As St. Joseph’s feast day approaches this week, we are honored to share this message from parishioner Bethany Welch.

Like many Catholics in the United States, I hit a dark period in my attitude toward the Catholic Church in the last few years. Between the sexual abuse crisis, the persistent effects of structural racism, and various disfunctions perpetuated by clericalism, I found myself asking what were the reasons to continue to affiliate with a broken institution? I have watched as some friends have left, stopped giving, or stepped back for a time. For me, the internal conflict took another turn. It gently pointed toward something I had actively explored a decade earlier but had then set aside: religious life.

This response might seem ridiculous at worst or oddly counter-cultural at best. We know congregations of women religious are in decline and there is less money than ever to fund their efforts. Why join a facet of a system you think is faltering? Yet, Protestant theologian and scripture scholar Walter Bruggemann writes of these seasons: “It is God’s spirit that begins something new when the world is exhausted, when our imagination fails and our lives shut down in silence and despair.”

Part of the attraction to religious life is the possibility of fostering new ways to be and to do faith together. We know there is much work to be done within Catholic spaces, including dismantling exclusionary structures in order to bring about reconciliation. This likely demands the energy of some who have the freedom to be for and with others through hospitality and accompaniment that is not entirely possible when in a partnered relationship or with dependent children.

I am delighted to share with you—my parish community for the last ten years—that the Feast of St. Joseph marks the official start of my candidacy with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Philadelphia. The discernment process is long and changes as one deepens their commitment. This August, I will move in with a local community while maintaining a job and my own expenses. Down the road, there would be another stage of candidacy, the novitiate, and then various stages of vows—usually eight or nine years in total before final profession.

—continued inside
12:05 Daily Mass Intentions and Presider

**Monday** 3/16
*Old St. Joseph’s Memorial Society*
*Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ*
*In your prayers,*
*please remember our sick and homebound*  
*brothers and sisters* 
*and our ministry at Pennsylvania Hospital.*
*Douglas Adler, Christina Bergonzi, George Bernato,*  
*Debbie Brooks, Audry Brunet, Ann Crowther,*  
*Jane Crowther, Mary Kay Crowther, Barbara Epting,*  
*Harry Gregory, Tessie Griffin, Fr. Mike Hricko SJ,*  
*Sharon Krinksy, Jerry Levins, Glen Malunis, Allan May,*  
*Fr. Jerry McAndrews SJ, Giancarlo Mazzoleni,*  
*Barbara Paul, Tamara Lucia Sanchez Porta,*  
*Raymond Scannapieco, Sara Smith,*  
*Anne Francis Tozzi, Craig Walsh,*  
*Lawrence and Sandra Williams,*  
*Sharon Winge and Pat Yusko.*

**Tuesday** 3/17
*Anne Migatz (D)*
*Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ*

**Wednesday** 3/18
*Kerry Pacifico (D)*
*Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ*

**Thursday** 3/19
*St. Joseph’s Day*
*Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ*

6:00 PM
*Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ*

**Friday** 3/20
*Old St. Joseph’s Memorial Society*
*Presider: Fr. O’Donnell SJ*

**Saturday** 3/21
*Catherine Regina Reinsel (D)*
*Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ*

**Saturday–Sunday**

3/22
5:30 PM
*Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ*

3/23
7:30 AM
*Presider Fr. O’Donnell SJ*
9:30 AM
*Presider: Fr. Hannafey SJ*
11:30 AM
*Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ*
6:30 PM
*Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ*

Health Precautions

To protect the health and safety of our community during the coronavirus outbreak, we are instituting a number of precautions here at Old St. Joseph’s:

*The holy water fonts at the doors of the Church have been emptied.*

*At the greeting of peace, we ask you to respect each other’s wishes regarding shaking hands. You may wish to acknowledge others with a gesture that does not involve physical contact.*

*For communion, the cup will not be offered until further notice. The ministers of communion will place the consecrated host onto the open palm of your hand and not on your tongue.*

*After Mass, Parish ministers may greet you at the door but without shaking hands.*

*Please keep in your prayer those who are sick from or suffer hardship because of the coronavirus or illnesses of any kind.*
—continued from front page

The first Sister of St. Joseph that I met was also the first nun/sister/woman religious that I encountered, sometime back in the late ‘90s. I was an energetic college student working at an internship focused on hunger relief. She was fierce, blindingly smart, and committed to a faith that does justice. About four years later, when I left Rochester, NY and landed in Philadelphia to serve as full time volunteer through AmeriCorps*VISTA, I met several similar sisters serving in Kensington.

In the 17 years that followed, I encountered Sisters of St. Joseph in places where much of society (and even the Church) had stepped away: at same-gender weddings, on city blocks punctuated by vacant houses, in missions formed in the remains of closed Catholic parishes, with asylum seeking families, at rallies for immigrant justice, and regularly in movements for more just social policies. One morning, at daily Mass, that faithful presence even included an empty altar when a priest failed to show for the liturgy. The sister quickly emerged from the pews to host an impromptu communion service instead of Mass.

No religious order is perfect, and no individual embodies the entire community, but in my experience, these women show up as fully human to be fully present to the humanness of others and in doing so, radiate the transformative love of God. We could probably use a few more of them in the years to come.

I am grateful to Old St. Joseph’s for fostering a sense of vocation in quiet ways, mostly through the rich fellowship I found in the young adult community, and for the many opportunities to deepen my understanding of Ignatian spirituality—something the SSJ’s share. Your prayers are most welcome as I continue this journey of discernment. Please know you are in mine.

—Bethany J. Welch


Feast Day Flowers

The flowers that will be on the St. Joseph statue on March 19 are donated by Lois Marcolongo in loving memory of her father, Emilio E. Marcolongo.
Announcements

A Plea for Environmental Action

We are witnessing the accelerated destruction of our greatest gift, our one and only Earth. As Christians we respect both the heavenly world and the mortal one. As the Bible says, “You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I dwell, for I the Lord dwell in the midst of the people of Israel” (Numbers 35:34). In allowing climate change to progress as it has, we have done precisely what the Bible warns us against.

What can you do to help? Here are a few options:

—Learn more about the problem and possible solutions: statesatrisk.org gives a good overview of the impact of climate change on Pennsylvania.
—Join an activist organization like the Citizens’ Climate Lobby or the Catholic Climate Project.
—Support a legislative solution such as the bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, HR 763. This bill proposes a carbon fee, imposed on fuels and materials which release excessive amounts of carbon in order to encourage the use of more environmentally friendly, renewable fuels such as wind and hydroelectric power. The money collected under this bill is returned to every U.S. citizen in the form of a monthly dividend.
—Encourage friends and colleagues to act. Every voice matters. It’s easy to add your endorsement at energyinnovationact.org/endorse/ or catholicclimatecovenant.org/program/advocacy.

Please act. Voice your support for HR 763. As a teenager, I am very concerned for the future of the world that my generation will inherit. When I am your age, what will this world look like? At the very least, please ask yourself, what kind of world do you want to leave for your children and grandchildren? What kind of world will you leave for me?

—Corey Becker

Rice Bowl Opportunities

Thomas Awaipo first encountered Catholic Relief Services as a child in Ghana. He was part of CRS’s Food for Education program, which provided children with daily meals in exchange for attending school. Mr. Awaipo is now a staunch advocate of CRS and its Lenten Rice Bowl program of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. He will talk about his life with Catholic Relief Services on Monday, March 23 at 12:00 Noon in the auditorium of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, 222 N. 17th Street, Philadelphia. A simple soup lunch will be served. All are welcome; please RSVP to Anne Ayella at aayella@archphila.org.

And on Monday, March 23 at 10:00–11:30 AM and again at 6:30–8:00 PM, St. Thomas of Villanova Parish, 1229 E. Lancaster Avenue, Rosemont, PA will host Advocacy 101 for people of all ages. The workshop will be focused on letter writing in support of HR 4864, the Global Child Thrive Act. Light refreshments will be served; please RSVP by March 20 to nancy.mcnamara@crs.org. More information about Catholic Relief Services’ advocacy is at crs.org/get-involved/advocate-poor.

—No additional information on these events is available at this time.

Villanova Conference on the Church Today

Villanova University’s Charles Widger School of Law will host a conference on The Church Today: Responding to the Sexual Abuse Crisis in the Catholic Church on will be rescheduled. Conference topics are expected include Law and Reform, Understanding Sexual Abuse, The Future of the Church, Lay Ministry, Catholic Social Teaching, and Church History and the Hierarchy. Search the conference title online for more information.
Announcements

Pre-Mass Reflection Group
Each Sunday at 5:30 PM (ending by 6:20 PM) all young adults are invited to reflect as a group on the readings that will be heard at the Sunday 6:30 PM Mass. We will meet virtually; contact sojyac@gmail.com for more information and instructions.

St. Patrick’s Day with OSJ Elders is Cancelled

OSJ Knitting Circle
Old St. Joseph’s has a knitting circle! Its members work on projects to warm up guests at Faith Food & Friends, at the Aquinas Center and at Women of Change. Donations of yarn are welcome and may be dropped off when the parish office is open.

Mark Bani in Recital
Old St. Joseph’s music director, Dr. Mark Bani, will present an organ recital on Sunday, March 15, at 4:00 PM at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, PA. His program will include music of Bach, Dupre, Hindemith and Vierne. All are welcome to attend!

St. Joseph’s Feast Day Celebration!
The 2020 Feast Day Mass and Celebration has been cancelled.

Centering Prayer
There will be no meeting of Centering Prayer Group this month.
INFORMATION

Pastor
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ (pastor@oldstjoseph.org)
Parochial Vicar
Fr. Francis Hannafey SJ (fhannafey@oldstjoseph.org)
In Residence
Br. Robert Carson SJ
Fr. Ed O’Donnell SJ (eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org)
Pastoral Associate
BJ Brown (bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org)
Business Manager
Eric German (germane@oldstjoseph.org)
Director of Music
Mark Bani (music@oldstjoseph.org)
Parish Offices
(parish@oldstjoseph.org)
Religious Education (PREP) Coordinator
Christine Szczepanowski (prep@oldstjoseph.org)
Faith, Food & Friends Director
Deborah Hluchan (faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org)
Director of Hospital Ministry
Tom Volkert (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Rectory Office Hours
Monday through Friday: 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Mass Times
Monday through Saturday: 12:05 PM
Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday: 5:30 PM
Sunday: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM
Holy Days: 12:05 and 7:00 PM

Medical Emergency
In a medical emergency when the need for a priest is urgent, please call the rectory.

Hearing Enhancements
Old St. Joseph’s is equipped with an audio hearing loop. Switch on the T-coil function of your device to use the loop. Booklets with the Sunday readings are available in the rear of the church.

Registration
Registration forms are available in the rectory office during normal office hours, on the bookcases in the back of the church and online at www.oldstjoseph.org. They can be returned to the parish office by mail or in person.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
A priest is available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation Monday through Saturday from 11:30 AM–12:00 PM or by appointment.

Sacrament of Baptism
If you want to arrange a baptism, please contact Fr. Hannafey (fhannafey@oldstjoseph.org) at least two months before the desired date.

Eucharist for the Homebound
To arrange to receive Communion at home, please contact the parish offices.

The Sacrament of Anointing
The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is offered during the 12:05 PM Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Homebound or hospitalized persons wanting to receive the Sacrament of Anointing should call the parish office.

Sacrament of Matrimony
If you want to be married at Old St. Joseph’s, please visit our website, oldstjoseph.org and read the material under the heading Weddings. Please call the parish office at 215-923-1766 at least nine months before your desired wedding date.

Rite of Christian Initiation
If you are an adult wishing to be baptized, or to receive First Eucharist and Confirmation, or are a baptized non-Catholic seeking full communion with Catholic Church, please call the parish office or email rcia@oldstjoseph.org.

Mass of Christian Burial
To schedule a funeral or memorial Mass, ask your funeral director to call the parish office.

Parish Pastoral Council
(osjpc@oldstjoseph.org)
Parish Finance Council
Paul Shay, chair

Historic Preservation Corporation Board
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ, president

Adult Education
Rita O’Brien and Jeanmarie Zippo (adulted@oldstjoseph.org)

Eldership
Pat Nelson (eldership@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Life
Joe Casey (parishlife@oldstjoseph.org)

Ignatian Spirituality and Formation
Len Mancini (osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org)

Women, Faith and Fellowship
Rana McNamara (wff@oldstjoseph.org)

Young Adult Community
(osjyac@gmail.com)

Altar Servers
Maria Ramirez (altarserver@oldstjoseph.org)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Bill Stewart (EM@oldstjoseph.org)

Hospital Ministry
Luanne Balestrucci (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Homebound Ministry
Neal Hébert (homeEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Lectors
Lou Anne Bulik (lectors@oldstjoseph.org)

Ushers
Nicola Sizgorich (ushers@oldstjoseph.org)

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
Peggy Connolly (clow@oldstjoseph.org)