

April 29, 2018

Gaudete et Exsultate: REJOICE AND BE GLAD!

This past March 19 (Feast of St. Joseph), on his fifth anniversary of his installation as Pope, our Holy Father Pope Francis gave us another beautiful Apostolic Exhortation: "**Gaudete et Exsultate**," which is a powerful reflection on **the call to holiness in today's world**. Once baptized we are **all called to holiness**. In its introductory first paragraph, Pope Francis reminds us that in Matthew 5:12 (end of the Beatitudes, beginning of the Sermon on the Mount), Jesus tells those persecuted or humiliated for his sake: "Rejoice and be glad!" The Lord asks everything of us, and in return he offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created. He wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland, mediocre existence. The call to holiness is present in various ways from the very first pages of the Bible. We see it expressed in the Lord's words to Abraham: "*Walk in my presence and be blameless,*" (Gen17:1).

The English version was released on April 9th and can be downloaded from the Internet (Vatican News), or order it from the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (<http://store.usccb.org>). This is Pope Francis' Third Apostolic Exhortation. His first one was about the **Joy of Evangelization (Evangelii Gaudium)**, and his second one about the **Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia)** in the family.

I recall reading Pope Francis' First Exhortation: "The Joy of the Gospel." It was about the Proclamation of the Gospel in today's world. It was published in November 2013. Francis had been a pope for only eight months. This was his first major writing and I was fascinated. I could not stop reading it. It was filled with the **Joy of Christ**. He began it with simple words:

"The Joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew." He continues in paragraph 3, "*I invite all Christians ... to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day.*" Paragraph 5 reads "*The Gospel, radiant with the glory of Christ's cross, constantly invites us to rejoice... 'Rejoice!' is the angel's greeting to Mary (Lk 1:28)...In her song of praise, Mary proclaims: 'My spirit rejoices in God my Savior' (Lk 1:47)...Jesus himself 'rejoiced in the Holy Spirit' (Lk 10:21).*" Pope Francis continues, "*Our Christian joy drinks of the wellspring of His brimming heart. He promises his disciples: 'You will be sorrowful, but your Sorrow will turn into joy...But I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.'* (John 16:22). *The disciples 'rejoiced' at the sight of the Risen Christ (John 20:20). In the Acts of the Apostles we read that the first Christians 'ate their food with glad and generous hearts' (Acts 2:46). Wherever the disciples went, 'there was great joy' (Acts 8:8)...Why should we not also enter into this great stream of joy?'"*

I have just begun reading **Gaudete et Exsultate**, and I feel the same excitement as when I was reading Pope Francis' First Exhortation four and half years ago...It is about the same **joy**, the **joy of Christ**, which no one (but ourselves) can take away from us! It is about the same **immense love** that God has for each of us. It is about the same **loving care** for others in the simplest ways. It is about being saved and finding eternal **joy with God!**

We know that from our baptism we have been **called to be holy!** As Pope Francis reminds us (paragraph 2 of Gaudete et Exsultate), quoting from Ephesians 1:4 "*For the Lord has chosen each one of us to be holy and blameless before him in love.*" We know that to join God in eternal life we do have to strive for such holiness. We also know that we cannot become holy on our own. We need the help of the **Holy Spirit**, and we need to cooperate with God's Will by constantly **desiring to become holy**, and **being open to letting the Holy Spirit guide every step, every decision in our daily lives.**

Paragraph 14 tells us, "*To be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest, or a religious...We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves.*" Paragraph 15, "*Let the grace of your baptism bear fruit in a path of holiness. Let everything be open to God; turn to him in every situation. Do not be dismayed, for the power of the Holy Spirit enables you to do this, and holiness, in the end, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life (Galatians 5: 22-23).*"

As Pentecost approaches (May 20) and we enter into the **Year of the Holy Spirit**, I invite everyone to begin reading this important, easy-read document and meditate today on the concluding paragraph: "*It is my hope that these pages will prove helpful by enabling the whole Church to devote herself anew to promoting the desire for holiness. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us a fervent longing to be saints for God's greater glory, and let us encourage one another in this effort. In this way, we will share a happiness that the world will not be able to take from us.*"

Thank **you** for your prayers and your kind words of love in response to my current physical sufferings. This is nothing in comparison with the sufferings that many of you are going through. So I invite you to take a friend with you to the on-going **Catechesis** on Mondays and Thursdays, 7 pm. Let us also continue our daily meditations: 33 Days to Morning Glory; a fitting preparation for Pentecost that ends with a short prayer to the **Holy Spirit**.

**Come Holy Spirit and fill our hearts
with the fire of your love!**

*One in Christ,
Fr. Alain*



Fifth Sunday of Easter

CCD Class Schedule

April 29/30: CCD Class

May 4: 1st Communion Rehearsal 6:00 pm

May 5: 1st Holy Communion 10:00 am

May 6/7: CCD Class

May 13/14: CCD Class

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

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

Edge: Middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)

Life Teen: High school youth ministry

**** Youth Summer Retreat ****



Youth Worship

Rising 9th graders-seniors, join us for **Camp Veritas** August 12th-18th at Camp Lakota in Wurtsboro, NY. It will be an amazing week of outdoor fun, prayer, time with friends, and growing in your faith.

For more information and youth opportunities, please visit www.olhoc.com/ym or contact **Marlen Coles** at marlen@olhoc.org.

Congratulations Confirmation Class of 2018!



Bishop Bevard of the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands, was very pleased to join us for the first time and confirm 41 people. It was a joyous celebration filled with the Holy Spirit and not a single squirrel (ask the newly confirmed)!

Heartfelt gratitude is extended to all who gave so generously of themselves in preparing these young people to receive this sacrament, and

to all who made the celebration so beautiful!

Please pray for the 61 children who will receive their First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 5th.



Lost Jewelry



Various items (wedding rings, watches, cell phones, etc.) have been found in and around our church building. If you or anyone you know has lost anything, please stop in or call the church office during business hours to claim.

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

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

Now Open – Registration for Fall 2018

For more information, send an email to preschool@olhoc.org or call the office and ask for **Nieda**, Preschool Director.

Upcoming Child Protection Workshop

Protecting God's Children: April 30, 6:00 PM
Archbishop Neale School, 104 Port Tobacco Road, La Plata, MD 20646

Community Outreach

The next **Shepherd's Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, May 17, 2018 at Good Shepherd Church.** We need menu planners for May.



Our next Outreach Committee Meeting is **May 2** at 7PM in the Social Hall.

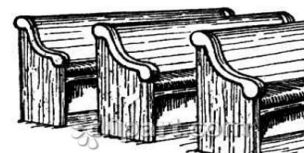
All are welcome!

Sharing Sunday – Non-perishable food donations are always welcome and can be left in the Social Hall. All donations will go to the local food bank, managed by Catholic Charities, on Irongate Drive in Waldorf.

Your Church; the Lord's House

Please respect your church, the Lord's house, and refrain from taking any food or beverage in the Sanctuary or Nave. If children need food or beverages, please use the cry room or Social Hall.

We have incurred some recent pew damage. Please care for the building investment by not walking on kneelers or using them as a foot rest.



Thank you for helping in keeping your church investment beautiful and clean.

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Prayer Requests *

We are asked to pray for: Fr. Alain, Grace Emmanuella, Dennis Forgash, Robert Brooks, Angel Morgan, William Graham, Fred Kowaleski, Kaylie Fowler, Ernest Mack, Derrick Webster, Brandon Mack, Johnné Webster, Dionne Gause, Dorian Webster, Alfred Brown, Doris Chesley, James Thompson, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Dunham, Tom Casey, Connie Miller, Windsor Family, Jessica Holt, Sue Holt, Michael Proctor, Larry McGraw, Sonia Knapp, Lynn & Ronald Henrion, Ebony Jenkins, Judy Studds, Pearl Green, Fr. Robert Pittman, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.



**Names will remain on our list for 3 months. Please call the parish office to re-request a name after 3 months or to remove a name when the person has regained health.*

Mass Intentions this Week

- Saturday, April 28, 9:00 AM: Harry Lissade (+)**
- Saturday, April 28, 5:00 PM: Guillermo Sanchez (+)**
- Sunday, April 29, 8:30 AM: OLHOC Parishioners**
- Sunday, April 29, 10:00 AM: Henry Vallesteros**
- Sunday, April 29, 11:30 AM: Allen Young (+)**
- Monday, April 30, 9:00 AM: Anthony & Joseph Fogol Cordera**
- Tuesday, May 1, 9:00 AM: Phyllis Swann**
- Wednesday, May 2, 9:00 AM: Zita Calvo (+)**
- Thursday, May 3, 9:00 AM: John Keller**
- Friday, May 4, 9:00 AM: Timothy Cunningham (+)**

The Vocations Tree

God, our Father, please send us holy priests. All for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, all for the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, in union with St. Joseph.



The **Vocations Tree** project invites our parish community (English and Spanish) to offer prayers for our Seminarians. Each year the Archdiocesan Vocation Office generously prints out Seminarian cards. Each card has the photo of a seminarian and a bit of information about him along with a suggested prayer on the back. We ask parishioners to **pick a card from the "tree-wall"** in the Narthex, and commit to praying for that seminarian every day until Pentecost Sunday, May 20.



Divine Mercy at OLHOC

The Divine Mercy Ministry invites us all to come and pray the chaplet each **1st Sunday at 3:00 PM.**

Mass Readings for May 6, 2018

Sixth Sunday of Easter

First Reading * Acts of the Apostles 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

Second Reading * 1 John 4:7-10

Gospel * John 15:9-17

Family Retreat - Parenting in the Modern World

Join fellow Catholic couples and families for a Domestic Church Day on **Saturday, May 5**, from 1:00-6:00 PM at the Saint John Paul II National Shrine. This half-day family retreat will feature a talk by Catholic psychologist Dr. Lisa Klewicki, on Balancing Bonding and Boundaries.

The cost of attendance is \$20 per family and \$10 per couple. Parking is free. To register please visit www.domesticchurchday.eventbrite.com.



OLHOC invites you to attend The Catechesis for Adults and Teenagers on Mondays and Thursdays at 7:00 PM, in the Social Hall.



To be a Christian is to have an encounter with the person of Christ. Jesus himself affirms: “... *I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.*” (John 10:10)

The catechesis will be given by a team from the Neo-catechumenal Way composed of one priest (Fr. Santiago), two seminarians from the Archdiocese of Washington, one widow, and two married couples.

This catechesis is an announcement of the Good News of the Gospel aimed to introduce people to a journey of mature Faith. The catechesis will help you deepen your Faith, encounter Jesus Christ through the scriptures, and find in Christ the answer to your daily sufferings.

We also encourage you to pass on this invitation with family members, friends or anyone that may be in need of rediscovering Jesus Christ. Take one or two cards located in the narthex to pass out and evangelize.

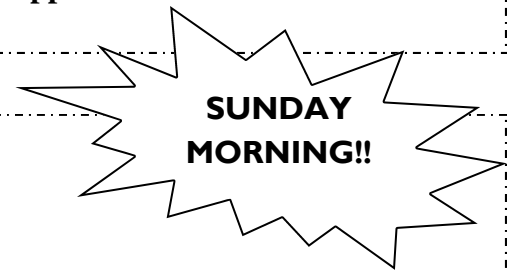
Come with an open heart - You won't be disappointed!

Adult Faith Formation Class:

Evangelization and the Acts of the Apostles

SUNDAYS at 9:30 AM

Nine more sessions - Come when you can!



As we approach Pentecost and our OLHOC “Year of the Holy Spirit” (Pentecost 2018-Pentecost 2019), there is no better place to look for guidance in the New Evangelization than the Acts of the Apostles. This chronicle of the Church in action gives us the blueprint for the life and mission of the Church today. In *Evangelization and the Acts of the Apostles*,

Dr. Mary Healy combines Bible study with Church teaching and practical wisdom to show us how modern Catholics can effectively lead people to Jesus Christ.

Healing Mass

St. Mary Church, Newport's monthly Healing Masses are held the **first Thursday of each month, 6:30 PM** in honor of St. John Vianney. The next Healing Mass will be on Thursday, May 3rd. Fr. Michael Briese will offer prayers of healing for the body and soul. Confessions begin at 6:00 p.m.; Location: St. Mary Church, Newport, 11555 St. Mary's Church Road, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622. For additional information, please call the rectory office at [301-934-8825](tel:301-934-8825).