

FATHER'S CORNER



The BLA

For those of use who grew up in what computer savvy folks call the “.mil” (the “dot-mil” – the military), abbreviations and acronyms are a part of the life, part of the culture. Inevitably, those abbreviations can take on meanings that may not have been foreseen by the original authors. My younger brother’s experience with the SMAW (“Shoulder-launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon” – a bazooka-like rocket system used against tanks and bunkers) led him to quote others that the acronym actually stood for “Shoulder Manipulated Additional Weight”. The “Landing Ship, Tank” or LST quickly became known, with reason, as “Large, Slow Target”. Get a few vets together and you could twist and tickle any abbreviation designed by mankind until TEOTWAWKI (“The End Of The World As We Know It.”)

So it is with almost any abbreviation that comes to mind. We know “the BLA” stands for “The Bishop’s Lenten Appeal”, which is the annual collection for diocese that keeps the Church in the Diocese of Arlington in a position to preach the Gospel, dispense the Sacraments and teach the Apostolic Teaching. Many, I’m sure, have their own take on the “BLA” and what it means. I would like, however, to propose a different outlook on “BLA” and what it REALLY means to us, to others, and to God.

Perhaps “Better Living through Almsgiving” can get us closer to the core of the whole program. We cannot afford (literally AND figuratively) to forget that all we have has been given to us by God, and that we are called to be fountains of grace and blessing to others. To give to God and to His children is to receive more from God than the world can ever return, or even conceive of returning.

“Bring Love to All” is Our Lord’s call to each of us. It is a call that is not dependent upon actually being able to see those that we are to love. This understanding of BLA points to the necessity to give to others what they need to live, to learn and to love in turn. Many are helped through our generosity, both in the diocese and elsewhere. It would be awesome to see, in one place, all those who are assisted by the BLA. It would be sobering to see those we could have helped, but did not. Thanks be to God that we have another year on this earth to make a better effort to love those we cannot see.

“Be the Lord’s Apostles” is the constant theme of the Gospel. We are to be a continuation of the Incarnation of Christ – God living, speaking and appearing to others in us. Our generosity is to be modeled on the generosity of our Lord, who served us even unto suffering and death.

I pray for all of us that you and I can “Bless the Lord Always” with our time, talent and treasure, and thus avoid “Being on the Left of the Almighty” (see Mt 25: 41-46).

2008 BISHOP’S LENTEN APPEAL - ‘LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT’

Many of you have received Bishop Loverde’s letter requesting your financial support of the 2008 Bishop’s Lenten Appeal. Please consider making a generous pledge to this important annual campaign.

BLA funds help to support diocesan offices and ministries that serve tens of thousands of people each year. All parishes benefit from services that are received from the Diocese of Arlington. From encouragement of vocations, to support of seminarians, to continuing education of priests, to training of catechists, the Appeal funds those things that parishes can not do on their own.

Please pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as you consider your annual pledge to the Bishop’s Lenten Appeal. Make a sacrificial gift in gratitude for the gifts that God has given to you.

BLESSED PALMS Please bring your blessed palms from last year to be burned for the ashes used on Ash Wednesday, February 6. There will be a basket in the narthex to collect them. Please bring your palms no later than *Sunday, February 3*.

ST. FRANCIS HALL KITCHEN TO BE RENOVATED

The parish hall kitchen will be undergoing remodeling from now until March 17. The floor in the hall will also be replaced. Because of this much needed repair and remodeling work, the parish hall will not be accessible for use until after Easter.

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 6

Mass times are 6:30am,
9am, and 7:30pm

Our Thoughts and Prayers Are With ...

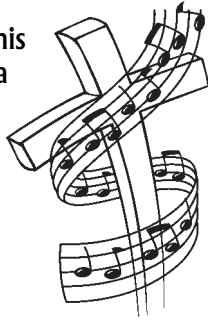


The Deployed: Afghanistan:, Michael Stone
Iraq: Charlie Balding, Paul Clark; Edmund Michael Hoffman, Joe Cooper, Casey Kershner, The Soldiers in our Adopt-a-Soldier program, Christopher Palm
The Sick: Liam Anderson, Wilhelmina Spreybroock, Liam Davidson, Donna Krafcheck, Anne Schroth
The Deceased: Virginia Moorcones, Robert Frederick Neal, Patricia Shea, Becky Rukowski, JenniferZilke, Robert Orme, Peter Gabby, Violet Brown, Dorothy Burns, Ernest Pavlock, Walter Risceck, Harold Ditzler

The Word of God invites us to

"Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord"

Our next "Joyful Noise" gathering will be **Monday, January 21** at 7:30 pm in the Church. Join us for an hour in a journey through Word and Song! This is a wonderful opportunity to have a shared experience of The Word of God in song, prayer, and reflection. We meet on the third Monday of each month...so set those times aside!



ALL ARE WELCOME!

Respect Life News

March for Life: The parish is invited to participate in the March for Life that will take place **Tuesday, January 22, 2008** in Washington, D.C. The rally begins at 9am where we will celebrate mass at 10am. at the Verizon Center. St. Francis will have a bus leaving at 7am to participate in the Youth Rally, Mass and the National Rally for Life and March for Life to the U.S. Supreme Court. Come as a family. Take the day off, get an excused absence from school, and let us celebrate the beautifulness of life. Sign up sheets will be available after all masses beginning the first weekend of January. Space is limited so sign up early. For more information or questions please call Michele Cohoon at 540-554-2049.

A HOLY HOUR FOR LIFE

Monday, January 21 at 7:30pm in the Church. Come to the Source of Life and Love, Himself, Jesus present in the Most Blessed Sacrament and intercede for life. The Holy Hour will conclude with Benediction.

ST. THERESA SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE St.

Theresa School will be having an Open House on Sunday, January 27th from 1 to 3pm and on Monday, January 28th from 10 to 11am. Please come and visit St. Theresa School as we begin to celebrate Catholic Schools Week. Some of our classes have openings, so please invite your friends and neighbors.

"To you who have been consecrated in Christ Jesus and called to be a holy people." Could it be that you or someone in your family is being called to consider priesthood or consecrated life? Call Father Brian Bashista at (703) 841-2514, or write b.bashista@arlingtondiocese.org.

Music News

Parish Choir Lent and Easter are just around the corner and the Parish Choir is beginning to prepare music for these wonderful seasons. The Parish Choir is open to those who have a love of music and want to praise God in song. The choir rehearses on **Tuesday evenings at 7pm**, and serves at the 10:30am Sunday Mass. All voice parts and levels of experience welcome!

Treble Choir The St. Francis Treble Choir will begin rehearsals on Tuesday, Feb 5th from 6-7pm.

The choir is seeking additional members and is open to girls ages 8 and up who love to sing and have a desire to learn parts singing. The choir serves at the 12:30pm Sunday Mass. Must be able to commit to a weekly rehearsal. For more information please contact Cindy Cummins, Director of Music at (540) 338-6381

Piano Lessons for Beginners Have you ever wanted to learn how to play the piano? Have you been thinking about getting your child involved in music this year? Starting in February I will be offering piano lessons for beginners. Lessons are 30 minutes in duration and are being offered at a very reasonable rate. Accepting ages 6 through adult (remember you're never too old to learn!). There are a limited number of slots available so call right away for more information. Contact Cindy Cummins, Director of Music at (540) 338-6381 or email me at music.stfrancis@comcast.net

ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNER'S AND PROFESSIONALS

In February 2008 we will provide all of our parishioners with our new Ministry Handbook. This full color book will contain important info about our church including staff contacts and a comprehensive list of the ministry opportunities active in our parish. The new book will also serve as a parish business directory, and will allow all of us to become familiar with the services available from fellow parishioners and vendors. To reserve your space, please call the office at 338-6381.



FREE THROW CONTEST

All boys and girls ages 10 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the 2008 Knights of Columbus Free Throw

Championship. The local competition will be held on Sunday, Feb. 3 from 1-3pm at the gym of Harmony Intermediate School. There is no cost to enter, winners will advance to the District and State competitions, with recognition possible at the National level. Registration will be held on the day of the competition. Please call Louis "Lou" Cironi at 571-228-4460 with any questions.

Religious Education

Melissa Gobs, DRE
338-4497

or dre.stfrancis@comcast.net

Please pray for all of our parish children who are preparing to receive the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** for the first time on Saturday, January 26. May they receive the Sacrament of Forgiveness with peace and knowledge of God's goodness and love for each one of them.

We are still waiting to receive our date of **Confirmation** from the Bishop's office. We will let all of our 8th grade families know as soon as we get word. Thanks for your patience.

Advent Parish Challenge - Still Going...

This week we will already be half way through our three-month reading plan and on book 5 of 14. For all of you who persevered in your reading through the busy-ness of the holiday preparations and celebrations you have earned our respect! For those of us who fell behind, no problem, let's make it our New Year's Resolution to pick back up where we left off, 3 chapters at a time. In fact, anyone interested in starting the reading plan in the new year can easily do so, and begin a structured daily reading of the bible in the convenience and comfort of your own home and on your own schedule. Pick up your handouts in the Narthex and sign up! Don't miss this opportunity to join your fellow parishioners on this journey through the Scriptures! This week's readings: 1 Samuel 25-28, 1 Sam. 29-31, II Sam. 1-4, II Sam. 5-8, II Sam. 9-12, II Sam. 13-16, II Sam. 17-20

Religious Ed Calendar

Sun., Jan. 20	<u>Grades K-8</u> Session 1 - 8:45am at LVHS <u>Grades K-8</u> Session 2 - 10:30am at LVHS
Mon., Jan. 21	<u>No Classes</u>
Tue., Jan. 22	<u>No Classes</u>
Wed. Jan. 23	<u>No Classes</u>
Sun., Jan. 27	<u>Grades K-8</u> Session 1 - 8:45am at LVHS <u>Grades K-8</u> Session 2 - 10:30am at LVHS
Mon., Jan. 28	<u>Grades 1, 2, 8, and Special Needs</u> - 4:15pm - at St. Francis
Tue., Jan. 29	<u>Grades K & 7</u> - 4:15pm, at St. Francis <u>RCIC</u> - 4pm, Visitation Room <u>RCIT</u> - 7:30pm, Visitation Room
Wed. Jan. 30	<u>Grades 3,4,5 & 6</u> - 4:15pm, at St. Francis



TEEN FAITH NEWS

Teen Mass - at 6pm every Sunday.
Teens welcome to join us in the front.

Social Movie Youth Night - Sunday, January 20th due to No school on Monday.

Mount 2000 - *Seek the Face of God*. Sign-up Today!!! for Mount 2000. Experience the awesome power of our Lord present in word, the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation, and the nearly 2000 teens gathered to learn, pray, and have a great time. We will leave St. Francis 5pm **Feb. 8** and return 2pm **Feb. 10**. The cost is now \$65.

Next Workcamp Meeting - February 17th.

Youth Group Ski Trip - February 22nd-24th. We will be returning to Wisp, MD. Join us for a weekend of skiing and fun. Sign up now so we know how many condo's to reserve.

Casino Night, Auction & Dinner Dance Workcamp Fundraiser - We are starting to plan our big fundraiser for Workcamp. We need all the help we can get. Please call Jane to volunteer or if you have anything you would like to donate for the auction.

Jane Treado Youth Director
540-338-6381 or Janedhs78@aol.com

J.A.M. SKI TRIP FOR 6, 7 & 8TH

GRADERS We're going to Whitetail on **Friday, January 25**. We will leave St. Francis parking lot at 7:30am and return at 8pm and travel by coach bus. *Seats on the bus are limited so reserve your space now!* Permission slip and ski packages have been mailed out. They must be turned in **no later** than Tuesday, January 22. Friends are welcome to come along.



VBS PLANNING MEETING

We will hold our first meeting in preparation for this summer's VBS on **Tuesday, January 29** in the Parish Office at 7:30pm. Anyone interested in learning more about VBS, helping this year, or sharing ideas should attend.

The Vacation Bible School Program is a week of creative educational and fun activities based on a Biblical theme. The program is designed for children ages kindergarten through grade six.

Discover how much fun it can be to help with VBS! Adults and teens are all invited to volunteer.

MASSES for the WEEK

† deceased

<u>Saturday, January 19</u>	<i>Vigil: 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>
5:00 pm	† Sean Patrick McCarthy
<u>Sunday, January 20</u>	<i>2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>
7:00 am	Lois D'Elia
8:30 am	† Ruth Sheldrick
10:30 am	People of the Parish
12:30 pm	Nancy Grish
6:00 pm	Jane Treado
<u>Monday, January 21</u>	<i>St. Agnes</i>
6:30 am	John Krebs
9:00 am	McCuiston Family
<u>Tuesday, January 22</u>	<i>St. Vincent</i>
	<i>Day of Penance for violations to the dignity of human persons</i>
6:30 am	† Celie Wladyka
9:00 am	Vincent Terreri
<u>Wed, January 23</u>	<i>Weekday</i>
6:30 am	Christine Krebs
9:00 am	Missy Krebs
<u>Thursday, January 24</u>	<i>St. Francis de Sales</i>
6:30 am	† Harold Ditzler
9:00 am	† Judith Merritt
<u>Friday, January 25</u>	<i>Conversion of St. Paul</i>
6:30 am	† Celie Wladyka
12:00 noon	† Campbell and Julian Families
<u>Saturday, January 26</u>	<i>Sts. Timothy and Titus</i>
9:00 am	† Richard Gessner
<u>Saturday, January 26</u>	<i>Vigil: 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>
5:00 pm	† Clinton Humphries
<u>Sunday, January 27</u>	<i>3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>
7:00 am	† Deceased members of the D'Elia, Curran, Sommer & Butts Families
8:30 am	† Sean Patrick McCarthy
10:30 am	Jack Heller
12:30 pm	People of the Parish
6:00 pm	† Deceased members of the Milam and Stafford families

PARISH FINANCIAL STATUS: 1/13/07

Offertory - this week	\$ 15,609
YEAR TO DATE	\$ 30,722
2nd Collection	\$ 2,476

IMPORTANT TAX NOTICE If you would like acknowledgement of donation for your tax returns, please contact Diane in the office at 540-338-6381.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 2008

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.
- Isaiah 49:6b

THREE MISSIONS

Today we begin with one of the "servant songs" from the book of Isaiah, a song prophetic of Jesus' ministry of service. Isaiah's mission is not only to bring back the children of Jacob to gather in Israel; it is also to be "a light to the nations" (Isaiah 49:6). Jesus Christ, as servant, will be the fulfillment of the ancient prophecy and the basis of the new.

This Sunday we begin a series of readings from Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Here Paul is identified by his mission: he is an apostle of Jesus Christ. The church at Corinth to whom he addresses this letter is also identified: it is part of the universal church of God. The Corinthians are called to holiness, as are all Christians.

Though the feast of the Baptism of the Lord was celebrated last Sunday, today's Gospel also alludes to the importance of that event. The reading emphasizes that Jesus "outranks" John: his baptism in the Spirit will eradicate sin. Jesus accepts John's baptism, even though it is he himself who is the Lamb of God.

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This Week

Mon., Jan. 21	<u>No RCIA</u>
Tue., Jan. 22	<u>Bible Study - 10am, Parish Hall</u> <u>Bible Study - 7pm, Parish Hall</u>
Thur., Jan. 24	<u>"Living Life in the Spirit" - 6:30pm</u> <u>Charismatic Prayer Group - 7:30pm</u> Visitation Room

Readings for the Week

Monday:	1 Sm 15:16-23; Mk 2:18-22
Tuesday:	1 Sm 16:1-13; Mk 2:23-28
Wednesday:	1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51; Mk 3:1-6
Thursday:	1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7; Mk 3:7-12
Friday:	Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22; Mk 16:15-18
Saturday:	2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5; Mk 3:20-21
Sunday:	Is 8:23 — 9:3; Ps 27; 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17; Mt 4:12-23 [12-17]