

KINDA-REGULAR ST. MARY'S YOUTH NEWSLETTER

What you want to know, whether you know it or not.

Volume 3; Issue 2

28 November 2005

It's a New Year at St. Mary's!

THE CHURCH'S NEW YEAR IS NOVEMBER 27

Advent is an especially wonderful season. With the beginning of Advent we also begin a new liturgical year in the church. The First Sunday of Advent—Nov 27—was therefore the Church's New Year's Day!

Advent comes from the Latin word for an "arrival" or "coming." Advent means that the Lord is coming. It sounds a bit confusing for sure. First Jesus came to us at a specific time in history at Bethlehem about 2000 years ago. But in the great feast of Christmas, he comes to us again! And besides that, he is always with us—in our hearts, in the Eucharist, in all those we encounter every day—our family, friends, neighbors, and in the stranger, the needy, the suffering. Thus, during the next few months of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, we prepare for and celebrate his coming again in this new year and are ready to welcome him when he does come, however that might be!

Here are some tips for preparing for advent by Henri J.M. Nouwen:

Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior. For you I wait all the long day, Because of your goodness, Lord. Psalm 25:5

Waiting is essential to the spiritual life. But waiting as a disciple of Jesus is not an empty waiting. It is a waiting with a promise in our hearts that makes already present to what we are waiting for. We wait during Advent for the birth of Jesus. We wait after Easter for the coming of the Spirit, and after the Ascension of Jesus we wait for his coming again in glory. We are always waiting, but it is a waiting in the conviction that we have already seen God's footsteps.

Waiting for God is an active, alert—yes, joyful—waiting. As we wait we remember him for whom we are waiting, and as we remember him we create a community ready to welcome him when he comes.

Lord, by your grace may I learn the art of waiting for you and your gifts with an eager and joyful heart.

EVENTS TO PLAN ON NOW

Although there is much uncertainty in life, we all know there are certain events that we can count on: Easter, Christmas, reading this newsletter...

Youth Group is like that. There are certain events you can be sure to count on. These events ("Events you can count on" for short) happen at youth group, because they are fun and because

fun people like you like to do them. Hint...hint...

A big advantage of these "Events you can Count on" is that, like when you received the first newsletter, you can **put them on your calendar NOW**. So, **flip open this newsletter and write these events down somewhere now. And count on them!**

FUN EVENT: On January 6, 2005, the Youth Confirmands took part in the first ever Epiphany pageant at St. Mary's. It was a great success! This year we are continuing the tradition with our Junior High Youth putting on the same pageant on Friday night, January 6 (Epiphany). Are you interested in helping out or playing a role in this fun pageant? Talk to Jenn or Tracy.

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Attention Parents!

- **Parent's Meeting** for the Second Half of the Year—looking ahead to the Spring and Summer: Sunday night, January 15 at 6pm.
- **Youth Leaders Retreat!** At the Diocesan Conference Center at Roslyn. January 13-15, 2006. Please see Jenn if you are interested in being a part of this great event!

St. Mary's Kinda-Regular Youth Newsletter

The Kinda-Regular is published semi-randomly, except during really slow or busy times.

Subscriptions are free to all those who attend at least one youth group event a semester. Others may subscribe by sending \$100 in cash to the editor's home address in a plain brown envelope.

Many thanks to The Rev. John Ohmer for the newsletters he produced in the mid-90s.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR YOUTH COUNCIL!

This Fall, our Senior High Youth organized and elected five people to a Youth Leadership Council for the 2005-2006 year. They are: Stephanie Pinch: Leadership Chair; Kevin Covucci: Leadership Co-Chair and Communications; Taylor Harvey: Leadership Co-Chair and Finances; Catharine Bellinger: Mission and Outreach; Enser Cole: Events. We are excited for this group and the events and activities they have planned so far this year and look forward to more in the year to come! If you have any ideas, suggestions, or feedback for them or about Youth Group, please see one of them! They are here for you!

COMING SOON: CONFIRMATION CLASSES!

We at St. Mary's have just learned of our date for the Bishop's Visitation in 2006—which will be our Confirmation Date. It is set for a Sunday in November 2006. Thus, we will have two Confirmation Classes during the 2006 year! Exciting news!

Preparation for Confirmation is a spiritual journey that involves a large amount of time and preparation both inside and outside the classroom. Confirmation class is not just a “now you are in the seventh grade and we are going to teach you what we want you to know and then you will be confirmed” model but is an opportunity to explore who you are, and who God is in this world and to hear an invitation to say “yes”—for each young person to “confirm” their baptism and to decide to give themselves to God in Jesus Christ for the rest of their lives.

The first Confirmation Class will be for all youth currently in Grades 7 and up. Our clergy—Andrew, Tracy, and Jenn—will be the teachers for the Confirmation Classes in 2006. We will meet on Monday nights from 6-7:30pm at St.

*Confirmation Classes begin
Monday, January 23 at 6pm!*

Mary's. A \$15 donation will be requested for all youth to cover dinner—which will be provided. Our first of ten meetings will be on Monday, January 23. Many of you have already indicated your interest in these classes to Jenn. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact her at (703) 527-6800 or Jennifer.Strawbridge@stmarysarlington.org.

Our second Confirmation Class will meet beginning in the Fall of 2006 for all youth who are, at that time, in 7th Grade and above. This class will meet from 5:30-7pm on Thursday nights for ten weeks beginning in September.

An overnight retreat for all Confirmands is being planned for September. More details concerning the retreat will be forthcoming.

Parents: Look for a letter with more details very soon.

WINTER BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to:			
Travis Hallman	November 2	Johannah Gehman	December 14
Evan Brandolino	November 3	Chandler Moskowitz	December 20
Max Emma and Ross Sylvestri	November 9	Fr. Andrew Merrow	December 21
Salena Hess, Colin Stucki, and Wes Millar	November 12	Megan Chase	December 27
Anne Pellegrino	November 13	Valerie Dugie	December 28
Stephen Benkert and Katy Hinkle	November 14	Cassandra Ford	January 1
Colin Gilliland	November 15	Mary Louise Dodson	January 4
Brendan Ware	November 16	Hunter Perrot	January 5
Oliver Cross	November 18	Brad Coyle	January 6
Fritz Parker	November 19	Elizabeth Dawson	January 19
Jack Overstreet	November 29	Kelly Willner and Alexis Hingle	January 21
Carly Hinkle	December 3	Caroline Minchew	January 25
Sam Nelson	December 8	Chris Emerson	January 26
Eleanor deButts	December 11	Cabell Perrot	January 27
Zachary Cross	December 12	Meagan Riley	January 28



Happy Birthday!

If we missed your birthday on this list,
Please do let us know!!!

EVENTS YOU CAN COUNT ON

READ THIS: This is just a foretaste of other events that will come about in the months ahead, however, this is what has already planned already! Once the new year and new semester gets going, life gets busy, we all get busy and we all get scheduled and overscheduled (sound familiar?), so if you want to make these events, be sure to write them down somewhere now, tell your parents about them now, so that the day will be free for this event!

Events Already Scheduled.....

SUNDAY, DEC 4	~ 12:30pm	SENIOR HIGH BRUNCH FOLLOWING THE 11:15 SERVICE
	6-8:00pm	PROVOCATIVE MOVIE NIGHT WITH DINNER FOR ALL YOUTH
SUNDAY, DEC 11	~ 3:00pm	ADVENT SERVICE PROJECT—OFF-SITE!
SUNDAY, DEC 18	~ 12:30pm	SENIOR HIGH BRUNCH FOLLOWING THE 11:15 SERVICE
	5:00pm	ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS
		YOUTH HOSTING THE RECEPTION OF COOKIES AND HOT COCOA!
	7pm	DINNER AND CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR ALL YOUTH—LOTS OF FUN!
SATURDAY, DEC 24	PM	CHRISTMAS EVE—COME SEE THE PAGEANTS AND SING CAROLS!
SUNDAY, DEC 25		MERRY CHRISTMAS! NO YOUTH FORUM OR ACTIVITIES!
SUNDAY, JAN 1		HAPPY NEW YEAR! NO YOUTH FORUM OR ACTIVITIES!
FRIDAY, JAN 6	PM	EPIPHANY PAGEANT BY JR. HIGH YOUTH—JOIN THE FUN!
SUNDAY, JAN 8	6pm	ICE SKATING TRIP
THURS. JAN 12	7-8:00pm	CAFFEINE AND CONVERSATION AT STARBUCKS (LEE-HARRISON)
JAN. 13-15		DIOCESAN YOUTH LEADERS RETREAT—ROSLYN CONFERENCE CENTER
SUNDAY, JAN 15	6pm	PARENTS' MEETING with YOUTH! Looking ahead to 2006!
SUNDAY, JAN 22	PM	YOUTH GROUPS MEET
MON., JAN 23	6-7:30pm	CONFIRMATION CLASSES BEGIN
SUNDAY, JAN 29	PM	YOUTH GROUPS MEET
SUNDAY, FEB 5		SOUPERBOWL PARTY (beginning one hour before the game)
MID-FEBRUARY	FRI-SAT	YOUTH GROUP SKI TRIP
TUESDAY, FEB 28	PM	SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE DINNER
APRIL 7-9		SR. HIGH WEEKEND at SHRINE MONT
SUNDAY, APRIL 16		EASTER SUNDAY
EARLY JULY		HONDURAS TRIP FOR AGES 16+
PROBABLY JULY 9-14		TOWEL MINISTRY TRIP TO NORTH CAROLINA FOR 9TH GRADE AND UP
JULY 9-14 (not including travel days)		HEIFER PROJECT INT'L MISSION TRIP IN ARKANSAS FOR 7TH GRADE AND UP
AUGUST 7-11 (during the days)		OUTREACH CAMP AT SAINT MARY'S (JR AND SR HIGH)

Is there something missing from this newsletter? What else would you include? Any news you want to make sure we know about?

Contact Jenn at 703-527-6800 or by email at:
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Kinda-Regular Youth Newsletter

'TIS THE SEASON...

ADVENT—the four-week period that leads up to Christmas—is a series of events designed not to delay the celebration of Christmas, but to enhance it. It is a kind of delayed gratification that culminates in a...satisfaction that is all the richer for the waiting. —Joan Chittister

THE EARTH has grown old with its burden of care
But at Christmas it is always young.
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair
And its soul full of music breaks the air,
When the song of angels is sung. —Phillips Brooks

YOU keep us waiting.
You, the God of all time,
Want us to wait
For the right time in which to discover
Who we are, where we are to go,
Who will be with us, and what we must do.
So thank you...for the waiting time. —John Bell

OH...jingle bells, Batman smells, Robin laid an egg. The Batmobile lost its wheel, and the Joker got away...
—Bart Simpson

Did you know...

- The popular Christmas song "Jingle Bells" was originally written in 1857 for Thanksgiving, not Christmas.
- It is not until the Twelfth Night (Epiphany) that the Three Kings are supposed to be added to the Christmas crèche.
- Santa Claus has two addresses...Letters addressed to TOYLAND go to Edinburg, but letters addressed to THE NORTH POLE have to be sent there because there actually is such a place!
- Turkey was first imported to the French by the Jesuit Priests. In some places in France, turkey is still known as "Jesuite"
- Rumor has it through the centuries that bread baked on Christmas Eve will never go moldy...
- Between 34-36 million Christmas trees are produced to keep up with the holiday demand.