

## Pastor's Message - Third Week of Easter

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

April 18/19, 2015

**Congratulations and Welcome!** At the Easter Vigil on Saturday night, April 4, we welcomed new members to the Church through the celebration of Rite of Initiation and the Rite of Reception Into Full Communion with the Catholic Church. Congratulations to: Kathryn Brossa, Stephen Maze, Katie Baldrich, Katlyn Wunder, Rhya Harris, Stefanie Write, and Melissa Wagner. Also, last weekend at the 9:00 AM Mass on the Second Sunday of Easter we welcomed Taylor VanHeest into full communion with the Catholic Church. Please keep our new members in your prayers as they continue their formation in the faith through the **Mystagogy**. This is the fourth stage of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults coming from the Greek words meaning "to lead through the mysteries." Traditionally mystagogy extends throughout the Easter season, until the feast of Pentecost. This is a period of accompaniment for new Catholics as they discover what it means to fully participate in the sacramental mysteries of the Church. The newly baptized are called "neophytes," from the Greek words meaning "new plant," because the faith has been newly planted in them. Even though their catechetical preparation has been completed, they still have much to learn about what it means to live as Catholic Christians. Things often look different from the inside! Once they find themselves really on the inside, the neophytes often have more questions about living a life of faith. They need the ongoing support of the community so that the faith newly planted in them can grow deep roots.

**Special thanks** to our Director of Religious Education, Janet Kempf, our parish catechist, Diane Browne, Jillian Buhl, Deacon Matt Hrobak, Fr. John Kelly, and all who lead our neophytes through the RCIA process to the celebration of the Easter sacraments.



**Church Building Repairs Update:** Over the past few months several sketches were made to document the means and methods for temporarily bracing the bell tower. The general idea was to secure a welded wire fabric to the outside of the bell tower. After a test drilling on the stone used to build the church (mica schist) to determine the feasibility of anchoring the wire fabric, the stone proved too dense and too difficult to bore through. To minimize the amount of coring, the project managers are generating new sketches maximizing the use of the existing fenestrations on the bell tower to anchor the welded wire fabric.

Meanwhile, the work on the Cresson Street buttress is proceeding and will likely be completed soon. On this area of the building, the contractor is mechanically reinforce portions of the existing buttress that have shifted or moved due to water infiltration and freeze/thaw damage. With the approval of engineers, the buttress is being reinforced with a combination of expansion and helical anchors that are inserted into holes drilled through the existing stones. By nature all stone can become a brittle material that fractures or shifts due to internal tension stresses produced by freezing water. The stainless steel helical mechanical anchors provide tension reinforcement of the stone and bridges across existing cracks to hold the stones together or they can be embedded into the internal exterior wall or the back up stones of the sub wall to prevent further damage.

(If this technique proves effective on the buttress, the general consensus (architect and engineer of record) is that we may be able to approach the bell tower repairs in a similar manner. If funding is available this might allow the contractor to forgo the installation of temporary bracing provided the mechanical repairs can be implemented in a timely manner.)

To prevent future water infiltration where the buttress joins the roof, a portion of the slate roof (approximately 3 feet) will be removed on the back side of the buttress so the step flashing can be replaced while the buttress is being reinforced.

Additionally, it was noted that the existing terracotta subsurface drainage piping (discharges for the roof downspouts) on the Cresson Street side of the church was scoped and was found to be deteriorated. There are concerns that the water may eventually undermine the foundation system for church or the retaining wall. The project manager has proposed to install new piping from the existing boots to an existing stormwater inlet on the church property below the surface. Pricing for this work has not been submitted yet.

### Thank You

We certainly had beautiful celebrations during Lent, Holy Week and Easter! Thank you to all who helped throughout the past several weeks with preparing the church and the liturgies - especially the Marthas, the Choir and Musicians, the Guitar Group, all liturgical ministers, staff and volunteers. Also, thank you to all who donated funds in memory or honor of family, friends and loved ones to help decorate the church and celebrate the Triduum.



## *Pope Francis' Urbi et Orbi (To the City and World) Easter Message*

**Dear Brothers and Sisters, a Happy and Holy Easter!**

The Church throughout the world echoes the angel's message to the women: "Do not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised... Come, see the place where he lay" ( Mt 28:5-6).

This is the culmination of the Gospel, it is the Good News par excellence: Jesus, who was crucified, is risen! This event is the basis of our faith and our hope. If Christ were not raised, Christianity would lose its very meaning; the whole mission of the Church would lose its impulse, for this is the point from which it first set out and continues to set out ever anew. The message which Christians bring to the world is this: Jesus, Love incarnate, died on the cross for our sins, but God the Father raised him and made him the Lord of life and death. In Jesus, love has triumphed over hatred, mercy over sinfulness, goodness over evil, truth over falsehood, life over death.

That is why we tell everyone: "Come and see!" In every human situation, marked by frailty, sin and death, the Good News is no mere matter of words, but a testimony to unconditional and faithful love: it is about leaving ourselves behind and encountering others, being close to those crushed by life's troubles, sharing with the needy, standing at the side of the sick, elderly and the outcast... "Come and see!": Love is more powerful, love gives life, love makes hope blossom in the wilderness.

With this joyful certainty in our hearts, today we turn to you, risen Lord!

Help us to seek you and to find you, to realize that we have a Father and are not orphans; that we can love and adore you.

Help us to overcome the scourge of hunger, aggravated by conflicts and by the immense wastefulness for which we are often responsible.

Enable us to protect the vulnerable, especially children, women and the elderly, who are at times exploited and abandoned.

Enable us to care for our brothers and sisters struck by the Ebola epidemic in Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone and Liberia, and to care for those suffering from so many other diseases which are also spread through neglect and dire poverty.

Comfort all those who cannot celebrate this Easter with their loved ones because they have been unjustly torn from their affections, like the many persons, priests and laity, who in various parts of the world have been kidnapped.

Comfort those who have left their own lands to migrate to places offering hope for a better future and the possibility of living their lives in dignity and, not infrequently, of freely professing their faith.

We ask you, Lord Jesus, to put an end to all war and every conflict, whether great or small, ancient or recent.

We pray in a particular way for Syria, beloved Syria, that all those suffering the effects of the conflict can receive needed humanitarian aid and that neither side will again use deadly force, especially against the defenseless civil population, but instead boldly negotiate the peace long awaited and long overdue!

Jesus, Lord of glory, we ask you to comfort the victims of fratricidal acts of violence in Iraq and to sustain the hopes raised by the resumption of negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians.

We beg for an end to the conflicts in the Central African Republic and a halt to the brutal terrorist attacks in parts of Nigeria and the acts of violence in South Sudan.

We ask that hearts be turned to reconciliation and fraternal concord in Venezuela.

By your resurrection, which this year we celebrate together with the Churches that follow the Julian calendar, we ask you to enlighten and inspire the initiatives that promote peace in Ukraine so that all those involved, with the support of the international community, will make every effort to prevent violence and, in a spirit of unity and dialogue, chart a path for the country's future. On this day, may they be able to proclaim, as brothers and sisters, that Christ is risen, Khrystos voskres!

Lord, we pray to you for all the peoples of the earth: you who have conquered death, grant us your life, grant us your peace!

Dear brothers and sisters, Happy Easter!

*Francis*

***You Are Invited to the Parish Assembly....***

**Sunday, May 3, 2015**

**Beginning with the 11:00 AM Mass. Followed by lunch and a gathering of parishioners in the Social Hall.**

**Your participation is important to understanding God's plan for the future of our parish!**

**If you plan to attend, please see the RSVP Form in the parish bulletin or web site ([stjohnmanayunk.org](http://stjohnmanayunk.org)). Let us know are attending by filling out the form and dropping it in the offertory basket at Mass, dropping it off at the rectory, emailing us at [rsvp@stjohnmanayunk.org](mailto:rsvp@stjohnmanayunk.org), or by calling the rectory at 215-482-4600, ext. 11.**