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**Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church**

Parish in Paradise

**Newsletter**  
Jan 2022  
ISSUE 31



Members of OLMC Youth Group, accompanied by some Deacons, young adults and Fr. Anthony Abraham, attended the 2022 March for Life Pilgrimage held in Washington, D.C.

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✦ From the desk of the pastor

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

Happy New Year! We continue to give God thanks.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

This requires a level of faith. Know God is in control, and He will work everything out for the good of those who love him (Rm 8:28). Therefore, it doesn't matter how severe the circumstances are, God is working it out. He is working even when we don't think He is working. This is very reassuring to know. God is on our side fighting for us.

There are certainly two qualifiers. The first is He works out everything for the good of those who love him. We must be a lover of God. He loves us first and will never stop loving us. This new year, let us renew our love for Jesus. The only way we can love God is when we come to know him. Knowing his love, one can only return love. He says, if we love him, we will keep his commandments.

John 14:15: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." This is the proof of our love for him. If we are truly honest - for us who are walking with the Lord - we know we fall short here. We fail sometimes miserably. However, because he is rich in love, we can go back to him and ask for mercy/love.

Secondly, He works for the good of those who are called to his purpose. We are created for a purpose and the only person who can reveal that purpose is God. This year, may we seek God's will in everything we do and say. May our lives glorify the one who created us out of love. We are called by him, and he holds a purpose for our lives.

Today let us see God working things out for our good - small and great alike.

In Christ,

Fr. Anthony Abraham  
Pastor



March for Life - January 2022 in Washington, D.C.

Some members of the OLMC Youth Group, Fr. Anthony Abraham, Deacons Evans Doway, Cassius Mathurin and Michael Jackson Sr., Cheryl Boynes-Jackson and a few young adults, all traveled to Washington, D.C., from Jan. 17-21, 2022, for the annual Pro-Life March. The day of the actual march was on Jan.21. So, we had a few days of leisure.

We visited the Franciscan Monastery, where we learned about Mount Calvary and Jesus' tomb; and the National Museum of African American History and Culture, where we learned more about the evolution of African Americans from past to present. Some were also able to go to confession at the Franciscan Monastery.

We also visited different monuments, including the Lincoln Memorial, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and the Washington Memorial. Lastly, we went to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. It was incredibly beautiful and big. We attended the Pro-Life Mass on Thursday, Jan. 20 at the Basilica. Hundreds of priests and deacons served at the Mass including our own priest and deacons.

This was the first time some people attended the march. On the day of the march, it was a very cold. So, we all bundled up for the weather.

Some the youth shared some of their thoughts.

KingAsa McCoy said, "The march was very inspiring, I saw people marching for the ones that couldn't speak, the march helped others become aware of the lives that are unspoken."

Davidson "DJ" Verdant Jr. learned about abortion and said, "If one of my friends talked about abortion, I would tell them no because they are killing a precious life."

Gleidy Caraballo-Castillo thought the march was interesting and fun. She also said, "abortion isn't the best choice. Before deciding ask somebody for help."

"People were shocked that we were from the Virgin Islands," Jacori Laurencin said. "Abortion isn't a good thing. That child could be someone great and could change many lives."

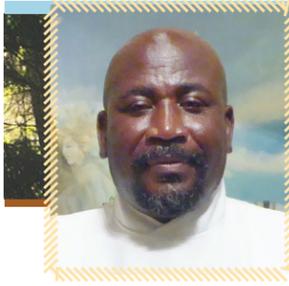
Liandra Dagou enjoyed the trip. "I enjoyed walking into the Basilica and seeing kids around my age there for the same thing I was." She continued, "Don't seek abortion as your first choice when you feel trapped and don't know what to do."

Overall, the trip was also filled with deep prayer. We prayed each day before we left for our journey. Although it was cold, the youth enjoyed each other's presence.

**Thank you to Fr. Anthony and to the chaperones. A great, big thank you to our benefactors who made this trip possible for us. See you next year for the Pro-Life March 2023.**



◆ Article written by Liandra Dagou, Youth Group Vice President



# God is a Merciful God

By Deacon Peter Laurencin

On April 23, 2021, I got the dreaded news that I had cancer. At first, I did not know what to make out of it. So, when the doctor said that I had to be admitted to the hospital immediately for treatment, I just looked at her and shook my head. I went back to the hotel. I checked into the emergency room the very next morning because of unbearable pain. It was the beginning of the journey to treatment and recovery. The doctor said that I needed eight rounds of chemotherapy to get the cancer under control. I had to stay in Florida and could not go home.

Pain, suffering, tears. Why me Lord? Frustration, depression. When will it end? As the Gospel of Luke says in Chapter 17, verses 11-19:

*“As Jesus continued his journey to Jerusalem, he traveled through Samaria and Galilee. As he was entering a village, ten lepers met him. They stood at a distance from him and raised their voice, saying, “Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!” And when he saw them, he said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.” As they were going, they were cleansed. And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. He was a Samaritan. Jesus said in reply, “Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?” Then he said to him, “Stand up and go; your faith has saved you.”*

God is a merciful God. Six months ago, I was lying in a hospital bed weeping, crying, vomiting and headaches where the room was spinning. My hair was falling off – no eyebrows, no hair on my head. I lost weight. I could smell things from miles away. I could not stomach the smell of anything. I was nauseated all the time.

Each month was a different experience. The first month I was bleeding. The second month my hair was falling out. Third month my skin was peeling and shedding. In the fourth month I was vomiting, with massive headaches. In the fifth month my skin was grey and purple, and I was praying to get out of the hospital. But God is a great God. When the

doctors said chemotherapy for eight months, God said five months. When the doctors said I would go home next year, God sent me home in early October 2021 and here am I today.

Chemo gets you down. I was at the point that I could not look at myself in the mirror. I was weak and could not eat. I lost a lot of weight. I needed to eat to gain strength. I was depressed. I did not want to walk around. I just stayed in bed all the time, but I could not sleep.

But Isaiah 41:10 says, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

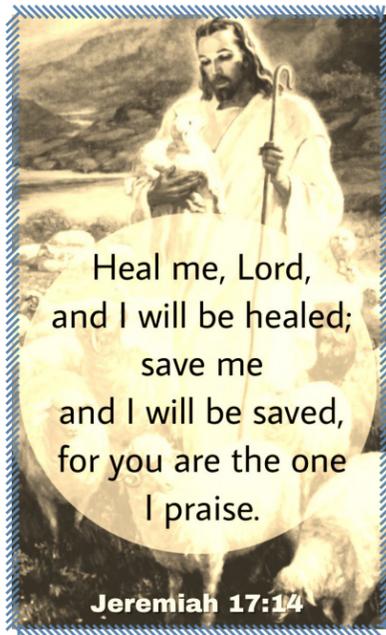
I would spend a week in the hospital for chemotherapy. I found strength in all the people who were praying for me; and sending cards, thoughts, and mementos. The encouragement and support from all of you were tremendous including those who took care of my family in my absence.

Today, I stand before you in full remission. Of course, I must go back for regular checkups, but I claim that I am healed in the name of Jesus.



*Dear Lord, I want to thank you for the people you have put in my life who support, encourage me, pray for me and love me. Please bless each one as they have blessed*

*me. Even if I do not say it daily, I know I have so much to be thankful for. Most of all, I am grateful for you, for all you do and for all that you are. In Jesus name I pray. Amen*



# EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

*“Can you not watch with me one hour?”*

— Matthew 26:40



Just a reminder that we have Eucharistic Adoration available. If anyone would like to sign up for any particular day(s) or hour(s), please call the office at 340-776-6339.

# Misa en español



## Spanish Mass Ministry

Spanish Mass has resumed on Sundays at 5:30 p.m. Three priests on St. Thomas have committed to celebrating the Spanish Mass. They are Fr. John Mark, Fr. Kerly Francois and Fr. Serapio Lopez Cruz. About 10 to 15 people regularly attend the Mass. The people are happy to have the Spanish Mass back. All are invited to attend.



Fr. Serapio celebrates Spanish Mass at OLMC.

# A Year in Review

Behold, I am with you always,  
to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:20

## By Claudia Verdant

Just yesterday we were saying Happy New Year and removing our Christmas decorations. Now the month of January is over, schools are back in session, and we are back to work. Some of us are already looking forward to the next holiday and making plans.

We cannot look upon this time of year without acknowledging that 2021 has ended and 2022 is already on an automated conveyor system. That thought alone demands us to take some time to reflect on 2021 and the remainder of 2022.

I am reflecting on where I was at the beginning of 2021 and where I am now. I am also assessing what happened, what did not happen, and what my thoughts and feelings are towards the different areas within my life: health, relationships, career, family, finances, competencies, weaknesses, and my spiritual life.

2021 marked several changes in my life: the birth of my goddaughter, a promotion at work, losing another Soldier to suicide, and relocating from California to Mexico. While reflecting on these events and more I am at times, struck with a sense of awe and thankfulness because of the way it ended.

Overall, 2021 was challenging and though I trusted God in the good times, I 100% expressed doubt in the tough and difficult times when I felt great uncertainty. I also vividly remember feelings of anxiousness and uncertainty more than hope and thankfulness. Sometimes I even felt alone while navigating 2021.



- Perhaps the greatest lesson 2021 taught me is that self-pity, discouragement, and despair are all demonic traps.
- Being absorbed by such feelings is like walking towards the edge of a cliff, an edge that crumbles easily, and you fall while believing this is the end.
- Despite my feelings I can truly say I was never at the edge of the precipice. I was never alone. He never left me alone. His presence was there in my past, it is currently here with me in the present, and will be there with me in the future.

Isaiah 41:10 says, "Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand." If I can take one thing with me from 2021 into the new year it would be this verse because the comfort that it brings outweighs every negative feeling, challenge, or demonic trap.

As I assess last year, I cannot help but to also look towards the remainder of 2022. I've made plans and written down my goals. However, I smile to myself, as I imagine God looking down upon me saying, "Claudia, let's not forget who is really in charge."

He orchestrates the events in our lives (His will be done) and we need to accept his ways are better than ours. I pray that we will simply trust Him and thank Him for the good that came out of 2021 and the good that will eventually come out of it all.

Jesus to his disciples after resurrection, "... I am with you always, to the close of the age." Matthew 28:20



◆ Claudia Verdant, a St. John resident, is a Major in the U.S. Army. She is also a parishioner of OLMC.

## PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

Remember us, O God; from age to age be our comforter. You have given us the wonder of time, blessings in days and nights, seasons, and years. Bless your children at the turning of the year and fill the months ahead with the bright hope that is ours in the coming of Christ. You are our God, living and reigning, forever and ever.

Amen.

## Fundraising items



As a fundraiser, OLMC has hats and rash guards on sale. The hats are \$20.00, and the rash guards are \$40.00. Call the church office for more information at 340-776-6339.

O Lord my God,  
I cried out to You,  
And you healed me.

Psalm 30:2

## Our Lady of Mount Carmel Mission Statement

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church will provide support to all through the liturgy, worship and education. We pledge to provide our parish community and our visitors a prayerful experience in an environment of friendliness and courtesy. We are committed to proclaim the Word of God in unity and love towards each other.

### Our mission is:

- Evangelization:** to evangelize ourselves, our families, our parish and our local community.
- Liturgy:** to celebrate our faith with joy through vibrant and prayerful worship.

- Education:** to educate and become educated in the truths of the Gospel and in the formation of conscience.
- Service:** to reach out in love and service to those in need.
- Stewardship:** to develop the material, financial and human resources of the Church and to manage them as faithful servants.

The OLMC Parish in Paradise Newsletter is composed by Fr. Anthony Abraham, Simonia Dagou, Lisa Etre and Brenda Rector Wallace.

To submit an article or for questions regarding OLMC Newsletter please contact: Lisa Etre by email at: [olmc@hotmail.com](mailto:olmc@hotmail.com)

Graphic Design: Julie Vazquez

### DEVOTIONS:

**Eucharistic Adoration** Daily: 24 hours a day  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation** Saturdays at 5 p.m.; after Masses; or by appointment

**Baptism:** By Appointment; 3 weeks preparation

**Weddings:** By Appointment; 6 months preparation

### Regular Mass Schedule

**Weekend:** Saturdays: 6 p.m.  
Sundays: 7:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m.  
12:30 p.m. (Coral Bay)  
5:45 p.m. (Spanish)

### Weekdays:

Tuesdays: 6 p.m. (Coral Bay)  
Wednesdays: 6 p.m.  
Thurs & Fridays: 7 a.m.

## New Fencing



OLMC recently installed security fencing around the hall entrance. The fencing was fabricated by Samson Welding Services.

## Christmas gifts donated



A huge thank you to all who donated Christmas gifts to the children of the parish and the homeless in the community. It was greatly appreciated.