

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

(301) 638-5035 Church
4419 Leonardtown Road
Waldorf, MD 20601

Rev. Father Joseph Edgington, Pastor
(703) 532-8017

fredgington@gmail.com

www.apostlethomas.org

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE

SERVICES

Wed: Moleben to the Theotokos 6:00 AM

Friday: Moleben to the Cross 6:00 AM

Saturday: Confession 5:00 PM

Great Vespers 5:30 PM

Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM

Sunday School 9:30 AM

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

January 13, 2019 – Sunday After & Afterfeast of Theophany | Martyrs Hermylus & Stratonicus of Belgrade

The Holy Martyrs Hermylus and Stratonicus, Slavs by origin, lived at the beginning of the fourth century during a persecution against Christians by the emperor Licinius (311-324). Saint Hermylus served as deacon in the city of Singidunum (Belgrade). Condemned by Licinius to imprisonment, he was long and cruelly tortured for Christ, but he remained unyielding.

Hermylus mocked the pagan gods, calling them deaf, dumb, and blind idols. In anger Licinius ordered more severe torments for him, saying that he could avoid them if he would offer sacrifice. The holy martyr predicted that Licinius would suffer terrible wounds himself because he worshiped idols instead of the Creator. His words came true, for Licinius was killed in 324.

After three days Hermylus was brought before the tribunal again and asked whether he would avoid more torture by offering sacrifice. The saint replied that he would offer worship and sacrifice only to the true God. Saint Hermylus prayed that the Lord would give him strength to endure his torments and triumph over the



pagans. A voice was heard saying, “Hermylus, you will be delivered from your suffering in three days, and will receive a great reward.” The torturers fell to the ground in fear, and took the saint back to prison.

Saint Stratonicus was one of the prison guards and a secret Christian. Seeing the agonizing torments of his friend, he was unable to keep from weeping, and he revealed that he was a Christian. They also subjected him to punishment. After the torture, they put both martyrs into a net and threw them into the Danube. On the third day, the bodies of the saints were found by Christians on the bank of the river and buried near Singidunum. Their venerable heads were in the Church of Hagia Sophia, where the Russian pilgrim Anthony saw them in the year 1200. (*from oca.org*)

Today’s Epistle Lesson – St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians 4:7-13

Brethren, to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” (Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Today’s Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 4:12-17

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.” From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

A Word From the Holy Fathers

I had determined, beloved brethren, to send no letter to you concerning the affairs of the Church in consequence of your prolonged silence. For when I had by writing from several cities of the Roman world frequently informed you of the faith and efforts of our religious brethren, the bishops of the East, and how the Evil

One profiting by the discords of the times had with envenomed lips and tongue hissed out his deadly doctrine, I was afraid. I feared lest while so many bishops were involved in the serious danger of disastrous sin or disastrous mistake, you were holding your peace because a defiled and sin-stained conscience tempted you to despair. Ignorance I could not attribute to you; you had been too often warned. I judged therefore that I also ought to observe silence towards you, carefully remembering the Lord's saying, that those who after a first and second entreaty, and in spite of the witness of the Church, neglect to hear, are to be unto us as heathen men and publicans.

But when I received the letters that your blessed faith inspired, and understood that their slow arrival and their paucity were due to the remoteness and secrecy of my place of exile, I rejoiced in the Lord that you had continued pure and undefiled by the contagion of any execrable heresy, and that you were united with me in faith and spirit, and so were partakers of that exile into which Saturninus, fearing his own conscience, had thrust me after beguiling the Emperor, and after that you had denied him communion for the whole three years ago until now. I equally rejoiced that the impious and infidel creed which was sent straightway to you from Sirmium was not only not accepted by you, but condemned as soon as reported and notified. I felt that it was now binding on me as a religious duty to write sound and faithful words to you as my fellow-bishops, who communicate with me in Christ. I, who through fear of what might have been could at one time only rejoice with my own conscience that I was free from all these errors, was now bound to express delight at the purity of our common faith. Praise God for the unshaken stability of your noble hearts, for your firm house built on the foundation of the faithful rock, for the undefiled and unswerving constancy of a will that has proved immaculate!

...Kept always from guile by the gift of the Holy Spirit, we confess and write of our own will that there are not two Gods but one God; nor do we therefore deny that the Son of God is also God; for He is God of God. We deny that there are two incapable of birth, because God is one through the prerogative of being incapable of birth; nor does it follow that the Unbegotten is not God, for His source is the Unborn substance. There is not one subsistent Person, but a similar substance in both Persons. There is not one name of God applied to dissimilar natures, but a wholly similar essence belonging to one name and nature. One is not superior to the other on account of the kind of His substance, but one is subject to the other because born of the other. The Father is not greater because He is Father, the Son is not the less because He is Son. The difference is one of the meaning of a name and not of a nature. We confess that the Father is not affected by time, but do not deny that the Son is equally eternal. We assert that the Father is in the Son because the Son has nothing in Himself unlike the Father: we confess that the Son is in the

Father because the existence of the Son is not from any other source. We recognize that their nature is mutual and similar because equal: we do not think them to be one Person because they are one: we declare that they are through the similarity of an identical nature one, in such a way that they nevertheless are not one Person.

I have expounded, beloved brethren, my belief in our common faith so far as our wonted human speech permitted and the Lord, whom I have ever besought, as He is my witness, has given me power. If I have said too little, nay, if I have said almost nothing, I ask you to remember that it is not belief but words that are lacking. Perhaps I shall thereby prove that my human nature, though not my will, is weak: and I pardon my human nature if it cannot speak as it would of God, for it is enough for its salvation to have believed the things of God.

...Amid the numerous dangers which threaten the faith, brevity of words must be employed sparingly, lest what is piously meant be thought to be impiously expressed, and a word be judged guilty of occasioning heresy when it has been used in conscientious and unsuspecting innocence. A Catholic about to state that the substance of the Father and the Son is one, must not begin at that point: nor hold this word all important as though true faith did not exist where the word was not used. He will be safe in asserting the one substance if he has first said that the Father is unbegotten, that the Son is born, that He draws His personal subsistence from the Father, that He is like the Father in might, honor and nature, that He is subject to the Father as to the Author of His being, that He did not commit robbery by making Himself equal with God, in whose form He remained, that He was obedient unto death. He did not spring from nothing, but was born. He is not incapable of birth but equally eternal. He is not the Father, but the Son begotten of Him. He is not any portion of God, but is whole God. He is not Himself the source but the image; the image of God born of God to be God. He is not a creature but is God. Not another God in the kind of His substance, but the one God in virtue of the essence of His exactly similar substance. God is not one in Person but in nature, for the Born and the Begetter have nothing different or unlike. After saying all this, he does not err in declaring one substance of the Father and the Son. Nay, if he now denies the one substance he sins.

...Let no one think that our words were meant to deny the one substance. We are giving the very reason why it should not be denied. Let no one think that the word ought to be used by itself and unexplained. Otherwise the word ὁμοούσιος is not used in a religious spirit. I will not endure to hear that Christ was born of Mary unless I also hear, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.*" I will not hear Christ was hungry, unless I hear that after His fast of forty days He said, "*Man does not live by bread alone.*" I will not hear He thirsted unless I also hear

“Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” I will not hear Christ suffered unless I hear, *“The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.”* I will not hear He died unless I hear He rose again. Let us bring forward no isolated point of the divine mysteries to rouse the suspicions of our hearers and give an occasion to the blasphemers. We must first preach the birth and subordination of the Son and the likeness of His nature, and then we may preach in godly fashion that the Father and the Son are of one substance.

– St. Hilary of Poitiers *On the Councils*

Also Commemorated Today: Saint Maximos the Hut-Burner

Saint Maximos Kavsoalyvites was educated at the Church of the Most Holy Theotokos at Lampsakos. At seventeen years of age he left his parental home, became a monk, and passed his obedience under Elder Mark, the finest spiritual instructor in Macedonia. After the death of his teacher, the Saint pursued asceticism under the guidance of several desert fathers of extremely strict life. Arriving in Constantinople, Maximos was constantly at the Blachernae Church of the Most Holy Theotokos, as though he had taken up his abode at the entrance.

From his youth, Maximos had a great love for the Mother of God. He persistently entreated her to grant him the gift of unceasing noetic prayer. One day, as he was venerating her icon, he felt a warmth and a flame enter his heart from the icon. It did not burn him, but he felt a certain sweetness and contrition within. From that time, his heart began to repeat the Jesus Prayer continuously. In this way, the Virgin Theotokos fulfilled his request.

Saint Maximos fulfilled his obedience in the Great Lavra of Saint Athanasios on Mount Athos. In order to conceal his ascetic deeds of fasting and prayer, and to avoid celebrity, he behaved like a fool. One day, he had a vision of the Mother of God, who told him to ascend the mountain. On the summit of the Holy Mountain, he prayed for three days and nights. Again, the Most Holy Theotokos appeared to him surrounded by angels, and holding her divine Son in her arms.

Prostrating himself, the Saint heard the All-Holy Virgin speak to him, "Receive the gift against demons... and settle at the foot of Athos, for this is the will of my Son." She told him that he would ascend the heights of virtue, and become a teacher and guide for many. Then, since he had not eaten for several days, a heavenly bread was given to him. As soon as he put it in his mouth, he was surrounded by divine light, and he saw the Mother of God ascending into Heaven. Saint Maximos told his vision to a certain Elder living by the Church of the Holy Prophet Elias at Carmel. He was skeptical, but the Saint turned his disbelief to belief. He pretended to be slightly crazy in order to conceal his prodigious ascetic deeds, privations, his hardship and solitude. Maximos did not live in a permanent abode, but wandered from place to place like a

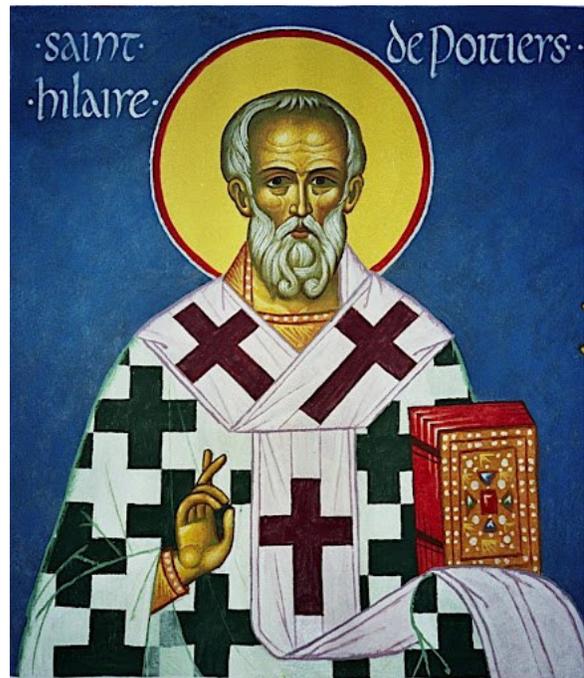
lunatic. Whenever he moved, he would burn his hut down. Therefore, he was called "Kavsokalyvites," or "Hut Burner."

Those on the Holy Mountain, knowing of the extreme deprivations and sorrows of Maximos, for a long time regarded him with contempt, even though he had attained the height and perfection of spiritual life. When Saint Gregory of Sinai (August 8) arrived on Athos, he encountered the holy fool. After speaking to him, he began to call him an earthly angel. Saint Gregory persuaded Saint Maximos to stop behaving like a fool and to live in one place so that others might benefit from his spiritual experience. Heeding the words of Saint Gregory and the advice of other Elders, Saint Maximos selected a permanent dwelling in a cave near the renowned Elder Isaiah.

Knowing of his gift of clairvoyance, the Roman Emperors John Palaiologos (1341-1376) and John Kantakouzenos (1341-1355) visited him and were surprised by the fulfillment of his predictions. Theophanes, the abbot of Vatopaidi Monastery, wrote about Maximos: "I invoke God as my witness, that I myself saw several of his miracles. Once, for instance, I saw him travel through the air from one place to another. I listened as he made a prediction concerning me, that first I would be an abbot, and then Metropolitan of Ochrid. He even revealed to me how I would suffer for the Church." Saint Maximos abandoned his solitude only just before his death, and settled near the Great Lavra of Saint Athanasios, where he surrendered his soul to the Lord at 95 years of age in the year 1365. After his death, as in life, Saint Maximos was glorified by many miracles. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

St. Hilary of Poitiers

Saint Hilary, the great opponent of Arianism, was born around 320. He was raised as a pagan, but converted to Christianity as an adult. He became Bishop of Poitiers in 350. When the emperor Constantius II attempted to impose Arianism on the western Church, Saint Hilary led a vigorous opposition to his efforts. Because of his outspoken criticism, he was exiled to Phrygia in 356. There he became such a defender and champion of Orthodoxy that the emperor decided it would be less trouble to allow him to return to his diocese. Saint Hilary continued to fight against Arianism until his death in 368. His holy relics still rest in the cathedral bearing his name at Poitiers in France. He has lent his name to the "Hilary term" of English law courts and universities, which begin on or near his Feast Day. *(from oca.org)*





Office of the Bishop

*312 Garfield Street
Johnstown, PA 15906*

December 19, 2018

Protocol No. 25/2018

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Diocesan Seniors,

Our Diocese is pleased to offer its second annual Senior Retreat this year from May 13-16, 2019 at Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA. I am calling upon all our Seniors, age 55 and older, to join me at the Camp for 3 days of fellowship and prayer in order to be spiritually rejuvenated. The Retreat is being offered with our Seniors specifically in mind.

The central theme of the Retreat is “Keeping Your Focus on God as a Senior”. The Retreat will help our Seniors navigate the many challenges they face including retirement, transition, health and family all while remaining focused on and committed to our Lord. It will include worship, fellowship, learning, fun, time for reflection and relaxation, and time spent together!

The Retreat is designed specifically for you, so Come! if you are “of age”.

Don't miss out on this opportunity for yourselves.

Register online at our Diocesan website: acrod.org. There you will also find the Retreat flyer and other necessary information about the Retreat. Alternately, you may print the Registration Form from the Diocesan website and send it in via mail.

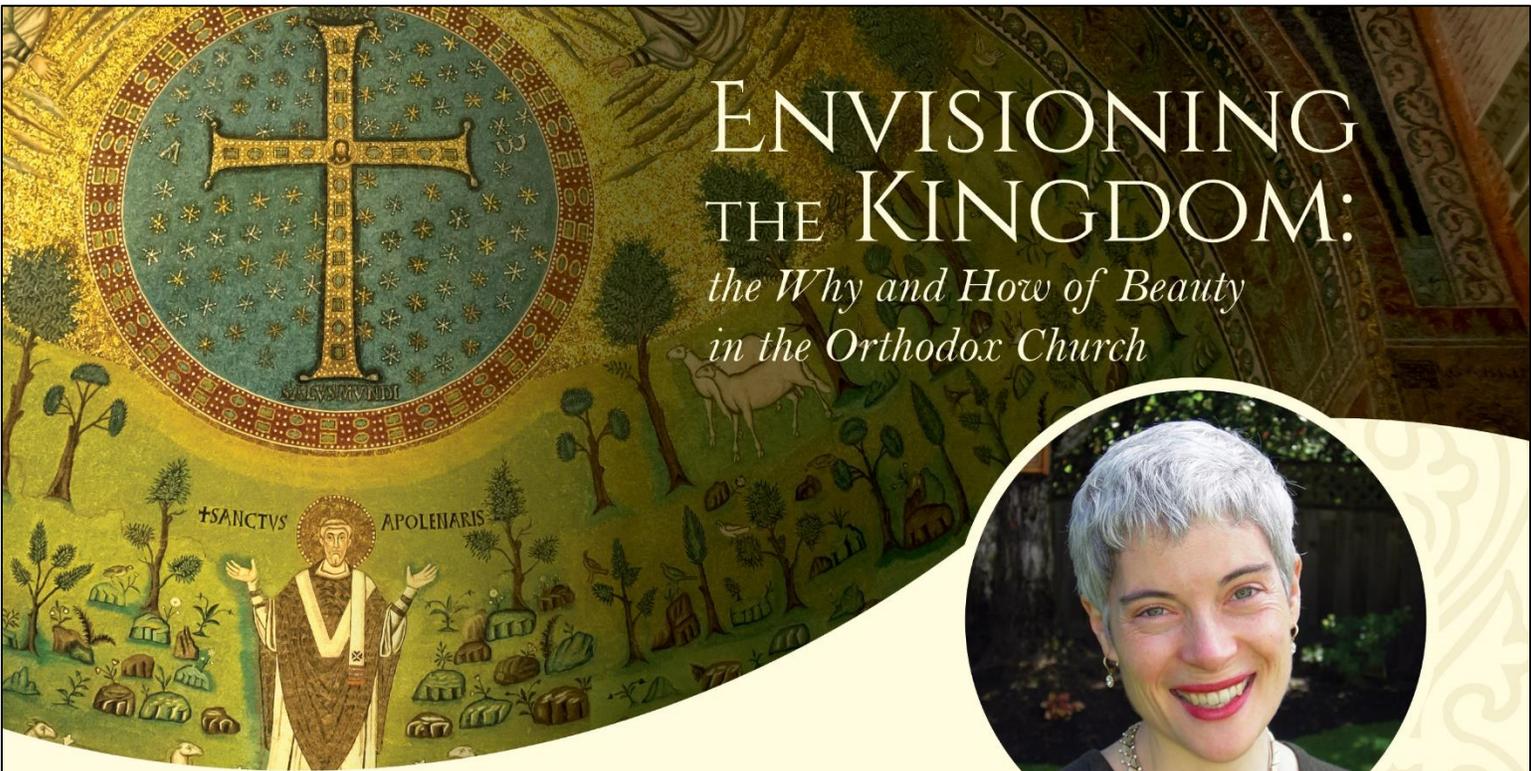
I am looking forward to spending time with each of you at this second annual Senior Retreat.

With blessing I remain

Working in His Vineyard with much love,

+ Metropolitan Gregory

+Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa



ENVISIONING THE KINGDOM:

*the Why and How of Beauty
in the Orthodox Church*



IS BEAUTY SIMPLY A TRIVIAL PURSUIT OR
COULD IT BE THE MEANS THROUGH WHICH
WE ENVISION THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?

Join Presvytera Krista West as she explores the Orthodox Christian approach to beauty and why beauty is such an important part of the Orthodox tradition. Opening with an explanation of the theological understanding of beauty within the Church, Krista will provide illuminating information on how beauty has been perceived and valued throughout the centuries and how it is very much a part of our calling as Orthodox Christians today along with practical advice for bringing more beauty into our lives and our churches. Krista is the author of “The Garments of Salvation: Orthodox Christian Liturgical Vesture” as well as a popular podcaster on Ancient Faith Radio with her “Opinionated Tailor” series and has worked as an ecclesiastical tailor for over 20 years. Engaging and informative, this presentation guarantees you won’t look at beauty the same way again!

Presvytera Krista West is an ecclesiastical tailor whose greatest passion is to bring more beauty into the world, and so she reads, writes and sews in the basement studio of her 1923 house. She occasionally leaves the studio to deliver lectures throughout the United States and loves inspiring others toward bringing more beauty into their lives. You can find her work online at kwvestments.com and avlea.life, and follow her on YouTube (search for “Krista West”) and Instagram ([kristanwest](https://www.instagram.com/kristanwest)).

A one-day retreat sponsored by:
Ss. Peter & Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church; 10620 River Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

Saturday, January 26th, 2019
10:00 am-3:00 pm (Including lunch)

The event is free, and ALL are welcome.

For further information, please contact Fr Isaac Crow or Fr Luke Toumi
301-765-3400 www.peterpaulpotomac.org

Message from Johnstown

We have received a request from our parishioners – Anna, Ron and Jacob Markosky – at St. John’s Church in Ligonier (Wilpen), PA. Their son, Jacob (age 33) was born with Polycystic Kidney Disease, a genetic disorder in which there is growth of multiple cysts in the kidneys. At the age of 3, Jake had a transplant from his dad which has lasted for 30 years. It’s now failing. Jake’s mother, Anna, intended to be a donor, but after testing she was not found to be compatible. They are now looking for a donor. Any interested person may call Living Donor – Pittsburgh UPMC (412) 864-5475 or go on-line for more information. God bless them in their search.

Sincerely,

Very Rev. Protopresbyter Frank P. Miloro

Chancellor

Upcoming Events

- ❖ The Annual Parish Meeting & Potluck will be held on Jan 20th (NEXT Sunday due to the snow expected today) after Liturgy, from noon until 2 pm. All are welcome and encouraged to come! The more perspectives and voices we can have the better. The primary order of business is to approve the church’s 2019 budget and to elect Parish Council officers. For official votes, only those who are considered voting members of the church can vote, but anyone can come to participate in the meeting. See you on Sunday, Jan 13th!
- ❖ January 18, 2019 is the annual March for Life in Washington, DC and St. Thomas has a long history of participation. Meet behind the Orthodox for Life banner. There are two local churches that are providing buses to the March.
 - 1. St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Waldorf. Email Kimberly.cardwell@gmail.com to reserve a seat. A hat will be passed for a tip for the bus driver.
 - 2. St Aloysius Catholic Church in Leonardtown. Call 402-850-8664. Donate what you can.
- ❖ There will be a St. Barbara meeting Feb 3rd after lunch to elect officers. After three years, Phyllis Thomidis is stepping down. There is also new business to address.

Follow Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews>

You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi of Aleppo, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Presbyteria Katie Baker and family, Santiago Alzugaray, Jeffrey Carey, Tatyana and Slava Chumak & family, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Luke Cooper, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Ron Dominiacki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, John Homick, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Tucker Karl and family, Robert & Pam Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, John Reece, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Alexander Shostko, Bernie Takabayashi & family, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, Subdcn. Nectarios and Ia, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)