annually. Two were not able to commit for another year and we were not able to find replacements for them so we are currently in need of two teen mentors. Rossana McKenzie answered the need for a 4th grade catechist in the regular school of religion so we are also looking for another adult catechist.

We are still very new at forming our ministry and have much to learn and improve upon. Our volunteers and parents are very optimistic and have offered some thoughtful suggestions for improvement and enrichment. One area where we found we can improve is in reaching out to more families. Regardless of the abilities or disabilities of their children, we welcome adult parishioners to join our parent support group so that we can learn from each other.

Our parent support group facilitator is **Donna Njoku**. She has shared a wealth of information with the families regarding laws, funding, and other resources that can benefit families of children with special needs. We recently reached out to Holy Redeemer Parish for ideas and the possibility of collaboration. They invited our Special Needs Ministry Team to a meeting in February and in that meeting we began initial plans to collaborate. We are working on including one or two other local parishes in our collaboration. Our goal is to strengthen and broaden a sense of community for our families with children of special needs and provide some family fun while doing so.

#### **One more thing:**

Our *Adaptive Finding God* program is not the only goal of the Special Needs Ministry. We are a ministry whose motto is *Helping those with disabilities and their families share in the fullness of our Catholic Faith and Community life*. Many of our parishioners with disabilities are not in elementary school, yet we desire that they feel the welcoming love of Jesus in our faith community, especially when they come to worship with us. Whether you feel a tug at your heart calling you to serve in this ministry, or you would like to find out more about what we are doing, or if you just want to offer suggestions about how we can better serve our parishioners with special needs, please send your thoughts and suggestions by email to the ministry coordinator, Mary Wade, at: [shreligious4@gmail.com](mailto:shreligious4@gmail.com).

*Blessed Margaret of Castella, Pray for us.*

### **MAKING SPIRITUAL LEMONADE OUT OF A LEMON**

Feeling a little down, like life has given you a lemon? Here's a little sugar to help sweeten up your day and remind you just how loved you are.

**St. Hugh Sodality Community Rosary:** The St. Hugh Sodality community is invited to join Prefect Rita Radich in praying the Rosary at home, daily @ 12Noon, in solidarity with efforts to stop the spread of CoVid19.

**Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women's Rosary:** Join us in praying the Rosary to End the Spread of the Coronavirus daily at 8:00pm by calling 605-468-8016, ID 357090#. Together, we are united in prayer!

**WORD AMONG US Resources:** [wau.org](http://wau.org) Read the daily Mass readings and meditation.

**Daily Mass on EWTN:** <https://www.ewtn.com/tv>

**Sunday Mass at the Shrine on Channel 50:** <https://adw.org/parishes-masses/sunday-tv-mass/>

**Sunday Mass live streamed on Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/events/210628620313563/>

**MAGNIFICAT Free Resources Online:** [www.magnificat.com/free](http://www.magnificat.com/free) Free online access to the Magnificat during this difficult time. Also available in Spanish at [www.magnificat.com/gratis](http://www.magnificat.com/gratis).

**Father Walter's Daily Emails:** To be included in Father Walter's daily emails please email the church office at: [sthughoffice@gmail.com](mailto:sthughoffice@gmail.com) and ask to be put on the list. He will keep us informed spiritually and logistically with the latest info from the Archdiocese on changes to the Mass and activity schedules during this CoVid-19 crisis.

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*Let us remember to pray...*

- for all our deceased Sodalists, parishioners and their family members who have died, especially for
  - for those who are ill, especially for Dalisay Lopez, JoAnn Kellaher, and Lois Gorman
- ...and for all those intentions written in the Sodality Prayer Book.

**Spring Birthdays**

Apr.7 Mary Ann Tretler  
Apr.14 Cindy Perry  
Apr.25 Melissa Fisher  
May 28 Monica Huber  
June 6 Kathy Labukas  
June 10 Rita Radich  
June 11 Mame Ellis  
June 14 Beverly Dziduch  
June 24 Suzann Lomax  
June 30 Peggy Hool

**Calendar of Events\***

Mar.25 Feast of the Annunciation  
Mar.28 Executive Council, CANCELLED  
Apr. 5 Sodality Mass & Meeting  
May 17 Sodality Tea, 2-4, GH  
June 4 End-of-Year Dinner  
Mass @5pm with Installation of Officers  
June 25 Parish Calendar Meeting

\*subject to lifting of CoVid-19 restrictions

**Sodality Prayer: To Jesus through Mary**

O Mother Mary, may you continue to bless our lives as we journey in faith, hope, and love. Be our model and guide as we live in the grace won by your Son, Jesus, by his suffering and resurrection. May your motherly intercession for us bring healing, strength, and renewal.

O Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners. Help us to bring all people to your Son, especially those in most need of his mercy. May our Sodality help us grow in your image as disciples of Jesus. We pray this in his name. Amen.

“If you want to change the world, go home and love your family.”

- - St. Theresa of Calcutta



**Reminder: Our lector for...**

Apr.5: Suzanne Lomax  
May 3: JoEllen Sarff  
June 7: Monica Huber

Keep current on our news by visiting our webpage:  
[www.sthughofgrenoble.org](http://www.sthughofgrenoble.org)