



PARISH NEWSLETTER

SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

FALL 2017

REFLECTIONS ON FAMILY AND FAITH

October is probably my favorite month of the year. I was born on the 8th of October in 1952. Two of my brothers were born in October. The days get shorter and cooler. The leaves on the trees begin to change colors and begin their descent to the ground. We end the month with the pilgrimage of costumed children through the streets on the vigil of the Feast of All Saints.

I would never have guessed that I would return to the parish into which my parents moved when I was five years old! They chose

their house on Melrose Street specifically because of its proximity to Blessed Sacrament Church and School. As I reflect on my heritage, I am reminded of the great gift of faith handed on to me by my parents. There was never a question about the centrality of Sunday in our weekly lives. My father made sure that we were dressed properly and situated in our pew at least ten minutes before Mass was to begin. We would also frequently have to wait to leave until my mother's mother finished her lengthy thanksgiving prayers after Mass.

On Sundays we frequently had guests—relatives and friends of our parents. I distinctly remember fascinating discussions during the days of the Second Vatican Council. The importance of Sunday and the bond we shared as children were undoubtedly major influences on my choice of a future vocation. I was always attracted to the mystery of the Mass, even when I had no clue as to what the priest was doing. When I applied to the seminary years later, all I knew was that I wanted to do what the priest did at the altar.

These brief words of reflection remind me both of my gratitude for my formation in the family and my prayer that family life in general will be strengthened.

Yours in Christ,

Father Bill



Photo courtesy of Carl Procario-Foley

We returned home to enjoy a sumptuous breakfast. The afternoon was a time of rest. My father would devour the New York Times while some of us might glance at the Redskins. In the evening we all gathered for a special meal—the only time my parents dined with the children during the week because my father's work schedule and our homework and bedtime schedules did not permit us much time together on week nights.

BLESSED SACRAMENT LEADERS VISIT THE HOLY LAND

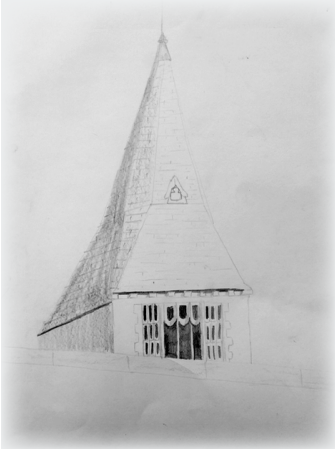
Last month, Michele Bowe, Blessed Sacrament parishioner and President of Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem, Pat Kavanaugh, Social Concerns Minister, and Rita Killian, Director of the Adult Center, traveled to the Holy Land to participate in a week-long pilgrimage sponsored by the Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem, entitled, "In the Footsteps of Jesus". All returned overwhelmed, awe-struck, and changed, moved spiritually by the religious experiences of visiting atypical shrines and Biblically-linked historical locations, where their accompanying chaplain, Monsignor Anthony Marcaccio, often celebrated Mass, and by witnessing the impressive commitment to life of the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem.

The pilgrims visited the Holy Sepulcher, walked the Via Dolorosa praying the Stations of the Cross, and then went to the site of the crucifixion and the tomb of Jesus. *(Continued on page 3)*



Photo courtesy of Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation

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Artwork by Charlie Neill, Ninth Grade

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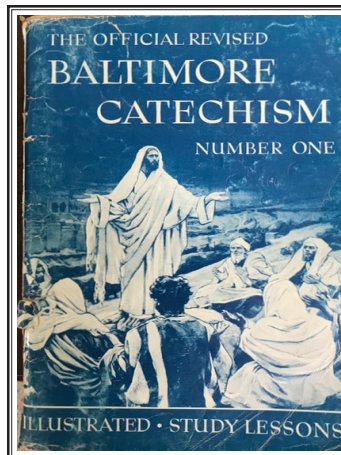
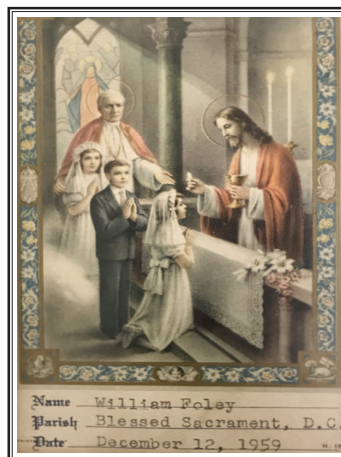
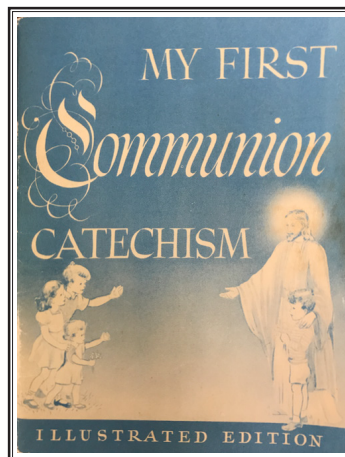
Artwork: Blessed Sacrament School students under the guidance of their art teacher, Judy Kearns

WELCOME FATHER BILL FOLEY!

Spiritual. Caring. Leader. Pastoral. Sense of humor. These are just a few of the descriptive words that characterize Blessed Sacrament's new pastor, Reverend William Foley.

Father Bill is a native son who grew up in Blessed Sacrament Parish, attended its school, and became a priest in the Archdiocese of Washington. Father has served in many roles and many parishes, and last summer he became Blessed Sacrament's pastor. Have just a brief conversation with him, and you know he loves his work.

Father's reflections on the front page of this newsletter give evidence of his respect for and love of history and community. A visit to his office reveals proof of his long-time Blessed Sacrament connections. How long? Check out these photos of documents he proudly displays in his office: his Blessed Sacrament Kindergarten diploma, his First Communion and Baltimore Catechisms, and his Blessed Sacrament First Communion card and certificate.



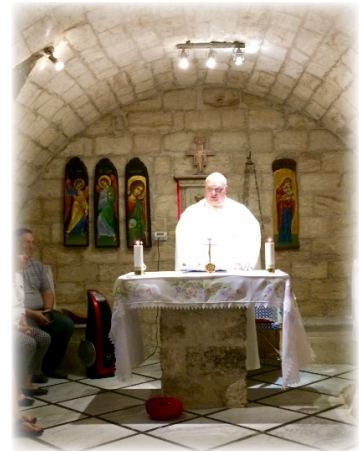
VISIT TO THE HOLY LAND *(Continued from page 1)*



The Upper Room, site of the Last Supper and Pentecost
Photo by Rita Killian



Holy Sepulchre: Tomb of Jesus
Photo by Rita Killian



Mass in Cana celebrated by Msgr. Marcaccio
Photo by Rita Killian

They visited the Upper Room, site of the Last Supper; Bethany, the town of Lazarus, Martha and Mary; Jericho; the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee, where the extreme heat lead them to test the waters. Cana, Nazareth, and numerous other sites made the gospel stories come alive to all. Rita was especially moved when, at the Church of the Nativity, the group attended a Christmas liturgy and sang Christmas carols. Pat declared the whole experience as “indescribable”, noting that although the Palestinians have no freedom, they are a happy, smiling people.

The group experienced first-hand the incredible work of the Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem, a shared effort of the Order of Malta. Located 1500 steps

from the birthplace of Jesus, this faith-in-action hospital effectively and economically provides state-of-the-art services and is a beacon of hope in the midst of political and social unrest. This Catholic-teaching institution delivers life, peace, and hope to the mothers and babies in the Holy Land, regardless of their religion.

The hospital provides prenatal care and delivery for more than 3,700 babies annually, neonatal intensive care for more than 400 premature infants annually, care for post-menopausal women, and healthcare for remote communities and Palestinian refugees through a mobile outreach clinic. Doctors and nurses, some trained in the U.S., who are from the three Abrahamic

faiths, work side-by-side to bring peace through medicine. Michelle shared her convincing thought: “I believe that the hope for peace in the Middle East will be born in this hospital.”

As members of a global faith community we pray for Christians and members of other faiths in the Holy Land. Michelle, Pat, and Rita, three Blessed Sacrament women, have gone the extra mile to bring us an understanding of what is often underreported in the media. They will be sharing their experiences in parish presentations; look for information in the parish bulletin.



Sunrise at the Sea of Galilee
Photo by Rita Killian



Rita Killian and Pat Kavanaugh at Holy Family Hospital NICU
Photo courtesy of Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation



View of the harbor in Jaffa
Photo by Rita Killian

SCHOOL OF RELIGION ANNOUNCES STUDENT INCREASE

Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. (Luke 18:15-17)

The Blessed Sacrament School of Religion is experiencing significant student body growth. The school, which offers Sunday and after-school Tuesday classes, provides religious formation for students in kindergarten through 8th grade. The program strives to communicate the Person and the message of Jesus Christ in the context of the beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. The goal of the School of Religion is to “put students not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ.”

Parents are always considered the first and primary catechists (or teachers) of their children; the Religious Education program can only complement and support the efforts at home. The School of Religion is not intended to take the place of our weekly obligation to attend Sunday Mass, whereby we all receive the living and true God, Jesus Christ, in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist.

Children of all ages and abilities are prepared for sacramental preparation! If a child is older and has not received the sacraments

of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and/or Confirmation, he/she can still prepare for their reception. There is also inclusion (as well as individual, one on one, catechesis upon request) for students with special needs. Every child is welcome at Blessed Sacrament.

For information, contact Michelle Balch, Director of Religious Education, 202.449.3981; mbalch@blessedsacramentdc.org.



Artwork by Michael DiLorenzo, Eighth Grade



Artwork by Cate Morrell (foreground), Fourth Grade



Artwork by Emma Blanton, Kindergarten

FINDING CHRIST IN THE DESERT

A POEM INSPIRED BY A SUMMER RETREAT AT THE
MONASTERY OF CHRIST IN THE DESERT

POEM AND PHOTO BY JOE BOZIK

Finding Christ in the desert,
Can be a sweet experience,
Like finding jam inside your dessert,
As you enter into His presence.

Stark, hot, dry, brown, and dusty,
Are images that come to mind –
Not so, at this Monastery,
Where there is warmth of the “Christ-kind”.



Sunset at the Great Sand Dunes National Park, Colorado

The desert is ever present,
As is Christ's loving embrace –
As close as the wet sagebrush scent –
A chance to feel Christ face-to-face.

The big skies with tall rain showers –
Creation's canyons of “marbled-red” dirt,
I could spend here, hours and hours,
Finding Christ in the desert.

TROOP 90 EXPLORES THE WILDERNESS

BY BRIAN ANDERSON

Ten scouts and six adults from Boy Scout Troop 90 joined in an early August canoeing trip in the Boundary Waters wilderness along the Minnesota/Canada border, participating in scouting's Northern Tier high adventure program. Over a seven-day period, participants paddled 80 plus miles among lakes and rivers, carrying canoes and gear between lakes and around waterfalls, and camping on remote islands. The scout excursion illustrated the principle: "The greater the challenge, the greater the reward." Participants say the trip was physically strenuous, but generated many memorable stories and a strong sense of accomplishment.

Troop 90 meets every Wednesday during the school year at 7:30 p.m. in the parish center. Boys 11-17 years old or beyond fifth grade are eligible to join.



Photos courtesy of Troop 90

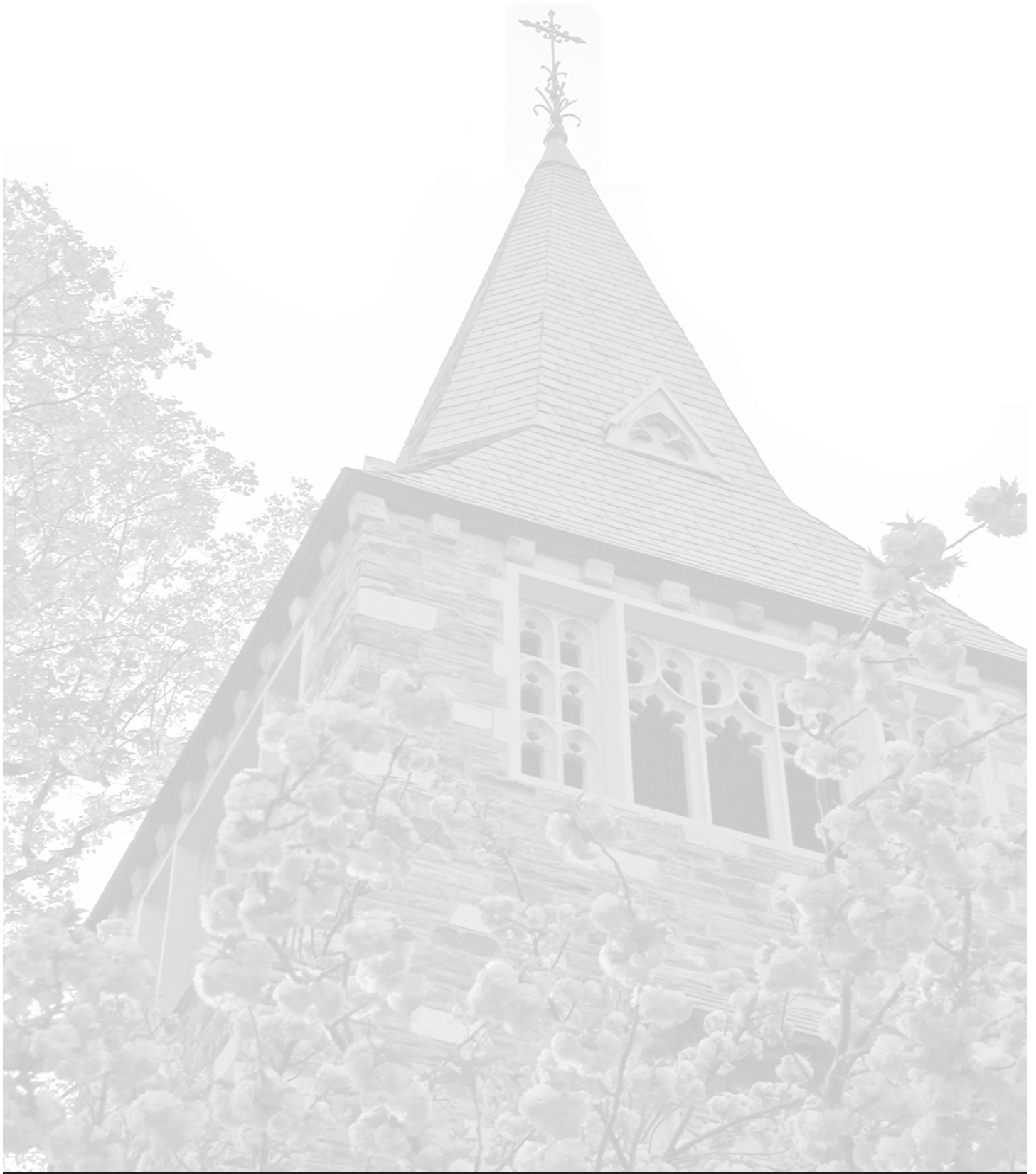
SCOUT COURT OF HONOR

BY WILLIAM CHOQUETTE

Blessed Sacrament sponsored Boy Scout Troop 90, now in its 98th year of continuous operation, held a Court of Honor in the parish center on September 27 at 7:30 p.m. Pastor Bill Foley opened the program with a Blessing. The Troop awarded 19 Scouts 23 Merit Badges. First Class Scout Myles Sampson served as Master of Ceremony.



Photos courtesy of Troop 90



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