

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church

Parish in Paradise



YOUTH IN ACTION!

Newsletter

January 2023 ♦ ISSUE 37



^ OLMC Youth, Fr. Anthony Abraham and chaperones participated in the annual Pro-Life March in Washington, D.C., in January 2023.

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♦ OurLadyof MountCarmelstjohn ♦ OLMC VI Virgin Islands ♦



➡ From the desk of the pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

It is with great joy that I welcome you to the great season of Lent. These forty days are meant to draw us closer to God remembering Jesus' own forty days in the desert. My dear friends, I love being a Catholic. The Church in her wisdom gives us this season so we can draw closer to God. It is so easy to wander far from God.

The three tools that the Church gives to us are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. If we allow the wisdom of the church to prevail, we will benefit from her wisdom. Let us try to increase our prayer time.

"For me prayer is a surge of the heart, it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy," CCC, NO. 2558, citing St. Therese of Lisieux.

Prayer is vital for our relationship with God. In the busy world which we live in, there are so many things that are fighting for our time. It is so easy for our prayer time to become less and less or non-existent. St. Francis de Sales says, "Every one of us needs half an hour of prayer each day except when we are busy -- we need an hour." Prayer is as important as the oxygen we breathe. Please desire a discipline prayer life. I pray God will put a burning desire in our hearts for spending quality time with him in prayer daily.

Fasting and abstinence are obligatory days on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday in Lent. Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence. The norm for fasting is from the age 18 until 59. When fasting a person is allowed to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. Abstinence from meat in the Catholic Church is required from age 14 onwards.

This discipline is very important for the spiritual edification of the Christian man and woman. It helps us to discipline the flesh. Fasting brings us in union with God. St. Paul reminds us of the battle that occurs in every human person. "The spirit wars against the flesh and flesh against the spirit" (Galatians 5:7). The one who wins is the one who is fed. Throughout scripture, fasting always moved the heart of God. It is a discipline we need to adapt again. The church guides us accordingly. I pray God's spirit will guide us to returning to fasting and abstinence at least once a week.

The last pillar is almsgiving. It is "witness to fraternal charity" and "a work of justice pleasing to God." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2462). God loves the widow, the orphan and the poor. We see all through scripture how God's eyes were always attentive to the cry of the poor. ALL of us are called to examine our relationship with the poor. In Matthew 25, we are reminded that what we do to the least of our brothers and sisters we do to God.

Saint Mother Theresa prayed asking God to help her to see Jesus in the distressing disguise of the poorest of the poor. This was a prayer she prayed daily after receiving Holy Communion. This task can be challenging. However, it is Jesus in that man that who has no home. That child that is looking for love. The woman who is mentally ill. The sibling that annoys us. The non-Christian. I know it is hard at times and sometimes uncomfortable. However, let us ask God for the grace in these next forty days to treat every person we meet with love. Keeping in mind the Golden Rule to treat others as we ourselves would like to be treated.

Let us put in the work this Lenten season to become better at spending quality time in prayer; fasting and abstaining on a weekly basis; and loving the marginalized in our community. May this Lent be your best Lent ever!

In Christ,

Rev. Fr. Anthony Abraham, Pastor



Youth Mass



^ The OLMC Steel Pan performed at the Youth Mass on Saturday, February 18, 2023. The OLMC Youth Group led the Mass on Saturday, February 18, 2023.

Poem Reading



^ Liandra Dagou reads a poem as part of the pre-swearing service for the 35th Legislature on January 8, 2023, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church. The poem, titled "Do It Anyway," is by Mother Theresa.

Youth Steel Pan Performance



^ The OLMC Youth Steel Pan performed before the post-inaugural service for Gov. Albert Bryan Jr. and Lt. Gov. Tregenza Roach on January 3, 2023, at OLMC.

Youth feeding those in need



“ Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. ” — Matthew 25:40

The OLMC Youth Group fed the homeless Monday, February 20, 2023. The group, along with volunteers Zach and Bonnie and Digna Doway, coordinator, prepared cheeseburger, chips, a salad and a drink. They then trekked throughout Cruz Bay and the Our Lady of Charity homeless shelter to deliver the meals.



Youth at the beach



After feeding the homeless and less fortunate, the OLMC Youth Group headed to Hawksnest Beach for a day of games, including volleyball and football, and swimming. Visitors Bonnie and Zach and Coordinator Digna Doway join in on the fun.

Martin Luther King Jr. Award



Liandra Dagou

Liandra Dagou was among 8 students, selected by their respective schools, to receive the Martin Luther King Jr. award, sponsored by the St. Thomas Hebrew Congregation.



^ Liandra Dagou with teacher Mrs. Veronica Woods and Rabbi Shimon Moch.



^ Liandra Dagou with parents Lindon and Simonia Dagou.



MARCH FOR LIFE

nine youth and five adults from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church attended the March for Life in Washington, D.C., from January 18-22, 2023.

To help achieve our goal, we held various fundraisers such as the steel pan playing after the Christmas Day Masses, a car wash, a bake sale and soup and food sales.

We all had a wonderful educational experience. Throughout the march, for some of us who had been to previous marches, felt that there was not as many people as previous years. Nonetheless, the energy we all experienced was worth fighting for. It was a great opportunity to join others coming from different parts of the United States and Canada to use our voices and join in the fight and be part of the first march since the overturning of Roe vs. Wade.

As Christians and Catholics, this Supreme Court decision was one that brought great joy and was worth marching for in the cold, showing our support for the voiceless.

We saw many different signs supporting the march. Seeing videos on big screens displaying live abortions gave us a greater appreciation for our bodies and made it even a bigger reason for us to join and fight for those who can't fight for themselves. Seeing other young people our age and even younger made us realize the power of the march and allowed us to feel more connected to the cause.



^ Arrival in D.C.

While in Washington, D.C., we also had the opportunity to visit the Franciscan Monastery, the Smithsonian National Zoo, among other places of interest. We attended Mass at the National Basilica and the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle. Two youth, Liandra Dagou and Davidson Verdant Jr., also participated in the Mass at St. Matthew by bringing up the gifts to the altar in the offertory procession.

We would like to extend a very big thank you to all who made this trip possible - our benefactors, families, parishioners, and visitors and all who contributed to making this trip an amazing and productive experience.

Thank you to all of you and may God continue to bless you and your families.

◆ Article written by KingAsa McCoy, Vice-President OLMC Youth Group

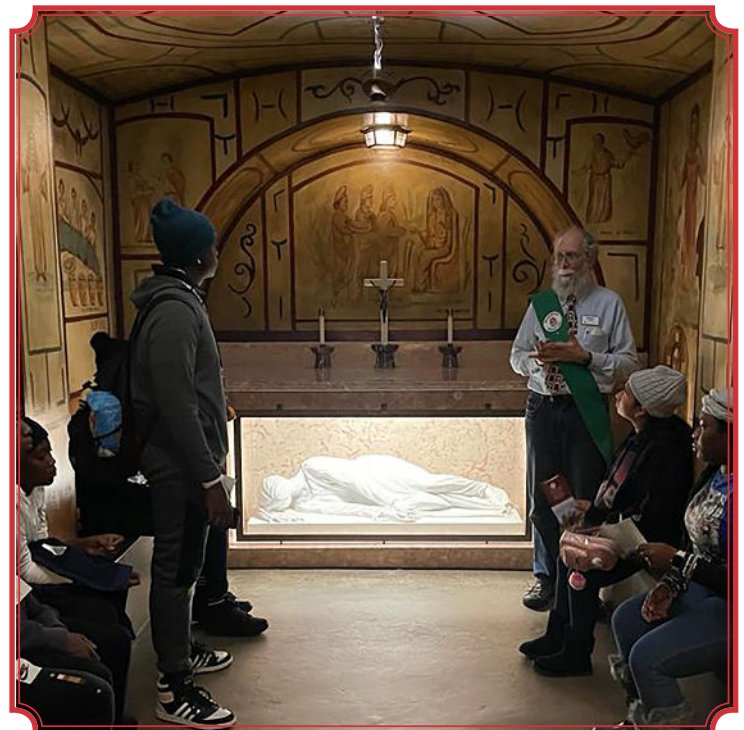


^ The OLMC Youth Group also held a soup sale and food sale to raise funds to attend March for Life.



^ At the Smithsonian National Zoo in D.C.

^ The OLMC Youth Group held a car wash to raise funds to attend March for Life.



^ At the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D.C.

^ The group visited the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America.



^ At the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.



^ Right before the march.

Honoring Our Commitments

By Claudia Verdant

As the days continue to pass, the year 2022 seems further away and now New Year's celebrations drift further into our rearview mirror and the season of Lent is here.

As I spent time thinking about my Lenten commitments in the area of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, my thoughts deviated. I started thinking about all my commitments (past and present), how I achieved or abandoned them and where I am currently.

Commitment means to carry into action and it goes beyond our desire or motivation. It is a conscious, deliberate decision that shows through our behavior and results and is essential to achieving the simplest of goals to the lofty ones. To use a food analogy, the next time you have bacon and eggs, know that the chicken was involved but the pig was committed. It had to give it all.

Years ago, I was speaking with a coworker and he said he wanted to quit smoking. As he said that, he was lighting his cigarette. Though I heard what he said, his actions showed he was committed to continuing his current lifestyle / bearing the same fruit.

We each are known by the fruit we bear; not the fruit we talk about; not the fruit we think about; not the fruit we hope about; but by the fruit we actually bear. Therefore, realistically, we cannot be upset by the results we didn't get with the work we didn't do.

At times I've made a commitment to do whatever it takes to achieve the goal, to essentially achieve greatness. In July 2022, I said I was going to train and complete a half marathon. I submitted myself and was committed to the training plan. It wasn't easy but it was worth it and on October 2, 2022, I completed my first half marathon.

There have also been times where my lack of commitment caused me to be unsuccessful and mediocre. I started working on my Master's Degree in May 2018, I started off

committed but lost my way and abandoned my goal for several years. I restarted the journey, committed myself and completed all the requisite courses in order to graduate in June 2022.

I've learned when we don't honor our commitments (especially the ones we make to ourselves) it depletes our self-esteem, erodes our self-image, it weakens our faith in ourselves. However, there is power, strength, confidence, and trust (amongst ourselves and others) when we honor our commitments.

Now I am not naïve to believe that we can keep 100% of our commitments. Life happens and there are variables that we cannot control. However, we need to have a contingency plan so that if something goes

wrong, we adjust and continue, we don't stop and abandon. If we do stop, learn from the experience, and start again. Never should we sentence ourselves to a lifetime of living a purposeless life, being stuck, miserable, regretful, broke, unhappy, or living an unhealthy lifestyle.

We need to look within ourselves and life around us and decide what areas in our lives we need to make a commitment to. It might be our health, finances, community, marriage, work, or in our relationships with God or family members.

Commitment means honoring ourselves, to recognize the greatness in us and to intentionally live the life we were created to, so that the glory of God may be revealed through our actions. Let us not short circuit our greatness with sin, fear, envy, being lazy or apathetic.

So, whatever our goals and plans, commit them to the Lord, our plans will be established, and the Lord will direct our steps (Proverbs 16:3,9).

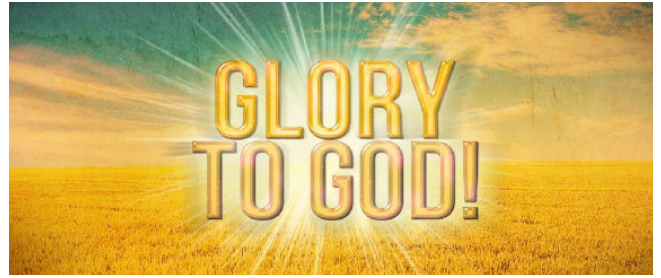
"You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?"

—Matthew 7:16



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

Our Lady of Charity Transitional Homeless Shelter



◀ Our Lady of Mount Carmel has been approved for a 20-year lease (with option to renew for another 20 more years) from the Government of the Virgin Islands to build a homeless shelter in Cruz Bay. OLMC hopes to break ground this year on the new *Our Lady of Charity Transitional Homeless Shelter*.

St. Therese Chapel permit approval



▶ Our Lady of Mount Carmel has been approved for the Major CZM Permit by the Department of Planning and Natural Resources for 6R-2C Carolina. OLMC hopes to break ground this year. The first structure to be built will be *St. Therese Chapel*. If you wish to make a donation towards this project, please contact the OLMC Rectory, or go online to: <https://olmcvi.org/st-therese/>

GHS Gives Back



◆ Photo courtesy of Giffit Hill School

^ GHS Gives Back Day returned to Giffit Hill School on January 26, 2023. All students participated throughout the day in service projects that gave back to the community. One of the projects was cooking for the homeless and less fortunate in the community. Students, under the direction of teacher La'Shanda Boodoo, cooked peas and rice, vegetables and barbecue chicken. Seventy meals were served.



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

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.



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MUETUS

Lisa Etre VI Artist

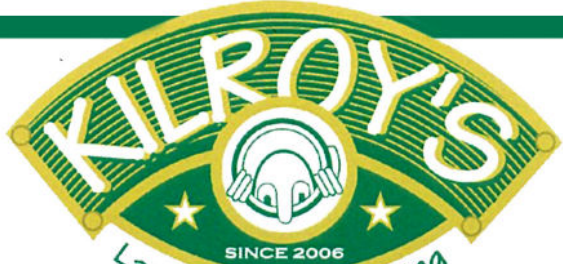
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