

Corps Connector

Volume 13, Number 1

March, 2018



January Day of
Reflection
See Page 3





Notes from the Editor

Jesus and the Syrophenician Woman

My Journal, Friday, February 9

Good Morning dear Jesus

Then he got up and left that place and went off to the neighborhood of Tyre. There he went into a house and wanted no one to know where he was. But it proved impossible to remain hidden. For no sooner had he got there, then a woman who had heard about him, and who had a daughter possessed by an evil spirit, arrived and prostrated herself before him. She was a Greek, a Syrophenician by birth, and she asked him to drive the evil spirit out of her daughter. Jesus said to her, "You must let the children have all they want first. It is not right, you know, to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she replied, "Yes, Lord, I know, but even the dogs under the table eat the scraps the children leave." "If you can answer like that," Jesus said to her, "you can go home. The evil spirit has left your daughter." And she went back to her home and found the child lying quietly on her bed, and the evil spirit gone." Mark 7: 31-37

[In my journals I hold an ongoing conversation with Jesus]

LORD, TODAY'S READING TURNS OUT TO BE A VERBAL CONTEST

between you and two women, the Greek woman with her demon possessed daughter. This was a life/death situation, for this woman from Syrophenicia, as she asks herself: "Will my child spend the rest of her life in torment from whatever kind of demon has taken her?"

For you, Lord, you're here for a rest and the last thing you want, is some pest buzzing around you. You're tired – worn out – and, sorry to say, you think: she is only a woman; of no consequence. You're usually not like this. You love women and are usually very sensitive to how our societies'—yours and ours—treat women. Also sorry to say, you have absorbed your countrymen's attitude toward aliens; you call them 'dogs'!

But here, with her, you have met your match. I visualize the scene unfolding like a brief one-act play:



As the curtain rises, Jesus is relaxing in his rented room; the syrophenician woman enters and falls at your feet.

JESUS: (lounging, half asleep:) "I'm sorry I can't do what you ask; it's not right to take the children's food and toss it to the dogs."

SYROPHOENICIAN WOMAN: (a wry smile crosses her face, hiding her desperation:) "Yes Lord, but don't the dogs under the table gobble up any scrap the children let fall?"

JESUS: (startled, sits bolt upright, mouth drops; slaps his the knee:) "By God, you're right!" (laughs heartily, wiping tears from his eyes:) "You're absolutely right. I've been so blind! Thank you for opening my eyes, for showing me that my mission is not just to my own people, the Hebrews, but it includes all peoples. Go home, your daughter is well. **(Curtain falls.)**

She has shaken you out of your chauvinism. And you do the right thing and cure her daughter. How human you are, Lord! And how human we volunteers can be. Don't we sometimes snub someone who comes to us for help? Maybe we're just tired, or the person is rude or refuses to listen to us or take our advice and we snap out an exasperated response that drives the other person away.

As you Lord, forgave yourself for your rudeness and thoughtlessness to this woman who helped you realize that your mission was far greater than you imagined. Let us also forgive ourselves for our churlishness and boorishness; and in our self-forgiveness may we find patience and caring.

Dick Bowling

Inside this Issue:

- Page 2 Notes from the Editor
- Page 3 January Day of Reflection
- Page 4 Save the Date: Evening of Gratitude
- Page 5 Save the Dates—June 11-13 for Spring Retreat
- Pages 6-7 Picture Pages: Christmas City Group Skits and Party
- Pages 8 –9 My Love Affair with a Guatemalan Medical Mission
- Page 10 Upcoming Events
- Page 11 DC/MD City-Group Schedule

Corps Connector

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Photos by Dick Bowling unless otherwise noted



OUR DAY OF REFLECTION

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FLECTION WAS HELD AT THE

Benedictine Monastery in Bristow, VA on January 18 2018. Joanie Coolidge welcomed us and told a charming story of a pilgrimage she took in the year 2000 with her husband and three very young children to Vatican City in the year 2000. Joanie was quite concerned about flying during the Y2K scare and just about everything that could go wrong, did! Then in her audience with Pope John Paul II she experienced such warmth, acceptance and love from the pope. Joanie said, “The Pope’s eyes met Christ in me and I met Christ in his.” Thus she introduced ‘The Art of Sacred Conversation.’”

A sacred conversation was demonstrated in a role-play between Jeanie Sweeney and Bill Plunket both spiritual reflectors. Bill in his role as an IVC volunteer coming to his spiritual Reflector, shared his experience as well as frustrations in his service tutoring children with learning disabilities.

Jeanie as Bill’s reflector, stressed the importance of spiritual companionship so the volunteer is able to reflect Christ to others. Jeanie helped Bill in his role play, reframe his volunteer work in light of gifts given and received and helped him identify where God was in his experiences. Bill concluded that just showing up and being with the children was a gift.

Jean Noon, another spiritual reflector, led the group deeper into Sacred Conversation by discussing conversation in the circle of God. She suggested imagining sitting in a circle with the Trinity, as four friends would do in a conversation. She had the group imagine that the talk had ceased and the Trinity loves its friend unconditionally. She encouraged the group to remain in this silent loving presence for a few minutes. The exercise was an intense Sacred Conversation. Jean also discussed the language of God being in the silence or the still small voice.

She noted that in spiritual reflection participants are encouraged to be attentive to God’s spirit of love and acceptance as well as being curious and appreciative. Quietening the mind and listening to the Holy Spirit will help foster

understanding, patience, compassion and empathy. Finally Jean gave the group some suggestions for preparing for spiritual reflection: Prepare to be unprepared, give the Holy Spirit space, and be surprised by God. At the end of your session it is helpful to keep a Listening Journal. In the journal note what you have learned in your session, your relationship with the Lord, insights into consolation and desolation. Also include prayers and actions you wish to take. Jean summarized “What we do and who we are in our reflection sessions affect not only own lives but the lives of people we encounter. When we engage in monthly spiritual reflection and take the practice of sacred conversation with us to our service sites and into our lives, we participate in God’s kingdom among us.”

Walk to Emmaus? The Walk to Emmaus was a one on-one activity that was a sacred conversation between two people. Those who were able went outdoors to walk the grounds of the Monastery, and those who couldn’t stayed indoors. While not exactly the seven miles the two disciples walked with Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles, our “Walk” became a way to try a sacred conversation with a partner. The lovely winter’s day drew many to the gardens, pathways and silos. Each pair started with a prayer then alternately spoke and listened and shared times when they had been surprised by God. The weather and surroundings were conducive to finding God in nature and each other.

Collecting the Graces

At the end of the day, all gathered in the chapel to “collect the graces”. The participants offered take away thoughts:

- ◆ The importance of listening,
- ◆ An interest in spiritual reflection,
- ◆ The difficulty of being a reflector,
- ◆ Need to work on trust in God,
- ◆ The art of asking questions
- ◆ Preparation for reflection,
- ◆ Keeping a journal or listening book.



by Jane Karpick

Save
the
Date:

Evening of
Gratitude

April 15,
2018

4:00
Liturgy

5:15
Reception

\$150.00

Gift to IVC



THIS YEAR'S DELLA STRADA AWARDS

THE LUCEYS

Pam Lucey developed a ground-breaking environmental science curriculum, taught it in Liberia, West Africa, and later in the Fairfax County Public Schools. **Dennis Lucey**, an Executive of TDK Global, credits his Jesuit formation at the University of San Francisco for devoting his life to philanthropy.

Together Pam and Dennis make a formidable team, supporting dozens of Catholic, Jesuit, and humanitarian causes including SOAR, SOME, Gonzaga and Visitation High Schools, The American Ireland Fund and the Peace Corps. Pam served on the IVC National Board and she and Dennis are veteran members of the IVC Regional Council, hosting the first Evening of Gratitude in their home in 2006.

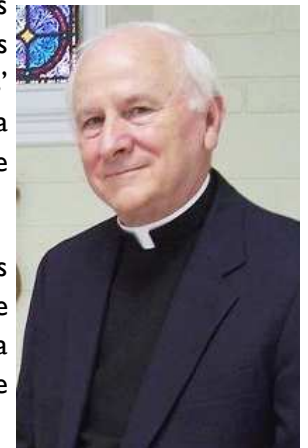


The magnanimous spirit of Pam and Dennis invites us to give more of our hearts, hands and funds, all for the Glory of God. When not serving of boards or organizing galas, the Luceys can be found at Holy Trinity Church or playing Nana and Papa for their adorable grandchildren.

FATHER MICHAEL BRYANT

Father Michael Bryant a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington, is author of articles addressing the Church and prison reform issues and contributing author to "Who is the Prisoner?" He was involved in the development of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' national statement on criminal justice reform calling for a new national dialogue on crime and corrections, justice and mercy, responsibility and treatment.

After 12 years of parish ministry he served for 25 years as staff chaplain at the DC Detention Facility. In 2005, he established the Welcome Home Re-entry Program, a mentoring program that assists those returning home from prison, aiding their transition to free society.



Save these Dates, also!

June 11-13, 2018

End of Year Retreat

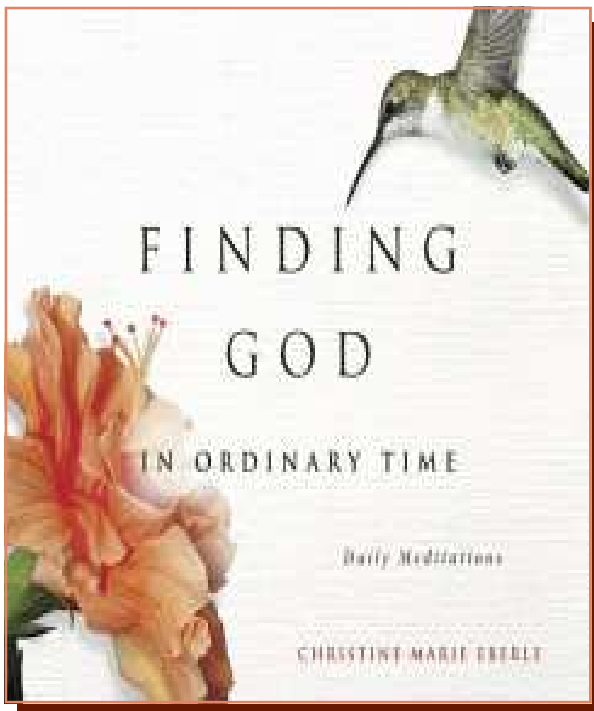


"The apostles gathered together with Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while'" (Mark 6:30-31)

Throughout this year, we have been laborers in the vineyard of the Lord--in the streets, soup kitchens and social service agencies to which we have been sent. Like the apostles, we have done and taught many things. But now Jesus calls us to come away and rest a while.

Our June retreat, "At Rest in the Vineyard," will be an opportunity to contemplate this volunteer year in the light of God's love. Together, we will give thanks for what has been, and look with hopeful resolution toward the year to come. The days will include inspirational talks as well as time for personal reflection, shared conversation, prayer and liturgy, as well as relaxing in one another's company.

Our retreat facilitator will be Christine Eberle, Director of Campus Ministry at Gwynedd Mercy University and author of *Finding God in Ordinary Time*, which will be published in September. You can read some of Christine's works by visiting her online at <http://christine-marie-eberle.com>.



Finding God in Ordinary Time

Whether you are comfortable talking to God or ambivalent about the very idea, Christine Eberle is a gentle, inviting guide through everyday encounters with the sacred. *Finding God in Ordinary Time* is a lovely reminder to pay attention because spiritual lessons can be found around any corner."—**Eileen Flanagan**, author of *The Wisdom to Know the Difference*

"Christine's earthy and easy style stirs the heart with gentle reminders to savor the everyday moments that upon further reflection yield great wisdom. This text serves as a user friendly guide for a journey to encounter the sacred in our midst. Common experiences are transformed into a doorway to grace and wonder. Christine helps readers cultivate the means to have eyes to see God in their daily life. What a delight! Definitely a must read."

—**Barbara Humphrey McCrabb**, Assistant Director for Higher Education, USCCB



"Sustainable Housing helps families achieve their goals"



CATHOLICS FOR HOUSING, INC. (CFH) WHERE I AM ASSIGNED WITH IVC IS IN DUMFRIES, VIRGINIA. CFH provides affordable housing opportunities in the Northern Virginia area. Last year's IVC Della Strada awardee the late Fr. Gerry Creaden was one of the founding members of CFH and was an active board member at the time of his passing.

When I first started, I was assigned to work with the Executive Director and the bookkeeper to assist with financial reporting initiatives. However, the term – “and other duties as assigned” from my Navy Days– quickly became the norm. Now the majority of my time is spent helping first time homebuyers, or buyers who have not owned a home for 3 years.

As you most likely have experienced, the purchase of a new home is both an exciting and anxious time for the first time homebuyer. I'm privileged to learn of the hopes and dreams of the applicants for our Down Payment Assistance program. I receive many inquiries and as I answer questions and review applications I am able to assist potential buyers in evaluating the reality of their finances and home ownership expectations. Happily, we were able to provide more than \$100,000 in assistance last year. Just preparing an application can be helpful to a prospective homeowner. Many of the non-qualifying applicants expressed thanks to CFH for having taken our ABCs of Home Ownership class. The class gives an overview of what the prospective homebuyer should look for in purchasing and maintaining a home.

One family I worked with was a husband and wife with 6 children. They had credit card debt but also had savings. During their application process, they were able to see that paying off their credit card debt would qualify them to receive assistance for closing costs and part of their down payment.

I have also acquired a new skill. I now know how to *quietly* move a 3 foot long wind chime from an auction area while guests at our annual fund raiser enjoyed their meals. (Hint: It takes a team.)

As IVC volunteers we meet many individuals with housing needs. **While CFH is unable to help with rent and house payments**, the dedicated staff works in diverse areas that might be helpful to your clients. The CFH website, www.CFHva.org has more details than those listed below:

Education programs:

- CHOICES Life Skills Program
- ABCs of Home Ownership

- Extremely Low Income Housing for Seniors in Fairfax County – Rental Subdivision
- \$200 Rental Security Deposit Assistance
- Acquisition and Sale of homes in conjunction with Virginia's Neighborhood Stabilization Program – basically this program enables CFH to purchase distressed properties make necessary repairs and sell them at below market value to buyers meeting certain income limitations.
- Down Payment Assistance for qualified first time homebuyers in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William counties (and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Manassas).



John Enzmann



Nicolas with bike he earned at Phoenix



Training youth bike mechanics in Northern Virginia by Margaret McBride

WHEN I SAY I WORK AT **PHOENIX BIKES** FOR MY IVC SERVICE placement, people aren't sure they've heard right. Bikes, as in bicycles? Yes, there is a bicycle non-profit group in Arlington that serves mainly youth, but also the wider community of Arlington and the metro DC area.

Phoenix trains youth in middle and high schools in bike mechanics via after-school clubs, mostly in Arlington, in a semester-long program. Youth can also train individually at Phoenix's bike shop on Four Mile Run Dr. In 2017, Phoenix trained approximately 500 youth; and 75 youth did at least one of the many recreational rides. As part of the curriculum, students strip and refurbish used and donated bikes to build a bike—first, one to donate and then one to keep.

About half the youth are from low-income families and/or get free lunch and sometimes don't speak English at home.

My work is not as challenging as bike mechanics, nor as stimulating as bicycling. I assist the executive director Meg Rapelye with letters acknowledging donations, data-entry into Salesforce; fund-raisers; logging student registrations, etc. Repairs and sales (of refurbished bikes) account for 50 percent of Phoenix's income; the rest is from donations and fund raising.

Meg currently rents office space from the Bonder & Amanda Johnson Community Development Corp. in south Arlington; there's not enough space at the bike shop, which is a former concession stand. Meg manages a bare-bones operation with no development director or admin staff; Phoenix has an education and a program director as well as trained bike mechanics.

Thanks to IVC-er Marie Van Ness, Meg learned of IVC because Marie works at Bonder & Amanda Johnson (a non-profit that serves a low-income population in the Nauck area of Arlington). In 2016 when IVC regional director Joanie Coolidge got a request from Meg for an IVC volunteer, she thought it would be hard to find a match. It happened that my 2016 IVC application noted that I like cycling and had recently taken up bike touring again.

Working at Phoenix, I've not only learned about their work but I've been inspired by Phoenix Director Meg-- and supporters and board members who volunteer their time, work and money. I've also participated in some of the community programs open to the public – for ex., "All the Cycle Ladies" which is a monthly Wednesday night bike mechanics class for women.

Phoenix likes to showcase their youth whenever they can. Selene, a high school student at Washington-Lee in Arlington, joined the after-school bike club as a sophomore because she was interested in engineering and wanted to learn to build a bike; hers was broken. According to her dad, she ended up developing an interest in outdoor group activities, exercise, competing and teamwork. She became an assistant instructor in the after-school club after taking the summer Phoenix Advanced Mechanics Camp. "I had a personal goal of getting into sports, but a huge cost barrier kept me from participating," said Selene, "so I'm glad that I've had the opportunity to join the junior racing team."

In 2017 Phoenix celebrated its 10th anniversary. They also found a new home and will lease street-front space on Columbia Pike at Arlington Mill Community Center starting in mid-2018. Meg will move also.

Is Phoenix a good match for me? I'm in community with others working to serve--and they're excited about it, which is contagious. I've learned that being useful is maybe reason enough to work there. I find that IVC's small city groups, retreats, and spiritual reflectors help motivate me to continue; they add community and deepen meaning.

Perhaps exposure to more cyclists inspired my first solo bike trip in 35-plus years. In August 2017 I cycled part of the GAP—the Great Allegheny Passage between Cumberland, Md., and Pittsburgh, Pa. *Adventure Cycling Magazine* published my write-up in December: <https://www.adventurecycling.org/resources/blog/solo-on-the-gap-trail-forest-bathing-stories-and-delights>.

Phoenix welcomes donations of bikes and bike equipment and accessories. More info is at: <http://www.phoenixbikes.org/>.



Margaret McBride

Christmas Skits



Christmas Party





MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH A GUATEMALAN MEDICAL MISSION



Fr. Andres Giron Clinic Community

IN JANUARY, IT WAS MY JOY TO RETURN TO THE Orthodox Fr. Andres Giron clinic in the Mayan village of Aguacate, Guatemala. What follows is part of the story....

Our team of 10 medical volunteers arrived in Tuxtla, Mexico, in great anticipation of getting to the village and beginning to provide care.

Luggage stuffed with needed supplies, fell victim to the suspicion of the Mexican border patrol, and was held for “customs fees”, aka ransom. With armed guards watching, Fr. Tom nonchalantly unpacked his guitar and began to sing “Take me Home, Country Roads.” The surrounding military became the percussion section, as they tapped their guns in rhythm with the beat! Who’d of known the Mexicans love John Denver?!? We then packed ourselves and our belongings into our tourist van and headed for the mountains of Guatemala. Eduardo, our driver, negotiated the muddy back roads of Guatemala like Mario Andretti himself.

Jesse was our courageous Orthodox Christian Mission Center missionary, and under his command, the driver drove straight through the unattended Guatemalan border post, and announced we were now officially illegal aliens!

Roberto, the clinic director, and Jesse oriented us for our arrival to the village of Aguacate, giving us a skeletal overview of the how to’s for meeting, greeting, and eating. Roberto’s “golden rule” for providing missionary medical care: “one patient at a time,” no matter how long it took or how many other villagers were in line. This phenomenon went against every fiber of our American mindset that tells us to see as many patients as possible, as quickly as you can. Roberto’s dictate would turn out to be prophetic wisdom.

The misty air, light rain, cool temperature and muddy ground did little to ruin our arrival. The dimly lit white archways that led to the doors of the medical clinic, were perfectly contrasted with the beautiful brown complexions of the young students and seminarians who eagerly awaited our arrival. We swiftly unpacked and then descended the steep uneven cement steps to the cocina. At every meal, the table was modestly set for a banquet feast from the origami napkins to the 5-star service of the young boy students and Father Evangelos, the Guatemalan Orthodox pastor. The meals were made from scratch and offered us their amazing and unique taste of Guatemala. They wasted nothing, turning leftover tortillas into



Fish for Dinner!

a drink, fruit into tea and beans into breakfast, lunch and dinner! The warmth generated from the tenderness of each boy’s humble heart who served our every need, made you forget just exactly how cold the living quarters and clinic were.

After each team member put the final touches on their exam rooms, we headed to our quarters to prepare our hearts, minds and souls for our medical mission that would

begin in the morning. Personal evening prayers could be seen literally ‘rising up from our lips’ to the Lord against the frigid air! We quickly learned to mummify ourselves to preserve our body heat—the only source of warmth generated in the building! We marveled at the villagers ability to wear short sleeves and walk barefoot in the cool, damp,

Continued from Page 10

cloud covered skies that peaked at 50 degrees during the day and dipped into the 30's by night.

Clinic days: With crow of the cock, we readied ourselves for duty. The doctors, Tom, Peter and Mia worked with their translators—Fr. John, Jesse, Jen, and Marco—to assess the needs of their patients. We took pride in setting up the first ever “Pearly Gates Vision Center” to hit the streets of Aguacate!

Each morning, Roberto, along-with his local helpers, opened the doors to a well-formed long line of villagers who travelled from near and far, with babies on their backs, dust in their eyes and injuries to their limbs, to receive much needed medical attention. We did not see hopelessness in these villagers’ eyes, though marred with blindness, or on their skin scabbed with scabies; rather, we saw love, gratitude and graciousness radiating from their humble hearts and hopeful spirits. While we fought our every fiber to hurry, they had the patience of Job. Slowly, one by one, we teamed up to offer whatever care we could in whatever way we could; be it by giving sight via glasses, pain management with pills, breathing treatments to babies, removing rotted teeth or surgically slaying abnormal growths, this team worked unceasingly to fulfill the gospel of Christ.

Treatment days were not without their humor! At the end of the day, the day’s debriefs told of how things could get lost in translation: From Dr. Tom’s “take one pill every six years” to Theanne telling a patient she had a ‘waterfall’ in her eye. For these we both thanked and cursed Google translator!

Peter introduced himself as “Dr. Father” to establish his credibility to his patients; Dr. Mia snuggled up with scabies



“Love these new glass-

from the babies! We had to break up a backroom brawl over a mix-up of glasses; while Chrysoptom the parrot drew blood from Dr. Peter’s ear! We chuckled endlessly at our shortcomings, while all the while celebrating our victories together!

You don’t need words to speak if you have Holy Spirit to translate. The Orthodox liturgy moved many to tears; the universal language of Christ’s love surpasses all tongues. The most moving moments didn’t require a mutual

vocabulary. Those were the moments that were spoken through long looks, gentle nods, hand holding, and hugs. Those were my favorite. The experiences words can’t



“These glasses seem a little snug”

describe.

Heading Home: We had to rip off the bandage sticking us to the clinic. There was no painless way to say goodbye to our newfound family of friends. Goodbye after goodbye, followed by ‘gracias’ after ‘gracias’ went on and on until we were forced to board the bus. This special place is far removed from modern communication, and the harsh reality is that keeping in touch with our new friends would be severely limited. They don’t get mail and don’t often have access to electronic communication. These goodbyes have really meant something. The bus moved forward as we all looked back on faces of our friends fading into the misty background. Thank God for cameras, and the pictures keeping those memories alive. At a glance, you can go back to Aguacate, if only in your memory.

Whether on bus, train or plane, we would shut our eyes and drift back into the clinic, or to the long dinner table, or to our patient rooms, only to wake up with our heads falling back and forth on an airplane headed home. Only God knows who will return to Aguacate, who will leave Aguacate, who will become a doctor, who will become a priest, and who will enter His Kingdom. There is so much to process now about our experience. How we will share it? How will our experiences impact our future? What difference did we make?

Written and photographed by Reanne Gagainis a member of the Medical Mission team. Submitted to the Corps Connector by Lynda Dendtler, IVC volunteer, who “worked, traveled and played” with Reanne.
Editor



Lynda Dendtler

Upcoming Events

EVENING OF GRATITUDE

APRIL 15, 2018

Liturgy: 4:00 PM

St. Aloysius Church

Reception: 5:15 PM

The Commons Gonzaga
College High School

JUNE RETREAT

JUNE 11-13, 2018

Christine Eberle Facilitator

Loyola Retreat House
Faulkner Maryland

FALL RETREAT

SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2018

Facilitator TBA

Loyola Retreat House
Faulkner Maryland

Northern Virginia Region 2017-18 City Groups

Good Shephard 8710 Mount Vernon Highway Alexandria, Virginia 1st Wednesday 10:00 am-12:00 noon	Our Lady of Good Council 8601 Wolftrap Road Vienna, VA 22182 1st Thursday 10:00 am-12:00 noon	Our Lady Queen of Peace 2700 19th Street South Arlington, VA 22204 2nd Tuesday 10:00 am-12:00 noon	The Broadway 502 W. Broad St. Falls Church, VA 22046 2nd Wednesday 10:00 am-12:00 noon
4/4/18	4/5/18	4/10/18	4/11/18
5/2/18	5/3/18	5/8/18	5/9/18

Saint Ann's 5300 North 10th St Arlington, VA 22205 2nd Thursday 10:00 am-12:00 noon	St. John Neumann's 11900 Lawyers Road Reston VA 20191 3rd Tuesday 10:00 am-12:00 noon	St. Joseph's 711 Columbus St. Alexandria, VA 22314 3rd Wednesday 10:00 am-12:00 noon
4/12/18	4/17/18	4/18/18
5/10/18	5/15/18	5/16/18

See Page 13 for the DC/Metro Md City Group Dates

DC/Metro MD Region 2017-18 City Groups

The Albrecht's 5814 Ogden Court, Bethesda, MD 20816 1st. Thurs.—9:30–11:30	Wash. Jesuit Academy 900 Varnum St., NE Washington, DC 20017 2 nd Tuesday—11:00-1:00	Riderwood 3140 Gracefield Rd. Silver Spring, MD 20904 Last Wednesday--10:00-12:00
April 5	April 10	April 25
May 3	May 8	May 30

