

Thirteen Coins

In the Spanish traditional celebration of the wedding, after the rings the spouses exchange thirteen coins, the "Arras", as a sign of the goods they will share in their common life. Why thirteen? The answer is inspiring: one for each month of the year and the thirteenth for the poor. This beautiful tradition teaches the spouses to care for the poor.

Traditionally, Christmas has been a season when as we gather as a family to celebrate, we remember that Mary and Joseph were poor and in need of shelter. Christmas tales are filled with poor children-stories teaching us to help those in need.

The Jubilee of Mercy is a strong call to reach out those in need, to make room for the poor at our table and welcome the Holy Family in our contemporary homeless. In the light of Christmas the Jubilee of Mercy is calling us with more urgency.

An excellent way to celebrate this Jubilee and be merciful is by practicing the works of mercy. In our catechisms we can find them. There are fourteen works of mercy: seven spiritual and seven corporal. The seven Corporal Works of Mercy are: Feed the hungry; Give drink to the thirsty; Clothe the naked; Shelter the homeless; Visit the sick; Visit the imprisoned; Bury the dead. The seven spiritual works of mercy are: Counsel the doubtful; Instruct the ignorant; Admonish sinner; Comfort the afflicted; Forgive offenses; Bear wrongs patiently; Pray for the living and the dead.

The Gospel for this fourth Sunday of Advent is the Visitation. "Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste" (Lk 1:39). Mary went to help Elizabeth. In doing so, Mary offers a precious example of serving those in need. After her, let's set out and reach those in need around us.

As we prepare for Christmas, we are invited to put aside the thirteenth coin, the one for the poor. Jesus is given to us in this Christmas. And he is given to us in the hungry, the thirsty, the naked and homeless. Thus, the way to welcome Jesus is to be merciful and welcoming with others, caring for their needs. In doing so we welcome Jesus himself, the one who will welcome us at the end of our lives: "Come, you, whom my Father has blessed... For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome..." (Mt 25:34-36).

Vocation Intention for the Week That the faithful response, "Behold, I come to do your will, O Lord," will be voiced by each person discerning a call to serve Christ as a priest, deacon, sister or brother, we pray to the Lord.

"It is by God's will that we have been sanctified."

How is God calling you to grow in holiness? If He may be inviting you to the priesthood, diaconate or consecrated life, contact Fr. Juan, general@queenofapostles.org or Fr. J.D. Jaffe (703) 841-2514, or j.jaffe@arlingtondiocese.org.

Fourth Sunday of Advent Masses this Week

Monday, December 21: Advent Weekday

6:30 a.m. +Maria Pelaez

9:00 a.m. +Dulcie Brown

Tuesday, December 22: Late Advent Weekday

6:30 a.m. Thanksgiving for the Guevara Family

9:00 a.m. +John Girone

Wednesday, December 23: Late Advent Weekday

6:30 a.m. +Shoukry Said

9:00 a.m. +Chester Toliver

Thursday, December 24: Late Advent Weekday (Christmas Eve)

6:30a.m. +Inocencio Monillas

9:00 a.m. +Dolores Perez

5:00 p.m. +Gregorio Pereira

7:00 p.m. +Lucia and Jose Antonio Venero

12 Midnight Living and Deceased Parishioners

Friday, December 25: The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

7:30 a.m. +Straun Pinto

9:00 a.m. (L) Rev. Kevin Walsh

10:30 a.m. Living and Deceased Parishioners

12 Noon (L) Rev. Thomas Vander Woude

Saturday, December 26: St. Stephen, The First Martyr

8:00 a.m. +Helen and Frank Zappacosta

5:00 p.m. +Efren O. Policarpio

7:00 p.m. +Alicia Melgarejo

Sunday, December 27: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

7:30 a.m. +John Plower

9:00 a.m. +Robert Evanski

10:30a.m. Living and Deceased Parishioners

12:00 p.m. (L) Michel Nasta

Operations and Stewardship Update: Making an End-of-year Gift

We are incredibly grateful for all parishioners who supported Queen of Apostles through their monetary giving this year. Please do not forget that your charitable contributions are tax-deductible, and that Dec. 31 is the last day that you can make a donation while still having it count towards your 2015 giving. If you would like to catch up on offertory giving, or you would like to make a special one-time gift, please remember to do so by **Dec. 31**. One-time gifts may be made electronically through Faith Direct by visiting faithdirect.net and using QofA church code: VA324.

Nourishing Our Souls With Holy Scripture

Readings for Next Week:

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14

Col 3:12-21

Lk 2:41-52(17)



Please pray for the members of our parish who are ill

Lyda Tanco, Mark Bush, Silvia Serban, Joseph Covas, Glenda Delosier, Luta "Cornie" McGrath, Margaret Peiffer, David Stemcosky, Irma Mori, Rita Sulit, Jason Banis, Emma Collins, Teresa Sabina Piecyk, Bridgetta Jenkins, Juana Mejia, Lisa Nyce, Monique Brooks, Debby Spracht, Consuelo Jocson, Cheryl McGlynn, Teresa Subalusky, Theresa Corcoran, Cordelia Carcamo, Donna Smith, Andres Encinas Fernandez, Sabrina Fernandez Numbella, Lula Tesfu, Monte Moyer, Joseph Luong Bui, Jeanie Miller, Carol D. Otani, Jean Seitz, Noah Mabaya, Robert McMurder, Anne Jenkins.

This Week in Our Parish

Sun., December 20:

School 9-10:15 a.m. Religious Education
Hannan Hall 2-3:30p.m. Ghana Group

Mon., December 21:

Parish Office 7-8p.m. RCIA
Choir Room 7-9:30p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Tues., December 22:

Parish Office 6:30-8p.m. Legion of Mary
Choir Room 7:30-9:30p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Wed., December 23:

Hannan Hall 7-9p.m. Ghana Prayer Group

Thurs., December 24: Parish Office Closed

No Holy Hour

Fri., December 25: Parish Office Closed

Cupertino Room 7-9p.m. Hispanic Legion of Mary

Sat., December 26:

School 4-6:30p.m. Spanish Prayer Group
Hannan Hall 7-9p.m. Ghana Choir

Sun., December 27:

School 9-10:15 a.m. RE Potluck Breakfast: No Classes
Hannan Hall 2-8p.m. Ghana Group



QUEEN OF APOSTLES CATHOLIC SCHOOL

FAITH, EXCELLENCE, JOY

Queen of Apostles School Now Enrolling for the 2016-2017 School Year

Registration has begun for the next school year. The kindergarten class is expected to fill up quickly, so don't delay registering your child. Application packets are available at the school and on the school's website (www.queenofapostlesschool.org). Tours are given daily from 8:30a.m. to 2p.m. or upon request. You can arrange a tour through the school's website or by calling (703) 354-0714.

Congratulations to Alexia, a 5th grade student at the school, for winning the Missionary Childhood Association Advent art contest. She is the grand prize winner from thousands of entries across the country. Her artwork is on display at the Basilica of the National Shrine. Alexia is also the winner of the school's Christmas card contest and her art will be used for the parish Christmas card. We are thankful for Alexia's God-given talents!

The **Parish Office** will be closed on **Dec. 24** and **25**, and **Jan. 1**.

Giving Tuesday—Thank You!

Thanks to the generosity of parishioners who donated on Giving Tuesday. The Religious Education Department was able to purchase 12 Bibles for RE students.



Religious Education Classes The last day of class for the calendar year is **Dec. 20**. Classes resume on **Jan. 10** at 9a.m. Thank you catechists and aides for your dedication in the faith formation of our children!

Feast of the Holy Family, Potluck Breakfast with RE Families, Dec. 27

Religious Education families are invited to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family by sharing breakfast on Sunday, **Dec. 27**, 9-10:15a.m. in Hannan Hall (please note change from Multipurpose Room). Meet other RE families and bring a dish or beverage to share. Please contact Blanca Barrios at blancabarrios07@yahoo.com to RSVP.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve: 5 p.m., 7 p.m. (in Spanish), & 12 Midnight. **There will be daily Masses at 6:30 a.m. and 9 a.m.*

Dec. 25 The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Day): 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12 Noon, & 2 p.m. (Ghana Catholic Community)

New Year's Mass Schedule

Dec. 31 New Year's Eve: 7 p.m. Vigil (in Spanish, 10:30 p.m. (Ghana Catholic Community)). **There will be daily Masses at 6:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. on Dec. 31*



Jan. 1 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation): 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., & 12 Noon

The **Adoration Chapel** will close on **Dec. 23** at 10p.m. and will reopen on **Dec. 28** after the 6:30a.m. Mass. It will close again on **Dec. 30** at 10p.m. and reopen on Jan. 4 after the 6:30a.m. Mass.



Opportunities throughout the Jubilee of Mercy to participate in Eucharistic Adoration

Thank you to our generous parishioners who made a commitment last weekend to Eucharistic Adoration during the Jubilee of Mercy. If you are still discerning the call to participate in this most important ministry of our parish, please know that we have now introduced monthly commitments in addition to our continual outreach for weekly adorers. Please see the desk next to the Adoration Chapel in the vestibule for hours of need and for sign-up forms.

March for Life: Support the Parish's Pro-Life Efforts

Did you know? Right within our parish boundaries there is an abortion provider. 1,613 babies were aborted at Alexandria Women's Health Clinic in 2014, equivalent to 5 babies a day, the second busiest abortion clinic in Virginia. Call our Pro-Life Coordinators Larry Cirignano 202-306-6863 or Carol Joanides 703-347-7339 and get involved in helping to stop this. More info to come regarding the **Jan. 22** March for Life and other Pro-Life initiatives in 2016.

KofC Annual Freethrow Contest The Knights are having their annual free throw competition for boys and girls ages 9-14 on **Jan. 28** at 5:30p.m. in the School Gym. Winners of this competition go on to compete in the district competition and later at the state level competition. All that is required is to show up!

Banica Mission Trip All teens 16+ are invited to participate in the Summer Youth Mission **Jun. 25-Jul. 5, 2016** to serve our brothers and sisters in the Arlington Diocesan Mission in Banica, Dominican Republic. Teens interested in applying to take part in this year's mission should contact Mother Maria, 703-354-0395 or Jo Balsamo, 703-623-5607. There will be a meeting for all participants on Sunday, **Jan. 3** after the 10:30 a.m. Mass. Please apply now, space is limited.

Thank you for your generous contribution to the Poor Box. This weekend, the collection will go towards **Christ House** and the **Missionaries of Charity**. Next weekend, the collection will go towards the **Poor Sisters of St. Joseph**.