



THE CHURCH OF SAINT MONICA BERWYN, PENNSYLVANIA

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

CHRISTMAS 2015

ANOTHER
WAY OF
KEEPING
YOU
INFORMED
OF ALL
THAT'S
GOING ON:

- Mark your calendar for all of our exciting initiatives and events in the months ahead!
- Please pass this newsletter along to a friend or neighbor in the Berwyn and Devon area!
- Let us know what you think!

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QUESTIONS OR
COMMENTS?

[Click here to
e-mail the Editor!](#)

Called by Name; Gifted by God; Committed to Prayer; Driven to Serve; Abiding in Hope

Meet Your Neighbor: Green Valley Academy

The classrooms in the “new” school buildings are filled with busy students once more! For the past 18 months, Green Valley Academy (GVA) has rented the entire second floor and recently expanded into two classrooms on the third floor to house their unique school.

MiMi Green, CEO of GVA (and daughter of long-time parishioners Anne and Frank Murdock) describes the students that this wonderful school serves: “Our students have fear-based anxiety caused by illness, family crisis, bullying, post-traumatic stress, eating disorders and other challenges”. These are 6th through 12th grade stu-

dents who were not thriving in a large public school. Instead, they benefit from the one-on-one relationships that are possible in a school



GVA Senior “Student of the Month,” Casey Lyons, November 2015.

where the student to teacher ratio is 6:1.

The students come to GVA from eleven local school districts, as close as TE and as

far away as Pottsgrove and Penn Delco. The diplomas that are awarded are from the school districts, not from GVA, except in the instance of students who are home-schooled and attending GVA for academics.

We have all read about cyber-bullying. For some of the GVA students, cyber-bullying made attending public school a nightmare. Can GVA eliminate the cyber-bullying? No, but they can support each student so they know that while they are at school, they are safe. Their teachers are their advocates in dealing with the problem and students know that the staff will protect them.

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Religious Education: *What's new?*

A Conversation with Mary Pizzano and Diane Pealer

What has changed over the years? The curriculum, class schedule options, the catechists / teachers and the goal of the Program are different now. The goal of the Religious Education Program is powerful, yet simple:

forming young disciples — followers and students of Jesus.

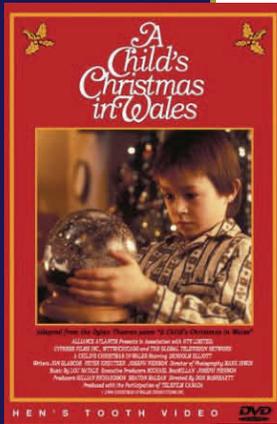
About 270 children in Grades 1 through 6 participate in the program. Children in Grades 2 and 6 are preparing for sacraments: First Penance, First Communion and Confirmation.

The students in sixth grade focus primarily on the life-changing sacrament of Confirmation using the *Chosen* DVD series by Ascension Press, student workbooks and classroom experiences.

Some form of community service is encouraged.

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A Child's Christmas in Wales



A Child's Christmas in Wales by Dylan Thomas

On January 3rd at 3:00pm, come and join us in the Church to celebrate Christmas from the perspective of a child remembering a simpler time. The story, written by Dylan Thomas is read and accompanied by choral music performed by the Princeton Singers. The program is enchanting and would appeal to families with children age 8 and above. All are welcome.

If your visiting relatives and friends are still here, bring them with you!

If you would like to preview the seven page story, it is readily available online and is in the public domain through Project Gutenberg Australia.

Future Music at Monica's dates are:

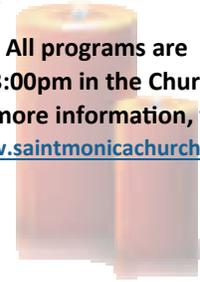
January 17: David Kim, violin, Philadelphia Orchestra Concert Master

February 28: Meral Guneyman, virtuoso concert pianist

March 20: Taize Service for Holy Week

April 17: Pennsylvania Girl-choir

All programs are at 3:00pm in the Church. For more information, visit www.saintmonicachurch.org



"90% of Green Valley Academy graduates go on to enroll in higher learning."

Meeting Our Neighbors *(continued from page 1)*

Admission into GVA is difficult. Each student is scrutinized to assure that there are no out-of-control behavior issues, and that students are on medications if needed. This enables a structured, safe learning environment where students can focus on learning and developing

their talents and gifts.

90% of GVA graduates go on to enroll in higher learning. One of last year's graduates was offered scholarships by six colleges and universities. These are often brilliant students who needed an opportunity to thrive. We are fortunate to have this unique school in

our parish community. GVA students give back: they recently provided the centerpieces for a luncheon at Surrey Services for Seniors in Devon and are singing Christmas carols locally in mid-December.

If you'd like to learn more, contact MiMi Green at 484-568-4409.

Eucharistic Adoration

By: Kit Sherman

Like many parishioners, I had seen the notices for Nocturnal Adoration for many years. My mom and dad attended Nocturnal Adoration faithfully, but I never was especially interested in getting up in the middle of the night to go to church, so I never looked into

it. That changed in Lent when we were challenged to come and spend an hour in Adoration on Holy Thursday.

I asked Renata Losoncy and Jack Ansley to provide a description of Nocturnal Adoration to explain it for beginners and take some of the mystery out of it. Each First Friday of the month, the Eucharist is exposed on the altar in the

monstrance (*a beautiful case for the host that survived the fire that destroyed the church in 1991*) from 9:00 pm until 8:00 am on Saturday morning.

A small group of people are assigned to be in the church for one hour throughout the night. Each group (*or "band" as they are called*) prays using a booklet of readings, psalms and prayers with periods...

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"This is the Bread of everlasting life which supports the substance of our soul."
- St. Ambrose



Family & Youth Ministry Update



Jason Carter has brought new energy and focus on the Family and Youth priorities of the parish since he started his ministry here in July. Here is his update:

“The first semester of Family and Youth Ministry at the Parish of Saint Monica has been a complete joy! This is an amazing parish with amazing families. I feel so blessed to be here at Saint Monica’s!”

In **Edge** (the program for middle school students), we began the year with a series on Joy. Junior High students are just naturally joyful, so we focused on that joy and on God who is the source of our joy. The series ended with a challenge to share joy with those around us as a starting point to sharing the love of Jesus.

Opening Day 2015 of Family & Youth Ministry

Our high school program (**Life Teen**) began with a series titled, “Alive and Dangerous” rooted in the quote from Saint Irenaeus, “The Glory of God is man fully alive”. We discussed how God is love and He created us to love. We look for love, sometimes not in the right places (sin), but are called to seek true love (a relationship with Jesus) and to share that love with others. We offered the sacrament of Reconciliation and spent time before the Eucharist in Adoration.

For both **Edge** and **Life Teen**, we ran a three part series on prayer. We discussed prayer as communication with God, a relationship where we need regular conversation involving us speaking to God and then the importance of silence where we take time to listen to God speaking to our heart. This series also focused on prayer with Scripture where we read the Word of God which is “living and active” (Hebrews 12:2).

On the final night, we spoke about the importance of Mary and the saints as role models in our faith. We reinforced the universal call to holiness, reminding us that everyone is called to sainthood.

We also completed a service project: packing toiletry bags for Saint John’s Hospice. The parish response to our request for travel-sized toiletries was enthusiastic — we packed several hundred bags! This is an ongoing ministry: donation bins are located in the back of church to accept travel-sized bottles of shampoo, deodorant, soap, toothpaste, shaving cream, body lotion, etc.

Finally, **Life Teen** launched a weekly Bible Study for high school students. We meet Wednesdays from 6 to 8 pm in the Youth Room. Our students have been highly enthusiastic about diving deeper into their faith. All high school students are invited to join us.

Thank you for all of your support. It is amazing to reflect on all that God is doing here!



If your world is filled with noise...this is a blissful way to experience an hour of peace and quiet...

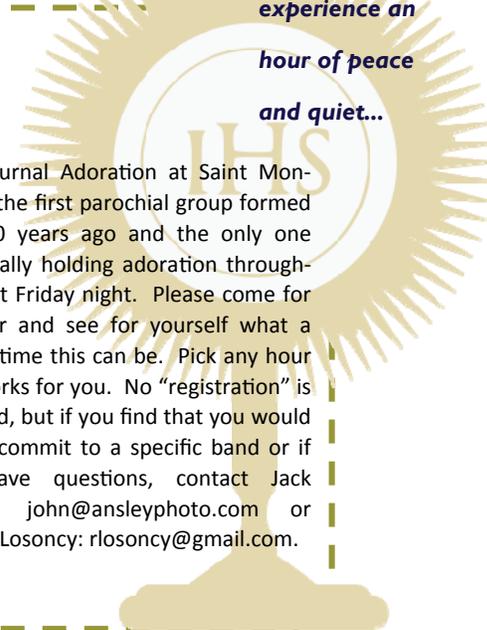
Nocturnal Eucharistic Adoration

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...of silent meditation in between. The hour passes quickly, and at the end of the hour, as each band leaves, the next band moves to the front of the church to assure that the Eucharist is never left unattended. Each band rotates their hour monthly, so if your band had the 10:00 to 11:00 hour in February, then you’ll be assigned to the 11:00 to midnight hour in March. Exceptions are made for the Youth Group, which is always assigned the 10:00 pm hour and the Merry Widows who always do the 7:00 am hour.

One of the bands is a “silent” band — that’s my personal favorite. We come in, say an opening prayer, and then spend the remaining time reading from Scripture, meditating, and praying quietly. At the end of the hour, we close with a group prayer. If your world is filled with noise — emails, phones, children, TV and internet, this is a blissful way to experience an hour of peace and quiet where you can listen to the “still, small voice of God” and what He has to say.

Nocturnal Adoration at Saint Monica’s is the first parochial group formed over 50 years ago and the only one continually holding adoration throughout First Friday night. Please come for an hour and see for yourself what a special time this can be. Pick any hour that works for you. No “registration” is required, but if you find that you would like to commit to a specific band or if you have questions, contact Jack Ansley: john@ansleyphoto.com or Renata Losoncy: rlosoncy@gmail.com.



Religious Education *(continued from page one)*



The Parish Religious Education and Family & Youth Staff

“The Gospel Weeklies are based on the Sunday readings, relating the Gospel to the students’ lives... This is a completely new approach.”

For example, many of the students helped carry, check and sort the Thanksgiving food donation bags and load them into the cars and vans to take them to South Philadelphia. There are three 6th grade classes taught by **Mrs. Amy Brown, Mr. Nick Kennedy, Mrs. Marybeth Panaro and Mrs. Bridget Tomasicchio.**

The second grade students prepare to receive the sacraments through 6 consecutive weeks of study per sacrament. These students will receive the sacrament of First Penance on Monday evening, January 25th. Their teachers are **Mrs. Lorraine Kinslow, Mrs. Pamela Matzinger and Mrs. Mary Pizzano.**

Children in Grades 1-5 are using a new liturgically based *Gospel Weekly* curriculum by Pflaum Publishing. The *Gospel Weeklies* are based on the Sunday readings, relating the Gos-

pel to the students’ lives and to contemporary issues and concerns. This is a completely new approach.

Rather than working out of a textbook, the children hear and are taught about Sacred Scripture in the words of Jesus and the disciples. Each year, the material is adapted to the various grade levels and since the Sunday readings are on a three year cycle, there is considerable variation in material from one year to the next.

The weekly lessons are based on the upcoming Sunday, so the lesson is reinforced when the children hear the readings at Mass. It also encourages a discussion with their parents on what they learned about Jesus or his disciples that week. Bibles are available in the classrooms for looking up passages.

Just as the curriculum has changed, so has the

structure of the program.

With the formation of a **Religious Education Advisory Board** eighteen months ago along with considerable thought, discussion and prayer, there are now three options for the busy families of the Parish of Saint Monica.

Classes are offered on Sunday mornings, Monday evenings and through the summer session, an intensive eight day program which has been offered during the last three summers and will be offered again this year. (*Sacramental preparation is not available in the summer program*).

Many of the Religious Education teachers are certified teachers; all have obtained the required clearances. The teachers are assisted by high-school aides and in some classes, by parents. For more information, contact Diane Pealer or Mary Pizzano through the Parish Website.

Capital Campaign Update

Our Church in Winter
(Photograph by Jack Ansley)



After several months, the Capital Campaign recently completed its “solicitation phase” and in January will enter the “pledge redemption phase”. When Fr. Zlock initially inquired about a capital campaign, 74% of the parishioners responded that it was

feasible and the proposed timing and focus of the campaign were appropriate. When asked about the priorities for a campaign, the survey results indicated the following as “essential”, “important” or “somewhat important:”

Critical Repairs – 93%
Renovations / Re-purposing of Youth Room / Cafeteria / Hagenbach Room - 84%

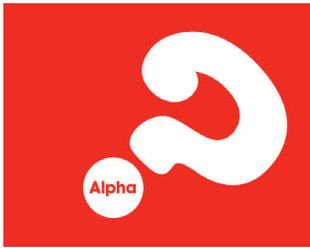
Fellowship / Social Welcome Center - 75%
Growth and Community Outreach – 95%

Are you aware?

A unique feature of the capital campaign was the desire of the parish to **not go into debt**, but only spend whatever amount has been raised toward the \$2.5 million

continued on next page

Learning More About Our Faith



Alpha debuts on Sunday, January 10th.

Have you thought about your 2016 “spiritual” New Year’s Resolutions? Why not give yourself the gift of an improved spiritual life? Recent studies have shown that one can actually measure spiritual “maturity” and spiritual “growth”. A definition of spiritual growth can be drawn from *Matthew 22:37-40* and defined as “increasing love of God and increasing love of neighbor.”

Thus, it is possible to empirically measure the “heart” (*spiritual growth and maturity*) in terms of examining a person’s concrete behaviors as they model “loving God” and “loving neighbor”. This would involve a person’s spiritual beliefs and attitudes; a person’s spiritual practices; participation in organized church activities and spiritual and pastoral activities directed with and toward others.

No spiritual program is “one-size-fits-all” and certain programs will only appeal to people in one particular spiritual

stage while having no impact or appeal to parishioners who are in a totally different spiritual stage. Thus, our spiritual programs need to be more specific and targeted and we need to let people know for which spiritual stage each program is intended. In January, we will roll out three adult faith spiritual programs. Each will be targeted to people in different spiritual stages in their lives.

Alpha is a ten week program, conducted in two hour sessions with lunch included on Sunday afternoons, starting at 12:30 on January 10th. The program offers a safe, non-judgmental atmosphere and is especially appealing for those who may have been away from the church for awhile, those who have serious questions about and for the church, those who have questions about God, prayer, etc. and those who are simply curious. Our pastor, Father Charles Zlock will lead this program.

Oremus is an eight week, one hour per session study program on prayer. How does God speak to you?

How do you speak to God? How can you tell when it is God’s voice you are hearing? The program will be offered on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM for 8 weeks beginning on January 13th and be led by Adult Faith Formation mem-

bers and former *Walking with Purpose* Board Member, Jillian Buhl.

Called and Gifted II is a follow up to the Called and Gifted program held at Saint Monica’s in October, 2014 and will appeal to people who are looking to have their faith seriously challenged, take personal responsibility for their own spiritual growth and are looking to be held accountable for that spiritual growth.

Each of us receives gifts from the Holy Spirit when we are baptized, confirmed and when we receive the Eucharist. When we awaken spiritually and begin to seriously live our Catholic faith, the Holy Spirit can use us as a channel of God’s love in the world. These spiritual gifts are called “charisms” and through the spiritually advanced “Called and Gifted” program, we are invited to discover our gifts and use them to serve others or build up the Church.

For more information about the Called and Gifted II program, go to www.siena.org.

Adult Faith Formation is offered for any person 18 years of age or older. All are welcome. **For more information, contact the Office of Religious Education at 610.647.4757.**

Capital Campaign - What’s next?

goal. Saint Monica’s is now debt-free thanks to generous contributions to the “Sustainability Appeal” and two large bequests. Our loan from the Archdiocese was paid off in summer, 2015 — three years ahead of schedule! Our sincere gratitude to those whose generosity has benefited our entire parish community.

What’s next?

Last week, we did a “light” analysis

of the initial campaign results and sent these preliminary figures to the **Finance Council**. They analyzed and vetted the numbers and posed questions to the Cunneen Corporation (who directed our feasibility study/capital campaign).

After this, revised figures were sent out to the rest of Parish Leadership (*Pastoral Council, Facilities and Parish Staff*) in preparation for a combined Parish Leadership

meeting on December 17. At that meeting, Cunneen presented the most current figures plus a tentative 5-year capital campaign “cash flow” analysis.

Some maintenance and repairs have already begun.

With a comfortable amount of cash in parish

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Please keep the efforts of our Parish Campaign in your prayers!

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[Reverend Charles Zlock](#), *Pastor*
 Reverend Jaehwa J. Lee, *Priest-in-Residence*

PASTORAL ASSISTANCE

Reverend Allan Fitzgerald, O.S.A., Ph.D.
[The Norbertines of Daylesford Abbey](#)

PASTORAL STAFF

[Mary C. Pizzano](#), *Director of Religious Education*
[Frank K.J. Orman](#), *Director of Worship & Music*
[Jason Carter](#), *Director of Family & Youth Ministry*
[Theresa Carey](#), *Business Manager*
[Catherine H. Levine](#), *Parish Administrative Assistant*
[Diane Kirsch Pealer](#), *Religious Education Assistant*
[Elizabeth P. Tenaglio](#), *Cemetery Administration*
[Frank Pantano](#), *Facilities Manager*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JANUARY

3 3:00 pm A Child's Christmas in Wales Church
 10 12:30 pm ALPHA Christian faith exploration begins
 13 7:00 pm Oremus Prayer Program begins
 17 3:00 pm Music at Monica's: David Kim, violinist
 22 7:00 am March for Life (bus from Saint Monica's)
Washington, D.C.

FEBRUARY

5 9:00 pm Nocturnal Adoration until 8:00 am
 28 3:00 pm Music at Monica's: Meral Guneyman, pianist

MARCH

4 9:00 pm Nocturnal Adoration until 8:00 am
 12 7:00 pm Team Trivia Night (registration required)
 13 2:00 pm Helping Hands / Catholic Relief Services
(Outreach Event: Food Packaging for Burkina Faso)
 20 3:00 pm Taize Service for Holy Week

Capital Campaign Update *(continued)*

reserves, the Finance Council recommended allocating \$233,000 to immediately begin to address 46 "maintenance and repair" items. For example, there was a serious mold problem in the Rectory where eight parish staff currently have office space. Since mold is a health hazard, this was remediated in November. Other projects that will begin in 2016 include:

- Fixing HVAC duct work, leaking pipes and fittings
- Repair/replace church doors and broken locks
- Repair concrete work throughout the parish campus
- Stabilize the sinking porch and entry-way to the Rectory
- Upgrade parish software systems and rebuild the parish website

The projects will be staged so that no or minimal retro-fitting is required in the

future.

Soon after Parish Leadership analyzes the final capital campaign numbers and makes recommendations to Fr. Zlock, an on-line survey will be offered to all parishioners to look at and prioritize the 26 remaining "big ticket" items. Fr. Zlock wants parishioner input on these projects so that we can assign higher priority to



A picture of our beautiful church in the autumn, taken by parishioner Jack Ansley.

projects parishioners think are more important, lower priority to those the parish thinks are less important and consider eliminating projects not considered a priority. Parishioner opinions are an important input for the teams working on the Master Plan/Capital Campaign.

Thank you!

We are very grateful for the 161 families who have pledged over \$1.2 million to the campaign as of mid-December. If you are still considering what your family's gift or pledge might be, please see the [parish website](#) for details on participating in this very important campaign or contact our Business Manager, [Terry Carey](#) at 610-644-0110 with questions.

Sign-up for campaign updates on Flocknote!
Text "Monica1897" to 84576