

April 16, 2017

Alleluia!!! Jesus is Risen!!! Alleluia!!!

Alleluia!!! He is Risen!!! Alleluia!!! Jesus is Risen!!! Alleluia!!! At long last, we can sing again: **Alleluia!!!** Since the beginning of Lent (March 1st this year), we have not pronounced this beautiful Hebrew word! For over forty days of Lent, we have “fasted” from this beautiful address to God which we find at the beginning of several psalms (e.g., 106, 111, 113), so that we can break our Lent by singing at the top of our voice at Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday: “**Alleluia**”...meaning “**Praise the Lord!**”. I recall that at the seminary, we had a sign put in the church during Lent, reminding us: **NO Alleluia!** The last forty days have brought many **blessings** to our parish:

First, the three Masses on **Ash Wednesday** (March 1st) brought record numbers of participants to our church. The large screen in the Narthex made it more inclusive for the many who could not enter the Nave of our church. The keychain given to everyone reminded us of the overarching theme of this Lent at OLHOC and this extraordinary year of Fatima: “**Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**” Everyone was encouraged to go to confession and to invite someone else to go too (distribution of invitation cards to the Sacrament of Reconciliation)! **Repentance** and **conversion** are central messages of Fatima. Some of you have let me know that you were successful in bringing to confession someone who had not gone for years. This is what evangelization is all about! All of us were also invited to spend at least one hour in **Adoration** of the Blessed Sacrament as part of our Lenten Resolution.

Second, we will never forget the 3-day **Parish Family Mission** (Fire It Up with Dan and Caroline) held at the beginning of our Lenten Journey (March 13-15): the **Holy Spirit** was truly present and touched many individuals and entire families. **Come Holy Spirit! Fill our hearts with the fire of Your Love!** Over 200 people, including many children and entire families, showed up on each of the three days. There was a sense of **joy** and **love!** We at OLHOC were truly a **family of families** during this exceptional Lenten Family Mission. Our double Lenten objective of Adoration/Prayer and Reconciliation (over 200 confessions) was achieved throughout these three days of reflection.

Third, we were all blessed with the visit of the **International Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima** on Wednesday, March 29! The church was packed! God provided a most pleasant weather for our outdoor candlelight procession! The message of **repentance, conversion, reparation for sins, peace and prayer** (especially the Rosary) was proclaimed loud and clear! It was also wonderful to see so many children participate in the outdoor procession and the carrying of flowers to the feet of **Mary!** We were also blessed with **amazing music!** It felt like a combination of the **joy** of Christmas and Easter!

Throughout these forty days, we prepared ourselves to enter in the **climax of our liturgical year**, namely the **Triduum**: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday! Many times we have heard say that we Christians are the chosen people, the people of the **Risen Lord**, the people of the **Resurrection!** Yes, it is with great **joy** that we are all singing **Alleluia! Jesus is Risen!** This is our **faith!** This is our **hope!** We believe that by rising from the dead, Jesus promises all of us that we too can participate in that **resurrection!** We believe that our souls will never die and that **God’s** desire is that one day our souls will be totally united with **Him in Heaven!**

Since last Christmas, we have repeated with St. John Paul II that “**The Mass is Heaven on Earth!**” Every Mass, God becomes fully present in the **Eucharist!** Every time we come to Mass, we **enter Heaven** as we come to be together with **God.** With Pope Benedict XVI, we can affirm that **Heaven is God**, and that therefore **to be in Heaven is to be with God!** We are all called to be **intentional disciples of Christ!** We are all called to invite people to come and worship with us, not only at **Easter**, but also **every Sunday** throughout the year! At every Mass, we celebrate the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of **Our Lord Jesus Christ!** At every Mass, we have the opportunity of experiencing an encounter with **God!**

On behalf of Fr. Lopez, Deacon Rich, Deacon Bill, Sister Maria Paz, and all our staff, we wish you all a **Most Blessed Easter Season!** May the **Joy** of the **Risen Jesus** remain in all our hearts throughout the **fifty days of the Easter Season!** May we all continue to experience in our daily lives the **Love and Joy of the Risen Lord!**

One in Christ,

Fr. Alain



Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of The Lord

CCD Class Schedule

Our Lady Help of Christians 2016-2017 CCD Registration is open online: www.olhoc.org.

April 16/17- Easter Break/No CCD

April 21- Confirmation Yr. I Retreat (4:30-9:30 pm- Social Hall)

April 23/24- CCD Classes

Contact **Therese Thiedeman** at 301-645-7112 or dre@olhoc.org

Parish Youth Night !

Life Teen: high school youth ministry (Sun., 5-6:30 pm, ; April 30; May 7)

Edge: middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)

FIAT: elementary school Faith in Action Team (meets monthly)

Attention Families!!

The next **All-Youth Night (FIAT, Edge and Life Teen)** will be **April 30** and will begin with 4:00 PM Mass followed by pizza, fellowship and FIAT, Edge, and Life Teen meetings. Bring your friends ! See the website at: olhoc.org/ym.

FIAT, Edge and Life Teen ! All Young Adults!

Everyone is invited to join us on our next **All Youth Night on Sunday, April 30**, starting with Mass at 4 pm. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, recently called a Synod on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment. We are inviting all young adults (18-35 years old) to join us for the All Youth Night. There will be Mass at 4 pm, followed by a pizza dinner and then a gathering with Fr. Lopez and other young adults from the area for a special discussion/listening session on the Synod. Bring some friends!

Upcoming Child Protection Classes

Upcoming sessions of "Protecting God's Children for Adults" for those who need to become Virtus Compliant (Adults wishing to volunteer in any capacity while children are present.

- **April 24@ 6:30 pm- Archbishop Neale ES, La Plata**
- **May 18 @7 pm- St. John Vianney, Prince Frederick**

Go to VIRTUS.org to register. Call Nieda or Therese with questions at 301-645-7112 with questions or if you need assistance with this process.

Mass Readings for April 23, 2017

Second Sunday of Easter/Divine Mercy Sunday

First Reading- Acts of the Apostles 2: vs. 42-47

Second Reading- 1 Peter 1: vs. 3-9

Gospel- John 20: vs. 19-31

Mass Intention

Saturday, April 15, 8:00 PM: Peter Nikolai +

Sunday, April 16, 8:30 AM: Bill Bryner +

Sunday, April 16, 10:00 AM: OLHOC Parishioners

Sunday, April 16, 11:30 AM: Henry Ballestero

Wednesday, April 19, 9:00 AM: Victor Cordero

Thursday, April 20, 9:00 AM: Arturo Padama +

Friday, April 21, 9:00 AM: Fr. Thomas Crowley +

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

<http://www.olhoc.org/preschool.html>

- Fall registration continues for all new students.
- Please call 301-645-7112 or email : preschool@olhoc.org for information.

Community Outreach

All are welcome! The next **Shepherds' Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, April 20, 2017**. Our OLHOC Confirmation Students will be sponsoring and hosting the dinner at Good Shepherd Church. The next Outreach Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, **May 3 at 7 pm**.

Volunteers go to: www.olhoc.org and click on the Community Outreach link, or sign-up at: www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B044FABAD2DAA8-olhc

Pilgrimage to Fatima, Lourdes & France

Our parish is organizing this pilgrimage **August 6-16, 2017**, celebrating the **100th year anniversary** of the apparitions of **Our Lady in Fatima** and the **Feast of Our Lady of the Bread Giver in Aire Sur La Lys** (Home parish of Fr. Narcisse Martin). Fr. Alain will be the Spiritual Director for the pilgrimage. There are detailed flyers available in the narthex and on the parish bulletin board. If you are interested in this wonderful opportunity, please sign up on one of the lists in the narthex or contact **May Oteyza at 301-843-7784**. Please do not delay; Seats are limited, but still available for this once-in-a-lifetime faith journey!

Mary's Helping Hands Bake Sale

The ladies of **Mary's Helping Hands** (Knights of Columbus Auxiliary) will hold a bake sale and raffle (Celebrate America Basket) on Sunday, **April 23** in the narthex. There will be a large variety of post-Lenten and Easter celebration treats!

Thank You

The Altar Guild would like to thank all those who made memorial donations for Easter flowers that helped to make our church so beautiful. We also wish to thank those who volunteered their time to collect the reservations.

2017 Annual Jubilarian Mass

Cardinal Donald Wuerl will celebrate the annual **Jubilarian Mass** honoring couples married **25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, and 51+ years on Sunday, June 25, 2017 at 2 pm** at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Please use the sign-up forms on the bulletin table to register (required) and turn them into the ushers or the office. All forms must be to the OLHOC office no later than Thursday, April 20.

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