

ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA CATHOLIC CHURCH, LEONARDTOWN, MARYLAND

A Word from the Pastor

Dear Friends,

The Christmas season officially comes to an end today at the banks of the Jordan River. Jesus is no longer the child “*wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.*” He is now the adult Redeemer journeying towards Jerusalem. The good news spoken by the angels, though, continues to unfold, and the best part of the Christ event is yet to come. Luke presents Jesus in today’s Gospel as the last person to be baptized by John, describing the scene with many images from the Old Testament:

- heaven was opened (“*Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down*” Is 63:19);
- the Spirit “descended upon him like a dove” (much like the wind above the waters at the dawn of Creation; by using this image, Luke suggests that, in Jesus, a new Genesis is about to take place – Gen. 1:2b);
- the “voice from heaven” identifies and confirms Jesus (“Here is my servant . . . my chosen one with whom I am pleased” -- Isaiah 42: 1, today's first reading; “The Lord said to me, ‘You are my Son; this day I have begotten you’” -- Psalm 2: 7).

Jesus’ baptism at the Jordan becomes the moment of God’s “anointing” of his Messiah for the work he is about to do.

The same Spirit that anointed Jesus for his mission anoints us today to be about His work. Like Jesus we are to seek out and find the lost, heal the hurting, feed the hungry, free the imprisoned, rebuild communities, and bring peace to all peoples everywhere.

Our anointing, of course, has come about through our own baptisms, a baptism different from Jesus’ since He was without sin. Baptism is more than just a ceremony but an ongoing process of becoming the people of faith that God calls us to be. In baptism, we claim the name Christian and embrace all that that name means: to live for others rather than for ourselves, in imitation of Christ.

Our baptisms have made us the servant of today’s readings, as well: to bring forth in our world the justice, reconciliation and enlightenment of Jesus, the “beloved Son” of God with whom God is well pleased. In baptism, the same Spirit of compassion, justice and peace that descended upon Jesus descends and rests upon us, compelling us to take on the work of the Gospel. May we be faithful to our mission as Christians so as to be found pleasing before God as well.

Peace,
Fr. John

Worship

Mass Intentions

Tuesday, Jan. 12:

12:15pm Glenn Edward Lawrence
Frank Davis

Wednesday, Jan. 13: St. Hilary, bishop

8:30am Marie Bassford
Jack Alvey

Thursday, Jan. 14:

12:15 No Mass

Friday, Jan. 15:

8:30am George C. Duke

Saturday, Jan. 16:

7:30am George M. Beavan
5:00pm Mercedes Aguinaldo (L)
James Michaud

Sunday, Jan. 17: 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00am Parishioners of St. Aloysius
11:00am K. C. Abraham
Rev. Msgr. Edward Wojtycha

Please Pray for the Sick and Homebound of our Parish

Community: Let us remember in prayer: Wanda Butler, Gerald Campbell, Mary Carrigg, Judy Cates, Sharon Catron, Bill Chubb, Fran & Ray Dicus, Mary Dyson, Susan Fenwick, Pat Gibson, Denise Lacey, Charles Latham, Agnes Long, Jim O’Brien, Kitty Radford, Isabelle Raley, Jim Raley, Amy Saul, Agatha Stokel, Donna Walker and Woody Wheeler.

Mass Schedule Change: Please note that there will be no confessions or Mass this Thursday, January 14th, 2010.

Born to Eternal Life: St. Aloysius extends our prayerful condolences to the family of Marie Bassford who passed away on December 27th, 2009. May the angels lead her to paradise; may the martyrs come and welcome her to the holy city, the new and eternal Jerusalem; and may the peace of Christ which is beyond all understanding give her family comfort and consolation.



Parish Mission

Mark your calendars. Reserve Sunday, February 21st through Wednesday February 24th for our Annual Parish Lenten Mission. Father Jude Winkler, OFM, Conv., nationally known author and retreat leader will lead our Mission this year. More information on the Mission will follow in later bulletins.

Scout Sunday

The Boy Scouts of America celebrate the month of February as the Anniversary of the founding of the Boy Scout program by Lord Baden Powell in England. Scout Sunday was added to the scout celebration around the middle 1940s. The Scout Sunday tradition was started to help people in church become aware of Scouting, and to allow Scouts to live out parts of what is pledged each week.

The Boy Scout Law says that a "Scout is Reverent" and boys of all ages promise to do their "Duty to God". The Girl Scout Promise, which includes "to serve God", is the way Girl Scouts agree to act every day toward one another and other people. These values strengthen youth character in their family, community and faith.

This year's Scout Sunday Mass will be celebrated February 7th during the 8 am Mass. Members of the parish registered in Scouting (girls, boys and adults) are invited to participate wearing their Scout uniform. If you are interested in participating, please contact Matt Allen at 301-997-0014 or at allenmjbj@hotmail.com. Please note that there will be a brief rehearsal for the Mass on Saturday morning, February 6th.



HOSPITALIZED

Please notify the Parish Office when a loved one is hospitalized: Caring for the sick is an important ministry here at St. Aloysius. In this ministry the Church prays for the sick, visits the sick and provides the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Please remember to call us so that visits may be arranged and prayers offered.

Vocation Cross

Devotion to the Vocation Cross involves a designated parish household receiving the cross at Mass and taking the cross home for one week and praying for a few minutes every day for the gift of vocations to the priesthood and religious life from our parish. The cross is given to at one of the three weekend Masses after Communion and it is asked that it be returned to the rectory by Saturday morning.

Please pray for Vocations this week with Fr. John.

Stewardship

Sharing Our Treasure: Weekly Offertory Contributions

December 26/27, 2009	December 27/28, 2008
1 st Collection: \$8,841.00	1 st Collection: \$6,990.92
2 nd Collection: Assessment -\$1,543.00	
January 2/3, 2010	January 3/ 4.2009
1 st Collection: \$9,768.00	1 st Collection: \$9,750.11
2 nd Collection: FAW - \$2,047.00	

2nd Collection Next Weekend: Our 2nd Collection for the weekend of Jan16/17 is for the Black & Indian Missions. Thank you for your continued generosity to our parish.

Patron of the Week: Thompson's Corner Kafe. Please remember to patronize our bulletin sponsors.

Offertory Commitments: Thank you, once again, to all who pledged a weekly offertory gift to the parish. Your commitment assures us that we will have sufficient income to meet our financial obligations during the coming year. Please remember that as of last weekend we have begun those commitments.

Church Envelopes are not Junk Mail!

Your parish offering envelopes are mailed monthly to your home. They will be in a small window envelope. Please watch for them.If you do not receive your envelopes; please contact Betty Williams in the parish office at 301-475-8064, ext. 11. If you plan on moving, we would appreciate being notified as soon as possible so your envelopes are not returned to the parish office, as they are ordered ahead of time. Thank you.

Parish Life & Evangelization

Community Sunday: Next weekend, January 16th/17th is our monthly celebration of Community Sunday. This is a regular opportunity for us to reach out to the less fortunate in our local community and in the world-wide community. Non-perishable food items for Helping Hands will be collected at all Masses next weekend. Coffee and donuts, usually part of Community Sunday, **will not be served this month** due to the Catholic Schools Basketball Games.

March for Life 2010: St. Aloysius Pro-Life Committee is sponsoring a bus to the Right to Life March on Friday, January 22, 2010. We invite you to spend a day of fellowship with your family and friends as we once again "march" the streets of our Nation's Capital to stand for life. A sign up sheet is in the vestibule of the church for you to reserve a space on the bus. We are asking for a donation of \$10 per person to reserve your space on the bus. If you would like further information concerning the March, please contact Chris Guy at 301-475-2166 or Fr. John at 301-475-8064

What is an Annulment?

There has been much misinformation circulated about marriage annulments. Much of it is based on misconceptions, misunderstandings and ignorance. Unfortunately that misinformation has prevented many a Catholic from participating in the sacramental life of the Church. The Church teaches that the Sacrament of Marriage, by its very nature, is ordered towards the good of the spouses as well as towards the procreation and education of children. It is during the marriage ceremony when a couple exchanges their vows that the Sacrament of Marriage officially begins. The Church also presumes that all marriages of all other faiths to be valid until proven otherwise. An annulment is granted only when an essential component of the sacramental consent is found to be missing, when something in the spiritual relationship between the man and woman is found to be lacking. An annulment does not mean that "in the eyes of God, it was not a marriage," nor does an annulment mean that the marriage "never existed." After all, the couple wed, lived together and possibly had children. They have a "history" as husband and wife. It also does not mean that children born of the marriage are illegitimate

That statement cannot be farther from the truth. The main effect of an annulment is that the former marriage no longer has legal recognition or standing in the community of the Catholic Church and, generally, that the parties are now free to marry again in the Church if they so choose. If you have any questions regarding an annulment or would like to learn more about the process, then you are invited to join Fr. Michael King, JCD, on Tuesday, February 2nd, 2010 from 7:00 pm till 8:30 pm in the library at Father Andrew White School to learn about and ask questions regarding the annulment process. Fr. King will explain the Church's teaching regarding marriage and divorce as well as help any individual wishing to seek an annulment. Please note as well, that divorced and civilly remarried Catholics are still a part of the Church, loved by the Church, and loved by Christ. The snow date for this presentation will be Thursday, February 4th, 2010.

Religious Education, Youth Ministry & School

Come One and All!

Everyone is welcome to visit Father Andrew White S.J. School and see the wonderful things happening in Catholic education today! The staff and students will host visitors during Catholic Schools Week on February 4, 2010 from 9:30 – 11:00 am and we will also host a Sunday Open House on February 21 from 12:00 – 1:30 pm. Registration of new students for the 2010 – 2011 school year will begin on Monday, March 1. At Father Andrew White S.J. School we are "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow, Living Our Faith".

Are you an adult Catholic who has never been confirmed?

Many baptized Catholics have received their First Holy Communion, but "missed" Confirmation because they were away from the Church or did not feel ready as adolescents. *It's not too late.* Each year, adult Catholics from throughout the Archdiocese of Washington prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation at their parishes and then gather at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in D.C. on the Feast of Pentecost to be confirmed by the Archbishop. If you are an adult who is interested in preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2010, please contact Leonard Wathen, Director of Religious Education at 301-475-8064, ext 16 or at lwathen@saintalloysiuschurch.org

Parents of Confirmation Candidates are reminded that there is a mandatory meeting on Sunday, January 24th, from 9:15 to 10:30 am, at Father Andrew White School.

Readings and Questions for Faith Sharing

The Baptism of the Lord

Theme: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Reading I: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

God upholds his servant, a light for all nations.

Reading II: Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38

Jesus is the savior of all nations.

Gospel: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan river.

Question for Children:

What are some things you can do to please God?

Questions for Teens:

"With you I am well pleased." What are you doing right now that is pleasing to God?

How does it feel to live that way?

Questions for Adults:

Looking back at the last few weeks, do you think God was "well pleased" by your words and actions? Why or why not?

**Next Sunday's Gospel, 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time;
John 2:1-11**

**Don't Forget to Save the Date:
Saturday, June 26th, 2010: 300th Anniversary Mass with
Archbishop Wuerl – 5:00 pm
followed by our Anniversary Dinner at the LVFD.**

Leaving a bequest in your will to the Church, your Parish or School allows you to leave your legacy to an institution that has meant so much to you and thousands of others.