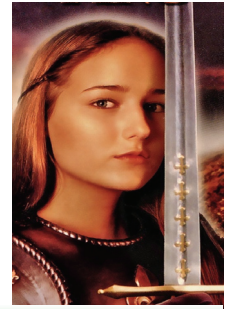


ENCOUNTER



A Newsletter of St. Joan of Arc Parish, Marlton, NJ

Fall, 2015



Dear Friends,
What a month this September is! Look what's going on:

◆ Our brand new ministry for men, called THAT MAN IS YOU, began on Friday, September 18th. All men of the parish are invited. You can get more info on our parish website (www.stjoans.org).

◆ St. Joan of Arc School celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year! What a remarkable milestone. Along with Sr. Pat Pycik, our principal, I want to invite everyone to join in the festivities planned all year long.

◆ We welcome Deacon Tom Murphy to our parish staff as Pastoral Associate for Support Ministries. Deacon Tom will help us extend God's love and compassion to persons and families in a variety of situations.

◆ The World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia at the end of the month gives us the opportunity, as a parish during our Sunday Masses, to learn more how to love and care for one another. We are all part of God's family!

◆ And, yes, in case you haven't heard: the Pope is coming! How exciting for us, as Catholics, that Pope Francis will be right in our own backyard. Let's pray for the success of his journey here and for the safety of all who will attend the events planned in Philly.

And, while we are at it, let's pray that all of us will deepen our faith and grow in our love for one another.

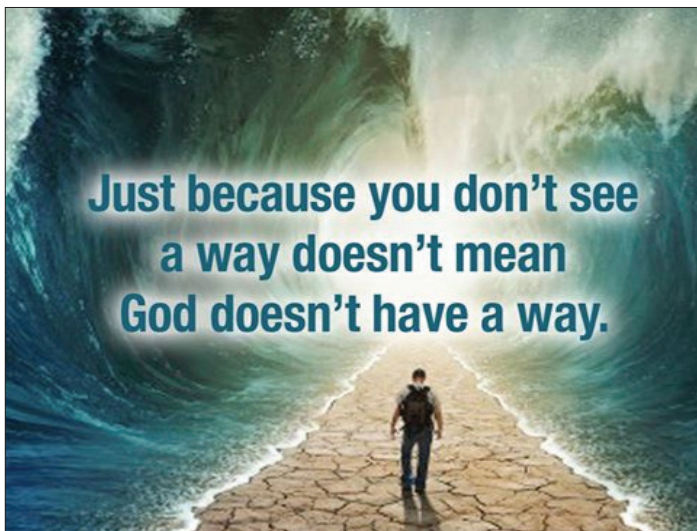
Peace!

Fr. Rich

"We learn many virtues in our Christian families.

Above all we learn love, asking nothing in return."

 -- Pope Francis
@Pontifex
8/6/2015



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Children Through the Eyes of Jesus

-- By Sue Latella



“Taking a child, he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it, he said to them, “Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me.”

-- Mark 9: 36-37 (Gospel for 9/20/15)

“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.”

-- Mark 9: 42 (Gospel for 9/27/15)

“And people were bringing children to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, ‘Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.’ Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.”

-- Mark 10:13-16 (Gospel for 10/04/15)

For three consecutive Sundays in late September and early October the Gospel gives us some insight into Jesus' attitude toward (and the importance of) children. How fitting that these messages are shared with us just before, during and after the World Meeting of Families. Jesus clearly sees the value of children and their importance in our earthly world and in the Kingdom of Heaven. His encounters with children throughout the Gospels show us His love and compassion for children -- sometimes contrary to the expectations of those who followed him, including his disciples.

So one might ask, “Why?” Certainly in Biblical times children were viewed as an important asset in a culture of multi-family units and multi-generational family living. “Be fruitful and multiply...” meant producing many children to help assure the survival of the family. As children came of age they were expected to assume increasing responsibility in the family unit. In some ways, they were viewed as the property of their parents. Indeed they were important for economical purposes; however, Jesus placed a very different value on children, and viewed them in a more enlightening manner.

When we think of a child, what words come to mind? Innocence? -- Unconditional Love? -- Awe? -- Joy? -- Trust? When we encounter a young child or infant, what expression typically emerges on our faces? A smile.

Jesus realized that children were filled with belief and trust -- unwavering trust -- unchallenging trust. Trust is perhaps the single most important ingredient to faith. Children have an unwavering trust in their parents. Children forgive easily because they trust. They have faith and believe in the goodness of their parents' love above all else. I believe that this is precisely the teaching moment that Jesus intended for his disciples and followers to embrace -- to love and trust Him -- just like a child.

When we look at our own faith, are we always able to trust that He is there for us -- unwavering? Are we able to trust our Lord in the darkest life moments -- unchallenging? Perhaps this is our teaching moment with Jesus too! Love Him like a child. Trust in Him like a child. Have faith in Him like a child. And have hope in His eternal love and care for our well-being -- just like a child.

Is it easy? Not always. Not every day. But as Jesus also said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me.” So we have the opportunity to renew that trust and faith in Him every day, running right back into His loving arms, through prayer, through the Eucharist, through Reconciliation, and through worship in our Community of faith. After all, we too are a family. We ARE the children of God.



Finding Beautiful Treasure

-- By Anastasia (Stacy) Bouillon

For many years I've been searching – going around and around the same mountain - sometimes getting it right, but other times....not so much! Then one day I realized, I can't do this on my own anymore. At the same time I also realized how much I needed the Church – Our Community of Believers. Thankfully, I was at the right place: St. Joan of Arc Parish!

Truly inspired by so many at our parish, I felt my heart begin to stir. I have been Catholic my whole life but all of a sudden I had so many questions. Finally, I was able to quiet my own voice and hear the quiet voice of the Holy Spirit urging me on to meet with our Priest. My first question started with the Sacrament I had left behind many years ago – the Sacrament of Confession. This was my most misunderstood and difficult Sacrament and somewhere along the line I left it off my “tray”. Our Priest was very understanding with my questions and truly met me where I was on my faith journey.



Stacy is a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish, a member of our Pastoral Care Ministry, and resides in Cherry Hill, NJ

As time unfolded my faith started to grow, in a new and deeper way. I found myself praying more, reading the Bible more, and going to Confession. It was in this Sacrament that my eyes were opened. So much changed. I began to understand with my heart. Now it began to make sense. Also during this time, with the inspiration and encouragement from our community, I decided to join an amazing ministry and began actively participating in our fantastic parish. Through all of this, I was drawn to the Eucharist in a deeper way and fell in love with the Mass. Soon enough I began to attend Mass more and more frequently too.

To my surprise the two things I most misunderstood about our faith have brought me my most treasured blessings. Through Confession and in the Church Community my heart has been opened in so many amazing and unexpected ways! It's also wonderful to contemplate how intertwined these two gifts are: in one I receive, only to be moved to give; and the other I give and receive so much more – it is truly beautiful!

But finally, through and in it all, with the abundant love, mercy, and grace of Jesus and with the guidance, inspiration, and fellowship of our parish community, I am part of something bigger than myself. How grateful I am for the gifts of our faith and finding their beautiful treasure!

“For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be” -- Matthew 6:21

“In true Christian Community, we can grow more in 1 year than in 20 years of isolated, individualized ‘Christianity’.”

-- Pope Francis

Are you seeking a deeper relationship with our Lord through participation in our Community of believers at St. Joan of Arc Parish? There are many ways to get involved and share your gifts. Visit our website: www.stjoans.org/ministries

World Meeting of Families Prayer

***God and Father of us all,
in Jesus, your Son and our Savior
you have made us
your sons and daughters
in the family of the Church***

***May your grace and love
help our families,
in every part of the world,
be united to one another
in fidelity to the Gospel.***

***May the example of the Holy Family,
with the aid of your Holy Spirit,
guide all families,
especially those most troubled,
to be homes of communion
and prayer,
and to always seek your truth and live
in your love.***

Through Christ our Lord, Amen

***Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Pray for us!***

The Gospel According to Mark 5:25-34

There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured." Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who has touched my clothes?" But his disciples said to Jesus, "You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'" And he looked around to see who had done it. The woman realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."

WE ARE BLEEDING!

Wow! What a series of weeks we had in June. As if 75 mile an hour winds weren't enough, look at what was going on:

- A terrible shooting in a church leaving 9 dead;
- A debate over the Confederate Flag;
- The Pope writes a controversial encyclical on the environment;
- Terrorists strike in France, in Kuwait and on a beach in Tunisia where 37 people are shot to death while sunbathing;
- The Supreme Court upholds the Affordable Care Act;
- And, then, just to put some icing on the wedding cake, the Court gives a thumbs up to same-sex marriage.

I ask you: wouldn't you love to be standing at this pulpit right now? Where do I begin? How do the Scriptures we've just read, about a woman who was hemorrhaging to death, address all of this? What would **you** say if you were the preacher? What **have** you said?

Maybe the clue is in that unnamed woman in the Gospel. In desperation, she reaches out for the hem of Jesus' garment, not a handful or an armful of him, not a yank or a pull, but just a slight, desperate tug on his hem. That's probably all she had the strength for. Because she was sick -- sick and tired and bleeding -- she was bleeding to death. So am I. Maybe you are, too. I am sick and tired of all the hatred, all the violence. I am sick and tired of people shooting and beheading and blowing people up -- as if that helps anything. Like that woman, the world is bleeding to death. I am sick and tired of the way we treat each other -- of the way I sometimes treat people. I am sick and tired of

the hurtful things we say to each other, the ignorant and sometimes abusive way we deal with each other. I am sick and tired of division, separation, and the walls we build to keep people out and away. I am sick and tired of labels; who's Christian, who's Muslim, who's Jewish; who's black, who's white; who's straight, who's gay; who's rich, who's poor; who's liberal, who's conservative. We are all people, aren't we? We are all children of God, aren't we?

I am sick and tired of everyone arguing and no one listening; of everyone trying to convince everyone else how right they are and how wrong everyone else is. The world is like that woman in the Gospel. The world is hemorrhaging. No one would fault that woman if she had given up, if she had just laid down and died. But she doesn't, does she? That's the amazing thing about her: as sick and as tired as she is, as shunned and alienated as she is, she won't give up. She finds a way to move through the crowd and touch Jesus, even if it's just the hem of his cloak.



I want to be like that woman. I think we all need to be like that woman. There must be a way to stop the bleeding. There must be a way for society to give guns to hunters who want to shoot ducks and keep guns away from people who want to kill people. There must be a way for our Church to uphold its ancient teaching that marriage is between a man and a woman while at the same time welcoming and loving our homosexual brothers and sisters for who they are and not for who we wish they were.

There must be a way to care for the earth and for the poorest among us without bankrupting economies. There must be a way for enemies to put down the sword and live peaceably with each other, sharing

the same land and making it work for everyone. There must be a way of disagreeing with each other while still respecting each other and working for the common good.

I want the bleeding to stop.
I want to help it stop.
I think you do, too.

That's why we come to church and why we will come back each Sunday ... to touch Jesus, for He knows how to stop it. He gave his own blood to show us how to stop killing ourselves. I think Jesus wants to touch us today ... every day ... maybe just a tiny tug on the hem of our heart. Let him. It's a beginning, however small ... like a single stitch.

Like a mustard seed.

Excerpted from Msgr. Richard LaVerghetta's homily for June 28, 2015 (13th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

The Light of Christ in Others

-- by Dotty Garro

When I started out as a Psychology major in college, I had no idea I would end up working with developmentally disabled children and adults. After 25+ years, I can honestly say that it has truly changed who I am as a person and as a follower of Christ. An experience, at the very beginning of my career, began my transformation.

My first job was as a direct care worker with Bancroft, a provider of programs and services for the mentally disabled. My desire was to bring the love of Jesus to "the least of these." I didn't have a permanent position yet, so my job was to substitute for staff who did not come into work. I expected to have the least desirable job, as the new girl, but I was not prepared for what I was given. I was directed to the unit where the most profoundly, intellectually disabled lived. My assignment was to be the one-to-one care giver for Bruce. He could not speak and, although he was physically an adult, he functioned mentally at the level of a toddler. It was obvious that he had been left unsupervised for a while and, to amuse himself, he had taken off his adult diaper and – to put it in the most delicate way – he had decorated himself and a good part of his room with the contents. Most of my shift was spent cleaning up Bruce and his room. While I can honestly say that most of the experience is a blur today, what I do remember was leaving the facility and sitting in my car, in the parking lot, and talking with God. I told Him that I really wanted to bring His presence to the people here, but I did not think I was cut out for THIS type of work. I told Him that I wasn't sure I could even go back. Then I remembered something I read that Mother Theresa said about her work with the people of India and I realized I had it all backwards. I was coming to my assignment thinking I was Jesus, but in reality THEY were Jesus. It was both humbling and exhilarating to realize that when I was serving Bruce, I was serving Christ. I was bringing comfort to the presence of Christ within Bruce. It changed everything.

In future years, working in a group home with nine women and men, these were some of the best years of my life thus far. I learned about unconditional love and joy. I learned how to see people with new eyes – now able to focus on Jesus living within them. There are days when I lose my focus, but then He draws me back and I see Him in the everyday people I come in contact with each day.

In all my years of working in social services, I could never repay what I have been given. I cannot thank God enough for all He has given me. I have felt His love through these individuals, as well as all around me. And, perhaps the most important thing that I have learned is that we are ALL "the least of these."

"Every time you sacrifice something at great cost - every time you renounce something that appeals to you for the sake of the poor - you are feeding a hungry Christ. You are clothing His nakedness. You are offering shelter to a homeless Christ. Every time we are concerned about the



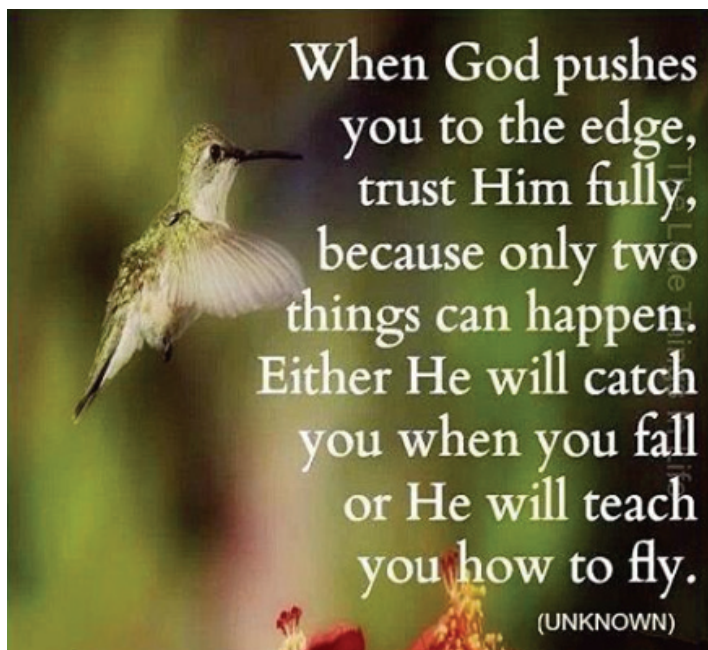
Dotty Garro is a member of our St. Joan of Arc parish community. She is pictured here (center) with former client, Wally Pickering (deceased) and current client Sarah Settle, through her work at the state of New Jersey Department of Human Services.

poor - whether they are near or far away - we do it all for Him." -- Mother Teresa

"God is in every human being. When I wash the leper's wounds, I feel I am nursing the Lord himself. Is it not a beautiful experience?" -- Mother Teresa

"I see Jesus in every human being. I say to myself, this is hungry Jesus, I must feed him. This is sick Jesus. This one has leprosy or gangrene; I must wash him and tend to him. I serve because I love Jesus."

-- Mother Teresa



Practical & Simple Ways to Begin Being a Disciple -- -- -
- by Deacon Barry Tarzy

We know that Jesus' disciples were a praying, worshipping, loving, giving, and an evangelizing group of men and women who refused to keep the truth of the gospel to themselves. God still wants disciples today—ordinary people like you and me who God can use to do extraordinary things.

Is there a practical and simple way to begin? Sure!

Simply start with reading and praying the scriptures about Jesus every day for 3 minutes. That is about two paragraphs. Try starting with the Gospel of Mark – shortest Gospel of all. We all have at least 3 minutes to learn more about the one God sent to show and give us forgiveness and eternal life, Christ Jesus.

After reading - then choose a person to pray for that day, for a good reason or any reason. If the person comes to mind, pray for them. Now you've just spent 5 minutes with God. That is a very good beginning for busy people -- a great start.

Later that day - call a person who needs support, or go see a person who needs a hug, or tell a child that they matter to you and that they are special in God's eyes. Tell whoever you speak with how much God cared enough for them to be born. How about that? You just became a "disciple"!

At night, before going to sleep, pray about your family with thankfulness, asking Jesus to protect them all throughout the night, and to guide them as they enter a new day.

The next day, when your family leaves for the day, or if you leave for work first, make the sign of the cross on the foreheads of each of your children and your spouse. It is the most powerful sign in all the world, and you just gave that blessing to your family. Try making that a

family practice, and don't be amazed when your kids come to expect that blessing.

Discipleship isn't that hard now, is it? You already told a child about God's love for them. You made the sign of the cross on a child's forehead and on the foreheads of your family members. A few more days like this and you will be talking to a friend about how Jesus gave you new life, and how the Holy Spirit of God, which is the love shared between the Father and Son, has been given to you so that you can share that love with them.

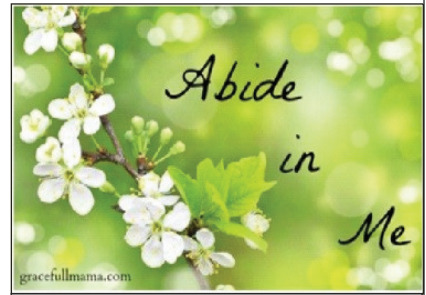
Sooner or later ... how you live will be apparent, and people will say "that person, you, are different - loving, caring, helpful and forgiving" – and they will say: "I want to be that way too".

You have just become a "Fisher for Jesus Christ".

I'm slowly dying

Actually, we are all slowly dying. The real question though is "Are you living? Really living?" Not so much eating at the "good" restaurants, or going to shows, traveling, or having a good wine, but loving, caring, forgiving, and having quality time with family and friends – paying attention to each other while we are together -- without our heads deep in our phones. If we are not really living, we are dying ... faster than we think. Choose life.

Many blessings,
Deacon Barry

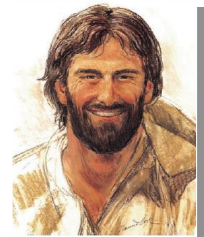


DO YOU NEED PRAYER?

Abide In Me - our intercessory prayer ministry joins together to bring to God whatever your need; a special intention, a sickness, death, addiction, a life crisis or problem. Let us raise our voices on your behalf. You can also join us in prayer on Wednesdays, 1 - 2 pm in the Gathering Room of the church.

Please email your intentions to: abideinme@stjoans.org or you can call (609) 744-7579. For more information, visit the ministry page of St. Joan of Arc website at: www.stjoans.org/ministries/abide-in-me/

Looking for a closer relationship with Jesus through the Catholic faith?



Haven't been Baptized? Confirmed?

Just need a deeper experience of God in your daily life?

CHECK OUT OUR RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS (RCIA)!

Call us at 856-983-0077 today!

*In Honor of the World Meeting of Families (9/22 - 9/25) and
Pope Francis' Visit to Philadelphia (9/26-9/27)
we offer these words of wisdom from our Pope.*

On Marriage and Family.....

"Not only would I say that the family is important for the evangelization of the new world. The family is important, and it is necessary for the survival of humanity. Without the family, the cultural survival of the human race would be at risk. The family, whether we like it or not, is the foundation."

On Being a Christian...

"We cannot be Christians part-time. If Christ is at the center of our lives, He is present in all that we do."

"I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord."

"Instead of being just a church that welcomes and receives by keeping the doors open, let us try also to be a church that finds new roads, that is able to step outside itself and go to those who do not attend Mass, to those who have quit or are indifferent."

"We cannot be Christians part-time. If Christ is at the center of our lives, He is present in all that we do."

"Families will always have their trials, but may you never add to them! Instead, be living examples of love, forgiveness and care. Be sanctuaries of respect for life, proclaiming the sacredness of every human life from conception to natural death. What a gift this would be to society, if every Christian family lived fully its noble vocation!"



On the Poor & Vulnerable...

"The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty."

"The victims of this [throwaway] culture are precisely the weakest and most fragile human beings — the unborn, the poorest, the sick and elderly, the seriously handicapped, — who are in danger of being 'thrown away,' expelled from a system that must be efficient at all costs."

"The 'home' represents the most precious human treasures, that of encounter, that of relations among people, different in age, culture and history, but who live together and together help one another to grow. For this reason, the "home" is a crucial place in life, where life grows and can be fulfilled, because it is a place in which every person learns to receive love and to give love."

"Those who celebrate the sacrament (of Marriage) say, "I promise to be true to you, in joy and in sadness, in sickness and in health; I will love you and honor you all the days of my life". At that moment, the couple does not know what will happen, nor what joys and pains await them. They are setting out, like Abraham, on a journey together. And that is what marriage is! Setting out and walking together, hand in hand, putting yourselves in the Lord's powerful hands. Hand in hand, always and for the rest of your lives. And do not pay attention to this makeshift culture, which can shatter our lives."

Pope Francis

Jorge Mario Bergoglio

Is the first pope...

- From the Americas
- From Jesuit order
- To take name Francis

Is known to...

- Take the bus and subway
- Cook his meals
- Have strong devotion to Mary
- Visit the poor
- Be very spiritual
- Have low-key style
- Love soccer and tangos

Speaks

- Spanish, Italian, English, French and German



"Now let's begin this journey, bishop and people... a journey of brotherhood, love and trust among us."



Then Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio poses with young soccer players from the San Lorenzo soccer club, of which he is known to be a fan.

Dec. 17, 1936

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to Italian immigrant parents

1957

At age 21, falls gravely ill; eventually severe pneumonia is diagnosed, right lung partially removed

March 11, 1958

Enters novitiate of the Society of Jesus

March 12, 1960

Takes first vows as Jesuit

1960

Studies humanities in Padre Hurtado, Chile

1961-1963

Studies philosophy at San Miguel Seminary, Buenos Aires

1964-1965

Teaches high school literature and psychology at Jesuit secondary school in Santa Fe

1966

Teaches at prestigious Colegio del Salvador secondary school in Buenos Aires

1967-1970

Studies theology at San Miguel seminary



Dec. 13, 1969

Is ordained priest

1970-1971

Spends "tertianship," or Third Probation period of Jesuit formation in Spain

1971-1973

Serves as master of novices and vice chancellor, San Miguel seminary

1973

Takes perpetual profession as Jesuit

1973-1979

Serves as superior of Jesuit province of Argentina and Uruguay

1979-1985

Serves as rector of Colegio Maximo and theology teacher

1986

Goes to Germany to finish doctoral thesis

June 27, 1992

Is ordained auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires

June 3, 1997

Is named coadjutor archbishop

Feb. 28, 1998

Is installed as archbishop of Buenos Aires

2001

Co-presides over Synod of Bishops

Feb. 21, 2001

Is elevated to cardinal

2005

Receives second-highest number of votes in conclave that elected Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as pope

2005-2011

Serves as president, Argentine Bishops Conference



March 13, 2013

Is elected pope by conclave of 115 cardinals

JOIN US!

God's love knows no boundaries, and neither do we; ALL ARE WELCOME!

Please register online at www.stjoans.org or at our Parish Office.

LITURGY SCHEDULE:

Saturday Vigil: 5:30 pm

Sunday: 7:30, 9, 10:30 am & 12 Noon

Korean Mass: 3:30 pm

on the 2nd Sunday of the month

Student Mass: 5:30 pm every 4th

Saturday of the month

Adoration: Tuesdays, 5 - 7 pm

Benediction: at 7 pm

Confession: Saturday, 4 pm or

Anytime by appointment

HOW TO BECOME CATHOLIC:

Call Msgr. Rich or Fr. Jorge at 856-983-0077 for any questions you have.

BAPTISMS...

Are celebrated nearly every Sunday at 1:30pm.

Please call the parish office at 856-983-0077.

WEDDINGS...

Please call the parish office at 856-983-0077 to schedule.

We encourage those who have married outside the Catholic Church to call and discuss options for blessing your marriage as a Sacrament.

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This newsletter is a volunteer offering for the parish community and friends of St. Joan of Arc Parish, Marlton, NJ. Visit our website to learn more about our parish: www.stjoans.org. If you are interested in submitting an article about your Catholic faith journey, a personal moment of encounter with our Lord, or ideas about how we, as a community, can better evangelize and bring an encounter with our Lord Jesus to others, please contact any member of our editorial team.