



# The Marian Messenger

Bi-monthly newsletter of the Sodality of Our Lady

“O Jesus living in Mary, Come and live in thy Servants”

## Prefect’s Perspective

As I sit writing this message, the leaves are falling off the trees and there’s a chill in the air. It’s autumn and almost the end of our liturgical year. Advent will start on December 1. Since Thanksgiving is late this year, our Thanksgiving to Christmas holiday season will move at a hectic pace. All of us have traditions and customs that we celebrate this time of year. Perhaps you bake cookies or have special ornaments that you carefully unpack each year and lovingly put on your Christmas tree. It could be that you tell stories of a Christmas past, remembering the good times spent with family and friends. Whatever your Advent tradition, it is a time of preparation, of waiting for the birth of Jesus.

Meister Eckhart once said: “What good is it that Christ was born 2,000 years ago if he is not born now in your heart?” It is important during all of the hustle and bustle of this time of preparation that we take time to pause and reflect on the gifts that God has given us. We must “be still” to be able to hear what God wants to tell us. I invite you to join me in pledging to take at least five minutes every day during Advent to sit quietly and prepare your heart for the birth of Jesus.

The Light of the Christmas Star to You.  
 The Warmth of Home and Hearth to You.  
 The Cheer and Good Will of Friends to You.  
 The Love of the Son and God’s Peace to You.

--An Irish Christmas Blessing

May we all be alive and well here this time next year!  
 Blessings,

JoEllen

## Calendar of Events

- Nov 02 Sodality Union Meeting  
 Parish Bazaar 9am-2pm
- Nov 03 Newsletter Published  
 Parish Bazaar 9am-1pm
- Nov 21 Executive Council @ 7pm
- Dec 01 Mass & Meeting @ 8am
- Dec 07 Sodality Union Meeting
- Dec 14 Christmas Party for Needy  
 Children TBD
- Dec 15 Gaudete Sunday
- Dec 26 No Executive Council Mtg.  
 Articles for Newsletter due
- Jan 05 Mass & Meeting @ 8am  
 Newsletter Published



## Reminder...

Our lector for...

December 1: Mary Wade

January 5: Suzanne Lomax

February 2: Mary Wade

## “Oasis of Peace” – a visit to the Franciscan Monastery Hermitage

--by Laurie Njoku

In August, I started taking a day or so to go to places of solitude in order to stay spiritually grounded at this time in my life. September found me at the Franciscan Monastery Hermitage for two days. It opened in 2012 and I kept meaning to go. It is a small building behind the monastery at the edge of some woods. It is the size of an efficiency apartment – an open room that serves as the living room, kitchen, and dining area with a single bed off to the side. The bathroom is off to the other side and is handicapped accessible (walk-in shower; no soaking tub). You bring your own food and the kitchen has a refrigerator, stovetop, microwave, utensils and dishes. There is a deck that faces east.

As many of you know, the grounds are beautiful and have a variety of plants and flowers. The hermitage is away from public access. There is a path that leads to a secret locked gate that gave me easy access to the church, visitor center and public grounds. If you want to know where the gate is, you'll have to ask me. Mass for the public is at 7:00 a.m. in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Confession is available as usual (Note: Confessions are no longer heard there on Mondays). I also had my own private chapel, the Alverna Chapel, which is next to the hermitage and kept locked. The visitor gets a key.

The days were still warm and I walked around the many paths crisscrossing the property. Did you know that they have bee hives? My favorite place (besides the rose gardens) was the monks' cemetery. It is near the hermitage and has a huge and beautiful crucifix and statues of, I believe, Our Lady and St. John. There is a place in front of the statues where the burial service takes place. The stone was blackened and I wondered whether it might be from the incense burning at the services. In this wonderful sacred place just minutes from Greenbelt, I found solitude, time to read my spiritual book, and an “oasis of peace” (words used on the website to describe it).

If you want more specifics, visit their website at [www.myfranciscan.org](http://www.myfranciscan.org) or ask me.

***“Without mistakes there can be no forgiveness.  
Without forgiveness there can be no love.”***

--Mother Theresa

This photo of a woman at the feet of Jesus was found online by Laurie Njoku.



## We Walk by Faith: A Day of Recollection

--by Suzanne Lomax

Almost 50 people attended the Day of Reflection on Saturday, October 12th. Attendees enjoyed conversation and a light breakfast before listening to the speaker, Father Dan Leary of Saint Andrew Apostle, Silver Spring, Maryland. The topic of his talk was “We Walk by Faith.” Father Dan divided his presentation into two parts, one focusing on Baptism and one on the Eucharist.

Through Baptism, we become children of God, and, as children offer their hands to their parents as they walk, we need to do the same as we walk through life with God our Father. Through the Eucharist, we are strengthened as we continue our friendship and relationship with Jesus.

Conversation and discussion continued during a wonderful soup and sandwich lunch provided by the Knights of Columbus. All felt that Father Dan was an inspiring speaker who comfortably related personal stories of fall, redemption and faith.

### **The Following is taken from the Newsletter of the ...**

...Archdiocese of Washington Council of Catholic Women (NCCW). --Thank you for sharing, Cindy Perry.

The **Sodality Union** of the Archdiocese of Washington celebrated its **95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** with a Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception followed by a luncheon at Andrews Air Force Base. The Celebration honored those Sodalists 85 years old and older. Thanks to Mildred Steptoe and her team for providing a warm day of prayer and fellowship among sisters in Mary.

**TASTE** is a Catholic Women's Program that stands for **T**aste **A**nd **S**ee **T**ake...**E**at:

<http://www.tasteprogram.com/9.html>. The Program is designed for women wanting to learn more about their faith and about the Catholic Church. It takes place EVERY Thursday morning until May 8, 2014, 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. at St. Mary of the Mills Catholic Church, 114 St. Mary's Place, Laurel, Maryland 20707.

The **USCCB Office of Justice, Peace, and Human Development** is sponsoring the 2014 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, *Becoming a Church that is Poor and for the Poor* at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C., February 2-5, 2014. Registration for the four days is \$445.20. For more information go to <http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/>.

### **Where Justice and Mercy Meet: Catholic Opposition to the Death Penalty**

**Saturday, November 9, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**Registration is required for all attendees**

This is a day long workshop at Catholic University on the Death Penalty. Participants may join the conference either in person or via an online live stream. Topics include: Practical Arguments on the Death Penalty, Moral/Theological Aspects of the Death Penalty, and Sr. Helen Prejean, Keynote Speaker.

All participants, regardless of how they are participating, must register on the event webpage:

<http://iprcua.com/2013/11/09/where-justice-and-mercy-meet-catholic-opposition-to-the-death-penalty/>

For more information contact Emily Dillon of the Catholic Mobilizing Network at 202-541-5290 or

[emily@catholicmobilizing.org](mailto:emily@catholicmobilizing.org).

### **Magnificat Day on November 9 in Philadelphia**

The relics of the Little Flower, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and of her parents, Blessed Louis and Zélie Martin, will be available for veneration all day at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Visit the event's website to register and for further details: <http://www.magnificatday.com/>. To discuss carpooling contact Sharon O'Brien, NCCW Province Director at [sharonaobrien@msn.com](mailto:sharonaobrien@msn.com) or call her at 301-651-8190

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**PRAYER CORNER**

Let us remember to pray for all our deceased Sodalists, especially Barbara Byrd and Jeanne Delaney's mother, and for parishioners and their family members....and for all those intentions written in the Sodality Prayer Book.

**A Prayer Before Opening Presents**

Lord and Giver of all good things, the magi travelled for miles to bring the Christ child the first Christmas presents. So may we, too, remember with thankful hearts the love that comes with each present we open. We also thank you for the love you have for each of us, and we thank you for the many gifts that you give us, especially the gift of life itself. Amen.

--found by JoEllen on [www.GodWeb.org](http://www.GodWeb.org)

You  
can never do  
a kindness too soon,  
because you never know when  
too soon will be too  
late.

--Anonymous

**November and December Birthdays**

Cleopatra White	Nov14
Franca Onunkwo	Nov15
Vickie Claflin	Nov21
Eunice Barber	Nov25
Joanne Kellaheer	Dec15
Ann Chukwu	Dec16
Mary Moien	Dec27



For back issues of the Marian Messenger and other Sodality documents go to:

[www.sthughofgrenoble.org](http://www.sthughofgrenoble.org)

Click on "Our Church" and then "Sodality of Our Lady".