

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church

Parish in Paradise

Newsletter

December 2023 ♦ ISSUE 44



▲ The OLMC Religious Education Program put together a Christmas program on Sunday, December 17, 2023. The event including pantomime, steel pan from the youth, piano music by Ronald Lee Jr. and student Tianna Jn Baptiste and a play by the Religious Education students. The mistresses of ceremonies were Sherry-Ann Francis-Hill and Ariel Mathurin. We thank all the Religious Education teachers, Ronald Lee Jr. and parents for making this a success. A special thank you to Lisa Samuel for creating and sewing most of the costumes; and Rosemary Joseph for the treats.

www.olmcvi.org ♦ olmc@hotmail.com ♦ fax: 340-693-7685

📞 P: 340-776-6339 • 📧 P.O. Box 241 • St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands 00831-0241

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From the desk of the pastor

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year 2024.

It is with great joy we have journeyed throughout the Advent season and have arrived to this great celebration.

Christmas is a true manifestation of God's love for ALL of mankind. It is said He (Jesus) became one like us so we can become one with Him. Love became visible.

I am sure for many it might have been a year full of joys and sufferings. For some maybe that is the reality you are facing now. Joy or suffering, Jesus is with us – Emmanuel. The book of James reminds us that trials come only to make us strong. Indeed, we can draw strength from our Savior. He is Emmanuel -- a God who never leaves us or forsakes us.

On behalf of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and all the parishioners, I want to say Merry Christmas and a bright and spirit filled 2024. Please be assured you and your family will be remembered at our Christmas and New Year Masses. Thank you for being a valuable member of our parish.

Prayer:

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.

In Christ,

Rev. Fr. Anthony Abraham, Pastor

Baptism and First Communion



Jhaleel and Hadeezah Emmanuel were baptized and made their First Communion on Saturday, December 30, 2023.



Just Bloom

By Claudia Verdant

Wave you ever seen a picture or painting of a sunflower? Have you ever grown sunflowers or visited a sunflower field? Have you ever bought sunflowers for someone or received them as a gift in a bouquet? Have you ever plucked one from your neighbor's yard?

They are, by far, without a doubt, or near-peer competition, my favorite flowers. My home is littered in a sunflower motif. My car keys are attached to a sunflower keychain, and my favorite outfit as a child had a matching top and bottom with a sunflower print.

Why are they my favorite? Oh, let me count the reasons.

1. Sunflowers reverberate joy and happiness.
2. They burst forth from the ground, unaware and unbothered of the other flowers around them.
3. Each flower stands tall and erect and faces towards the rising sun following the sun's journey westward across the sky.
4. Their vibrant colors, elongated petals, and eye-catching appearance show the world their God-given beauty.
5. Each is perfectly imperfect, with its leaves' rough and serrated edges and hairy stems.
6. Each flower has its own potential for growth, fulfills its purpose, and is incapable of envy.
7. They exist without pretense.
8. They don't compete with the flower next to them; they just bloom.

They just bloom. This same tenet should apply to humans: don't compete, just bloom. Why spend

time comparing (i.e., when it's destructive and not motivating) and competing against one another?

Why be envious of one another? Why are we trying to keep up with the Joneses? Newsflash: the Joneses are broke and unhappy as they continue to chase "happiness and contentment" every time they swipe their credit cards.

When we spend time comparing or competing against one another, we allow them to drive our behavior. We look at their best features against our perceived average or subpar features, which is self-destructive.

We not only begin to kill our natural beauty and authenticity, but we steal our own joy, chip away at our self-esteem, and form a skewed perspective of our lives. Our growth pattern slows, and we don't bloom. Instead, we begin to wilt from the consequences of envy, ingratitude, and being unloving toward ourselves and others.

November, December, and January, all call us to pause, be reflective, give thanks, change our ways, celebrate the love, peace, and joy found in Jesus, and look upon our future with hope and optimism. Remember, we are wonderfully made (Psalms 139:14), nourished through God's word (Matthew 4:4), worth much more than the birds (Matthew 6:26), and there is one thing we do better than anyone else, and that's being us.

Reflect on who we are, give thanks, don't compare, and like the sunflower, stand tall even on the darkest days, find the sun, and just bloom!



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

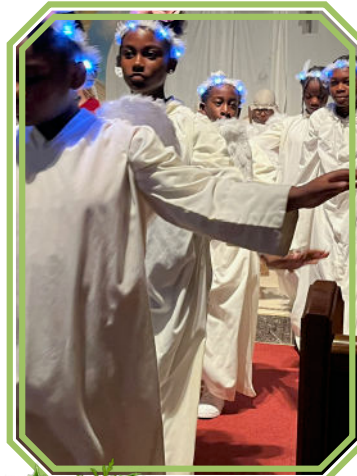
Christmas Program



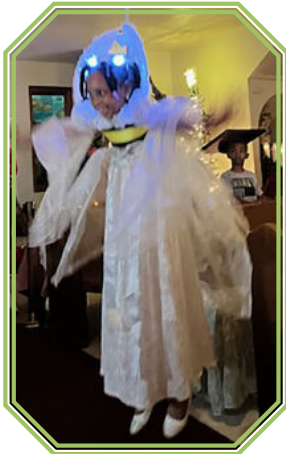
OLMC Pantomime Dancers: Liandra Dagou, A'maya Abraham and Gleidy Castillo Caraballo



Play narrators Ariel Mathurin and Olivia O'Connell



Angels fly away from the scene.



Angel Leilani Richards descends from upstairs of the church.



Shari Raphael and Lynnea Jean play steel pan. (left photo) Tianna Jn Baptiste with instructor Ronald Lee Jr. play the piano. (right photo)



The entire group sings Christmas songs in the end of program.



OLMC Youth Steel Pan played a Christmas song.

Advent Candle Lighting



Life in the Spirit Seminar



OLMC held a Life in the Spirit seminar for seven weeks beginning on October 19, 2023.

The seminar was held at Holy Family Church on Mondays and Thursdays at OLMC.

Holy Family had about 25 participants and OLMC had more than 50 participants.

The seminar included praise and worship, a talk, a testimony and group discussions.

The seminar ended with participants being prayed over and receiving certificates with their prophecies and scripture verse.

Thank you to all the leaders and guest speakers including Msgr. William John Lewis from Dominica.

The Kidneys: Why Do We Need Them?

By Trevor Jean-Jacques, MD

The kidneys are two oval shaped organs that are on either side of your spine in the abdominal cavity. On the side facing the spine, there is an indentation that serves as a point of entry and exit for blood vessels and the ureters (the tubes that carry the urine from the kidneys to the bladder).

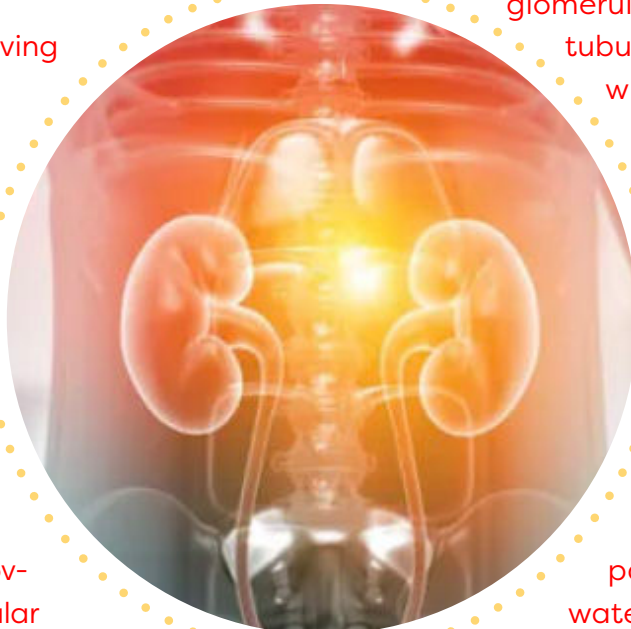
The kidneys function in removing waste and regulating the amount of fluid in your body by controlling how much water it removes from the blood that passes through them. Kidneys, that are functioning properly, will clean about half a cup of blood every minute while making urine as the waste product.

The kidneys function by removing waste products from cellular metabolism, extra fluid, acids and managing healthy water, salt and mineral balance in your blood. Without this proper functioning, minerals like sodium, potassium, calcium and phosphorus can accumulate in the blood and cause your muscles and nerves to not function properly.

The kidneys also help in controlling your blood pressure, the manufacturing of red blood cells and maintaining strong and healthy bones.

Each kidney is made up of around 1 million nephrons. Each nephron takes on its share of blood to filter as the blood runs through the glomerulus and is passed into the tubule. The tubule then determines what to return to the body and what goes out as waste.

For all that our kidneys do, they are an asset, and we should take care of them. Start by controlling your high blood pressure and diabetes if you have them. Avoid drugs that are toxic to the kidneys. Drink lots of water to keep your urine a pale-yellow color. Avoid coconut water if your kidneys are failing as the coconut water is rich in potassium and could cause your potassium to get dangerously high. Get regular check-ups with your doctor and ask them questions so you can be more informed.



Blessing of creche and Christmas tree



Fr. Serapio



^ Father Serapio López Cruz celebrated his last Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, with the Spanish and English communities. He will now be serving in the Diocese of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Fr. Brancker John



^ Fr. Brancker John of Dominica was the guest speaker at OLMC's Advent Mission from Dec. 4-8, 2023. The first night of the mission was held at Holy Family Church and the other nights at OLMC. The theme was "Stay Awake," based on Rev. 22:12. A special thanks to Fr. Brancker for also celebrating Masses in Fr. Anthony's absence.

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)
5:30 p.m. (Spanish)

Weekdays:

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



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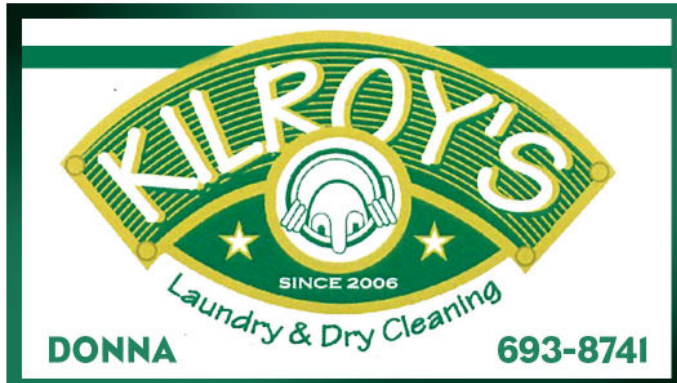
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