

SHORT*Con't from page 1*

for spiritual guidance and sacramental service and to those who provide inspiring music, ceremony, and worship space. Thank you to parish council and school board members for wise and responsible counsel. Our parishes are more compassionate thanks to volunteer ministries caring for the poor, the elderly, sick, unemployed and disabled. New Catholics are gracefully informed, soon to be wed Catholics lovingly prepared and confirmed Catholics more aflame in faith and service thanks to the nurturing of mentors and ministers of sacramental preparation. We are grateful to school and religious education staff

and volunteers who foster our children's faith and learning. We are grateful to those who lead athletic and youth social activities. Thanks to those who seek to make us all more just by advocating for fairness and to protect the environment. Our buildings and grounds are beautiful and safe because of diligent maintenance and landscape staff. And all coordinated by dedicated, multi-tasking rectory staff. Some of you will be off this summer, some not. In every case, please know of our sincerest appreciation for what you do.

"In everything, give thanks". So teaches St Paul. These four words synthesize thousands of years of complex theological writing into an understandable and actionable definition of faith. Each moment

of our lives, each encounter, each joy, sadness, success and failure are part of God's plan for us and the world for which we should be grateful. Hard stuff that comes to us only through the gifts of grace and faith. I witness faithful gratitude each week when visiting the Little Sisters of the Poor residence for the elderly in Northeast Washington. I've written from time to time about this loving home and the Sisters who serve there. The Sisters are celebrating their 150th year in the United States. During the dozen years that I have been visiting, I've been blessed with the friendship of inspiring residents, remarkably Christ-like sisters, and compassionate and skilled staff. I'm thankful beyond meager literary skill to describe the impact these friend-

ships have on me and the gratitude I feel. My faith matures as I witness their thankful acceptance of God's plan each day. Whatever the dawn brings, good health or ill; loss or joy; loneliness or visits, fresh air or dreary weather, the attitude of gratitude is present everywhere in the home.

Let me tell you about a few of my friends, some living and some with God, and the grace they bring to my life. Miriam greeted everyone with her **optimism**. How are you, Miriam? Smiling, she confidently replies, "Peaceful, grateful and joyful". After seeing Miriam, my day was brighter. Richard's arrival at lunch was marked by his personalized, **engagement** with other residents in the dining room. He made each of us feel special, as if we

were the most important person in the room. Mr. "V" blessed us with his sharp **intellect**. Joe with his painful disability inspired with his gift of **perseverance**. Though in pain, he moved about the home and participated in activities bringing his unquenchable curiosity. My friend Leonard was a **pious** servant of the Lord and to the Little Sisters. For years he served as a skilled tailor to the home and as devoted alter server at Mass. Dave brings **humor** to every circumstance, even the painful ones. My grand-children are grateful for the weekly jokes Dave shares with me for them. I regret I cannot remotely do justice to his hilarious style. Friend Phillip has a **charitable** heart. Even with modest resources, he shares with organizations serving people less fortunate than himself. Mary, our home's petit-framed, but powerfully willed gardener, tends to scores of indoor plants in the home assuring year-round natural beauty and providing inspiration for others to give thanks to God for a **healthy environment**. Each week for more than a decade my faith has been inspired through chats with Msgr. Bazan. His enduring **pastoral care** is a blessing to all at our home. He often reminds us to give thanks to God. Brother John's smile brightens the home with **joy**. He does whatever needs to be done and every week drives the sisters to collect donated food at the market. Sr. Mary Bernard is among the older of the Little Sisters at the home. Yet she joyfully serves meals to the resident each day. She once was "the boss" Mother Superior, yet today she **humbly** serves her beloved residents. She's also not too proud to beg...you have likely seen her begging for funds to support the home in the rear of your parish church. In all, she gives thanks.

The Little Sisters of the Poor have created a loving family home guided by their vigorous faith and inspired by joyful gratitude for God's presence in each person each day. It is a home where aging is not so much a matter of time in people's lives as it is a important place in their time. Here is a home where in everything they give thanks. Have a blessed, safe summer.

God Bless!

Chuck Short

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OPT**GRANDPARENTS***Con't from page 18*

by the Student Council and representatives from each class, followed by a concert. Later, guests visited the classrooms to meet the teachers and engage in learning activities. Some ended the day with a trip to the book fair!

"It is one of my favorite days of the year," shared Mrs. Kane. "Our school is blessed with loving, caring families and it is beautiful to see them enjoying time together. It is also a time to remember family members who are unable to travel here for the day—their love is still present in our hearts and minds."

OPT**Amara Alexander**

Academy of the Holy Cross

Isaac Baum

St. John's College High School

Hannah Bazer

Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

Juliana Bove

Academy of the Holy Cross

Elizabeth Browning

St. John's College High School

Maximilian Cardillo

DeMatha Catholic High School

Jillian Donahue

Academy of the Holy Cross

Richard Drummond

Winston Churchill High School

Joaquin Espinola

St. John's College High School

Thomas Flaherty

St. John's College High School

Richard Johns II

St. John's College High School

Gabriela Musalem

St. John's College High School

Miranda Obando

Academy of the Holy Cross

Timothy O'Connor

Georgetown Preparatory School

Isabella Potakey

Georgetown Visitation

Joseph Rascher

St. John's College High School

Margaret Rose

Academy of the Holy Cross

Christopher Somefun

Gonzaga College High School

Daniella Suarez

Academy of the Holy Cross

Mary Washko

St. John's College High School

Adelaide Wildermuth

Academy of the Holy Cross

Hayden Williams

Walter Johnson High School

Alexander Wilson

St. John's College High School

Isabella Wood

Academy of the Holy Cross

Sophia Zelaya

St. John's College High School



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St. Raphael School's Mr. Jerry Nash, Golden Apple Award Winner!

By Nina Cardillo

Catholic school teachers play a tremendous role in the lives of students by teaching academics, arts, and athletics and in everything witnessing to the Catholic faith through words and actions. At St. Raphael School, fifth-grade teacher Jerry Nash does this and more, mixing education, faith, and fun and making him a well-deserving recipient of the Golden Apple Award! The honor recognizes excellence in teaching and commitment to Catholic education and will be formally presented to 10 local Catholic school teachers May 16 at the Mayflower Hotel.

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Photo by Anna Quattrone

St. Raphael School fifth-graders celebrate their teacher, Jerry Nash, after he was named a 2019 Golden Apple Award winner for teaching excellence.

How God Completed a Jewish Man

On April 9, 2019 Richard Meyer spoke with the women of St. Raphael's Sodality and other parishioners about his conversion from Judaism to Catholicism in a talk entitled *How God Completed a Jewish Man*. Richard used his personal conversion story to explain the four steps involved in conversion: religious, intellectual, affective and moral. His story shows God's patience as He took a man who refused to be



Edith Galvin, Martha Verme, Ursula Boesch and Janet Leonard Walker listen to Richard Meyer.

married in the Catholic Church into RCIA, the Church, and now into Diaconate formation. Richard attended several years of Hebrew School and attained his Bar Mitzvah at 13 years old, but never attended synagogue regularly through his years of higher educa-

tion or as he began his career as a patent attorney. His met his wife Mary, a devout Catholic, in 1991. They were married by a rabbi and a priest in September 1992, and now have three children. After years of occasional Mass attendance with

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A 43-Year Mystery Solved

Mission: Find the person who drew "Raffi," the familiar children's drawing in the logo for St. Raphael Nursery School. The quest begins in 2015, when the school Development Office publishes a "Who Drew Me?" announcement in the parish bulletin. An unidentified caller leaves a voicemail, saying the drawing was made by the child of then SRNS Director Janet Brewer. The number is tracked to parishioner Sharon Discavage, who gets credit for the first great clue.

MJ Zafis-Garcia of the



This item in the parish bulletin kicked off the quest to find the artist.

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Photo by Tom Carrington

Mary Washko plays The Cat in the Hat in St. Raphael School's production of "Seussical Jr."

St. Raphael School Presents 'Seussical Jr.'

Colorful costumes, spectacular sets, sensational songs, and awesome acts... "oh, the thinks you can think" about "Seussical Jr.!" This year's school musical, directed by music teacher Mary Kate McGetrick and supported by numerous staff and stage crew, told the story of "Horton Hears a Who!" along with other Dr. Seuss classics. SRS middle-school students showcased their talents in singing, dancing, and working together in drama production for a wonderful portrayal of "Seussical Jr." This "amazing" musical is a beautiful reminder that "a person's a person, no matter how small!"

OPT



Photo by MJ Zafis-Garcia, St. Raphael School

Elizabeth Stanislav (bottom row, center) is surrounded by SRS and SRNS students wearing shirts bearing the picture she drew in 1976.

Spring Celebrations

If you were lucky enough to be at SpringFest on St. Patrick's Day, then you were lucky enough! This year's SpringFest featured an online auction with charming prizes and gift packages, and bountiful baskets that benefited the school like a pot of gold. All who came enjoyed the blessing of good food and fellowship, and many pressed their luck at the cornhole competition that has become a favorite tradition. Thank you to all the volunteers, participants, and sponsors who made this year's SpringFest a success!

Bursting with color and buzzing with excitement, the annual Girls' Night Out was the place to "bee"... once again, SRS hosted the all-in-one spring shopping boutique, fill-

ing the Trumpet Room with great vendors and merchandise, appetizers and drinks, and SRS family and friends. At this year's spring shopping extravaganza, everything came up roses!

In May, the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation were joyfully received by 95 Communicants and 116 Confirmandi at St. Raphael Catholic Church. Bishop Herbert Bevard of Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands, and Bishop Michael Fisher of the Archdiocese of Washington each celebrated one of two Confirmation Masses at our parish. Congratulations to the children and everyone who helped them reach these milestones in Catholic faith formation!

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Catholic Business Network Essay Winners

Every year, the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County holds an essay contest for eighth-graders in local schools. Students who will be entering a Washington metropolitan area Catholic high school are eligible to win scholarships, and at SRS, we are proud to say that the Class of 2019 has four winners! Jillian Donahue placed fourth of seven girls, and Alex Wilson placed fifth, Timmy O'Connor placed seventh, and Isaac Baum placed eighth of eight boys who were awarded scholarships. The theme of this year's essay was the Beatitudes and how they are lived out in the students' lives—well done, eighth-graders!

OPT

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Please see page 28 for St. Raphael's Class of 2019 congratulations ad

St. Raphael

JEWISH

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his family, mostly at Christmas and Easter, his conversion began at age 40 when he decided to figure out for himself whether Jesus was the Son of God. He began to read about Christianity, and he attended meetings of the Christian Legal Society. He began his intellectual search by reading the New Testament and books such as "From Skeptic to Christian" by Gordon Pearce, and "Mere Christianity" and "The Great Divorce" by C.S. Lewis. Lewis' books challenged Richard to make an intellectually honest decision: is Christ a Liar, a Lunatic, or the Lord? Richard decided Jesus is the long awaited Messiah, the Son of God and our Savior. In the fall of 2003, he entered the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program at St. Raphael's.

In Easter 2004 he became a Catholic and his faith and love for the Eucharist has grown. He stayed involved in RCIA, but his



Richard Meyer explains his four-fold conversion process from Judaism to Catholicism.

desire to learn even more about his faith led him into discernment and eventual acceptance into the ADW Diaconate Formation program. He

is currently about half way done and hopes to be ordained with the rest of his class in June 2021.

OPT

NASH

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Standing 6 feet 9 inches tall, Nash's own Catholic upbringing and schooling helped to form the deeply rooted faith within his towering frame, which brightens and lifts up our SRS community through his lightheartedness, gentleness, and genuine compassion for students. Nash's inspiration to become a teacher is credited to his faith-filled parents, Patricia and James (who have passed away in the last six years), influential teach-

ers, and Catholic education from preschool through college. God's call to teaching appears to run in the family because his father, after having worked as a lawyer, taught ancient history and religion at The Heights, Nash's high school alma mater.

This is Nash's first year teaching fifth grade. He previously taught seventh-grade homeroom and middle-school language arts for six years, as well as third- and fourth-grade math and language arts and sixth- and seventh-grade social studies. After the previous fifth-grade teacher, Patty Quinn (win-

ner of the Golden Apple Award in 2014), died of cancer last June, Nash stepped up to fill the gap. In the classroom, he left in its place Quinn's poster with the message: "When faced with two choices, always choose the kinder." He continues to encourage his students to live out the "choose kind" challenge that is part of Quinn's legacy and has spread throughout the SRS community. Congratulations, Mr. Nash, on winning the Golden Apple Award! Above all the qualifications this award recognizes, it truly distinguishes the golden hearts!

OPT

MYSTERY

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Development Office pores through parish directories and the internet in search of Janet Brewer. She uses other online tools to narrow down the possibilities by age and location, eventually zeroing in on a woman in Potomac whose profile seems to check all the boxes. Zafis-Garcia mails a letter and waits. Janet Brewer calls. The Janet Brewer. And her information is gold.

No, it wasn't her child who drew Raffi but she remembers who it was. It was a student named Elizabeth O'Connell. It was probably 1976, she estimates, back when St. Raphael Nursery School was a co-op run by parents. The school had the four-year-olds draw pictures and the parents chose the winning drawing. "We put it on T-shirts and tote bags," Brewer says. "It's still on T-shirts and tote bags!" Zafis-Garcia replies. Brewer even

remembers the name of Elizabeth's parents, Maureen and Dan.

The mission to find Raffi's artist gets overtaken by more pressing needs and the project is put on hold. When 2019 arrives—the year of SRNS's 50th anniversary—Zafis-Garcia resumes her search. She finds three people who seem to be a match for Elizabeth, Maureen, and Dan O'Connell, and she mails more letters. Jackpot. Elizabeth O'Connell calls. The Elizabeth O'Connell (now Elizabeth Stanislav). "I actually did draw that," she says giddily on a voicemail. "My mother will be so excited."

Stanislav still lives in the area and turned 47 last month. She is a physical therapist for the Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers Program. The Stanislavs are parishioners at St. Patrick's. Zafis-Garcia invites her to stop by SRNS to see the school. On her visit, she is surrounded by students of all ages—rounded up by SRNS Board President Ashley Mendez with help

from teacher Camila Samper—all wearing SRNS T-shirts and sweatshirts in her honor. Stanislav is beaming as she comes upon the sea of kids wearing her masterpiece. She talks about the contest to draw the school logo. "I remember them making a big fuss of it and telling me how awesome it was," she says. She mentions she has a hazy recollection of the picture being of her mother. So maybe Raffi is really... Rafaela?

It is a happy visit, with hugs and smiles, backdropped by the ambient sounds of children playing—multiple generations woven together by a drawing made by a little girl 43 years ago.

The SRNS 50th celebration is June 1, starting with 5 p.m. Mass and followed by festivities on campus. Visit the anniversary webpage at www.srnsm.org for details and to RSVP. Walk down Memory Lane with SRNS by visiting the ongoing photo gallery.

OPT

SEDER

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Participants from the English-language RCIA program to attend as well in order to experience and to reflect on the significance of this part of our Christian history. This group sat together at a large table with the others, and with the help of a couple of translators, participated fully throughout the evening. Once the women lit the candles at the tables, Father Steve led the readings and rites which the community followed enthusiastically, most, for the first time.

The retelling of the Passover in this celebration brought to light the yoke that ties some ancient Jewish traditions to present day Catholic rituals. It was an important reminder to all, that Jesus Christ, our Lord, was a Jew. He celebrated the Passover much like this. He ate bitter herbs, retold along with his parents, Mary and Joseph, and his friends and family, the historical escape across the Red Sea during the narrative of the Exodus. Perhaps Jesus more than once was one of the children asking the traditional questions! Also, importantly, some of us also recalled that a young Jesus remained at the Temple after the Passover – at His Father's House. (See Luke 2:41-52.) This event was surely a precursor to a more significant transforma-

tion related to Pesach: The Blood of the Lamb. Lifesaving markings in Old Testament homes changed their texture, fiber, content. As Catholics we see a new, glorious, lifesaving, life giving essence. Jesus is our Sacrificial Lamb.

Along with the Haggadah text that was recited at the Seder, the celebration included a plethora of music and singing – with a Latin twist. There was also a lovely traditional Jewish dance performance by a group of our youths. Of course, when the easily recognized Jewish folk song "Hava Nagila" was played, most of the full house broke out onto the dance floor. What began as a small circle of dancers became a seemingly endless spiral of dancing feet and waving arms that transformed into a very long conga line! As usual, a delicious dinner was cooked by some of the parishioners and was served in very generous portions to the hungry attendees.

Overall, the evening was educational, it inspired reflection in some, and it was also very much fun for both adults and the many children in attendance. (Get kids to dip their finger in salted water or wine – grape juice, in this case – and sprinkle it on anything, and that's an automatic fun thing for them!) This attendee hopes the Seder will continue as an annual tradition at Christ the King. Shalom!

OPT

The Woods Academy

Prayers & Pizza

On Sunday, May 5, the Class of 2015 (now high school seniors) and their families gathered at The Woods for an intimate Mass celebrated by Father Raymond Kemp from Georgetown University. Everyone was thrilled to meet and greet old friends and former teachers while enjoying a casual pizza dinner.

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Members of The Woods Class of 2015, now high school seniors, enjoyed catching up after Mass on May 5. (Standing Left to Right) Will Pappert, Nicole Briscuso, Sidra Swift, Patrick Dolan, David Hobart, Inés Andrés, Margaret Maloney (Seated Left to Right) Zubin Eimen, Alexandre Crepin, María Ascanio Aliño, Catherine Heming Briana Lantuh, Molly O'Connor, Grace Yang

SKILLS

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the students create a business that will solve a problem or meet a need. After they brainstorm ideas, research and collect data, and finally develop a polished business plan, the students pitch their ideas to a room full of investors – Mr. Powers and their parents. This Shark Tank-like presentation requires the students to hone their public speaking skills and practice resilience and flexibility. The young entrepreneurs must remain poised and confident as the investors contemplate a deal.

In a recent presentation, a group of seven students scored a deal for their Water 4 Whales startup. The startup offered customizable water

bottles for sale to encourage conservation and decrease the use of plastic. In just one week of operation, the students turned a profit of \$151.33 which they donated entirely to 4Ocean (www.4ocean.com), an organization committed to removing trash from the ocean and coastlines.

At The Woods, students learn to use complex technology to express themselves, solve problems, and create opportunities as innovators, leaders, and entrepreneurs. Students participate in authentic projects and gain applicable skills that include collaboration, critical thinking, communication, character, and creativity, growing in the context of the world they will one day lead.

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