

Celebrating the Opening of Our Beautiful New Hall

Saturday, February 2/Sunday, February 3

The time has come to plan the celebration of the opening of the renovated Social Hall. We are nearing the finish line. The mobile partitions were shipped from the factory Friday, January 11. Their installation should be completed in the next few days. The last step would be to obtain final approval by Charles County. Then, it will be time to **celebrate**.

The next major Feast Day is the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple on Saturday, February 2nd, always 40 days after the Nativity of our Lord. This year it happens to occur on the First Saturday of February. Before the Mass (called the Candlemas), we have the tradition of blessing candles (including those used the next day to bless throats on the Memorial Day of St. Blaise) followed by a candlelight procession to the main church. We hope many of you can join us at 9 am in the new hall before attending Mass on Saturday, February 2nd. For some it may be the first time participating in the First Saturday Devotion promoted by Our Lady of Fatima. (We are now in our seventh year of this devotion at OLHOC).

The Core Leadership of our Youth program is currently considering having a parish-wide Super Bowl Party on Sunday afternoon, February 3rd. Due to the cancelation of our traditional St. Nicholas Breakfast last month (no space available), we had been looking for an alternative fundraising event to support our youth activities while fostering fellowship. Stay tuned! Save the date! More details will be given shortly.

Following recommendations from our Parish Council, input from our staff, and many of you, we intend to name our renovated social hall Father Martin Hall. Fr. Martin was pastor in Waldorf for 29 years: 1894-1923. At that time there was only one Catholic parish in our area, St. Peter's, and Fr. Martin demonstrated a zeal for evangelization, baptizing over 2,300 children/adults at a time when there were very few people living in the Waldorf area. He also established missions in St. Michael and St. Dominic in Brandywine/Baden. The Father Martin Society, which includes members of our parish, has now been incorporated as a non-profit organization to continue the promotion of Fr. Martin's three-fold legacy: 1. Devotion to the Eucharist, 2. Prayer and support of vocations to priesthood and religious life, and 3. Ever-deepening intercultural unity through worship of the Eucharist (especially in silence and song). Last year, the Father Martin Society began to fund scholarships for low-income families at our own preschool and St. Peter's school. Father Martin is being considered for the first step of sainthood, Servant of God, because of his zeal for evangelization. We pray Father Martin will continue to be an inspiration to all of us as intentional disciples of Christ.

We have just completed the first week of Ordinary Time, which began right after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In today's Gospel (John 2:1-11), Jesus performs the first of his miraculous signs: the transformation of water into wine at the Wedding Feast of Cana. For the first time, Jesus reveals his glory to his disciples and they began to believe in him. Mary is the one who tells Jesus, "They have no wine." Jesus's response is "how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." But Mary persists and she simply asks the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." I invite everyone this week to reflect on this request from Mary to each one of us, who are called to be servants of God. "Am I doing everything Jesus asks me to do?" "How can I be a better listener of Jesus' orders?" "Who is guiding my daily decisions?" "Is my guiding star my GPS: God's Powerful Spirit?"

Come Holy Spirit, Guide us, strengthen us and console us. Tell us what we must do. Let us only know Your will and do Your will, not ours.

One in Christ,

Fr. Alain