

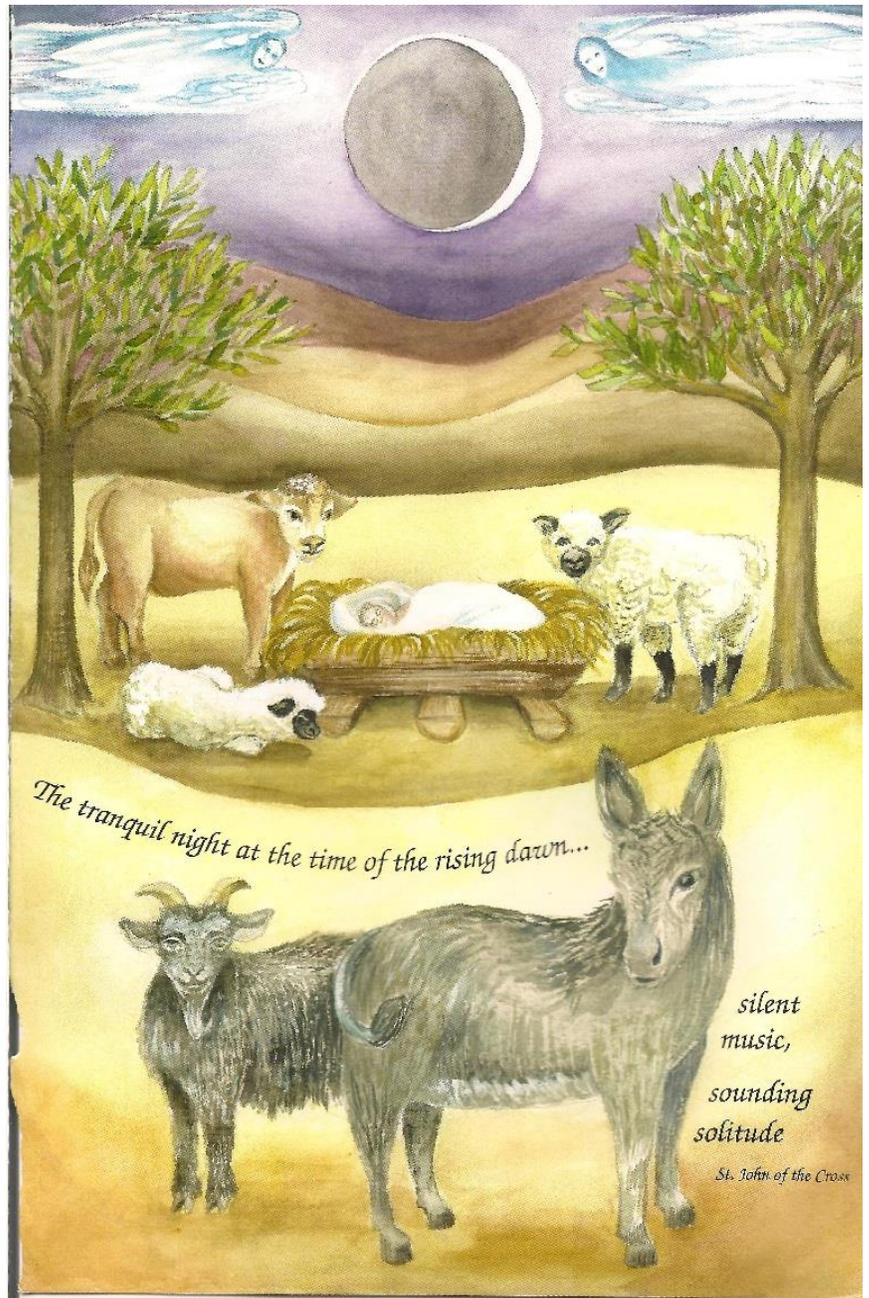
EPIPHANY CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 25, 2014

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*Then he called
the archangel Gabriel
and sent him to
the virgin Mary,
at whose consent
the mystery was wrought,
in whom the Trinity
clothed the Word with flesh.
and though Three work this,
it is wrought in the One;
and the Word lived incarnate
in the womb of Mary.
And he who had only a Father
now had a Mother too,
but she was not like others
who conceived by man.
From her own flesh
he received his flesh,
so he is called
Son of God and of man.*

*When the time had come
for him to be born,
he went forth like the bridegroom
from his bridal chamber,
embracing his bride,
holding her in his arms,
whom the gracious Mother
laid in a manger
among some animals
that were there at that time.
Men sang songs
and angels melodies
celebrating the marriage
of Two such as these.
But God there in the manger
Cried and moaned;
and these tears were jewels
the bride brought to the wedding.*



*The Mother gazed in sheer wonder
on such an exchange:
in God, man's weeping,
and in man, gladness,
to the one and the other
things usually so strange.*

These verses are part of a larger poem by the Spanish 16th c. John of the Cross (Carmelite priest and co-reformer of the Carmelite Order) entitled Romances. This part makes a wonderful Christmas meditation on the Annunciation and the Birth of Christ. The mysteries are so profound that John felt they could best be expressed in poetry. The picture is from a Christmas card from the Baltimore Carmelite Monastery.

SEASON OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES

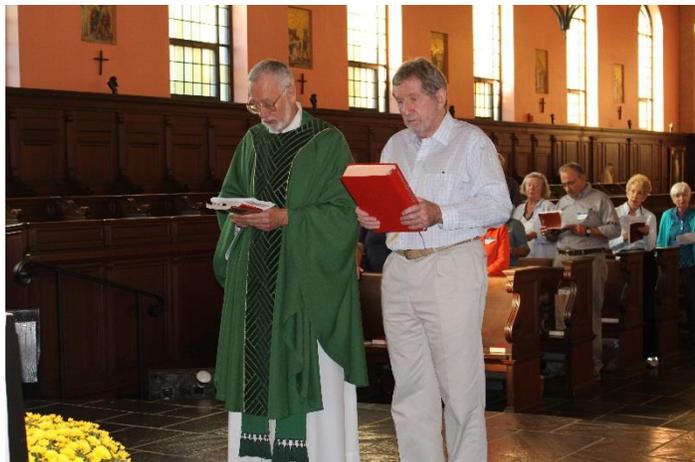
Our community celebration, as always, will be on Christmas Eve, December 23rd at the Cape St. Clair Clubhouse with Christmas Carols at 7:30 p.m. and Mass at 8:00 p.m. We are honored to have Fr. Charles Borges, S.J., as our celebrant and are grateful for his presence! There will be our traditional reception afterwards with punch and treats....please contribute something to the celebration! On Sunday, December 28th, there is the usual 9:30 a.m. Mass with Fr. Bazemo, Missionary of Africa. Our annual anniversary of our founding, The Feast of the Epiphany, will be celebrated on Sunday, January 4, 2015 with Fr. Okure. The annual community meeting will follow with our famous pot-luck brunch. Please bring your special dish as a contribution.

THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Epiphany Community came through again with donations to allow seven needy families in Annapolis to receive Thanksgiving baskets as well as staples and paper goods! Special acknowledgement to Lynn Evans and Julie Hildebrand who always dedicate time and energy to this project!

DAY OF REFLECTION

We had a good turnout for our annual event at the Franciscan Friary in Ellicott City with Fr. Peter Bernardi, S.J., as the retreat master. The theme was very topical on the teachings and spirituality of Pope Francis. Not everyone filled out the evaluation but those who did were very positive. Thanks, Peter, and thanks to Michael Murphy for putting it together!



LIGHTHOUSE SHELTER

Thanks to Marie Cushing for organizing donations for the shelter and homeless people during this special season!!!

PROFILE OF RITA MURPHY



I was born in Larksville, Pennsylvania, a small coal mining town. My grandparents were immigrants from Czechoslovakia. My mother was born there and my father was born in the US. Our life revolved around the Slovak Church and its liturgical seasons, enriched by our old country customs.

I was lucky enough to be able to go to the local college, Misericordia, and was the first person in our family to do so. I got a degree in elementary education and taught for one year in a Catholic school in Alabama. After a year of teaching second graders, I discovered teaching was not for me so I applied to Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to their graduate school to study English literature.

Marquette is where I met Michael, the love of my life. I never finished my degree, but married Michael instead. A better choice. We were married in September, 1960. Before we were married, Michael asked me if I loved to travel. I said absolutely. So after four months of marriage, Michael got a job with Catholic Relief Services and we ended up in Northeast Brazil. That was just the beginning.

Three years and two children later, we came back to the States, lived on Long Island, while Michael continued to work for CRS but in New York City. That lasted three years. Then we went to Belgium for a year of study at Louvain University. We came back to the US and settled down for a while. Had two more children.

In 1972 we moved to Annapolis while Mike worked in Washington, DC. for the International City Management Association. In 1984, Mike had the opportunity to connect with CRS again and we were sent to Central America. We worked there for three years – part time in Costa Rica and part time in El Salvador. Our two boys came with us while the older girls stayed home. It was quite an adventure for the boys. They learned a lot about life in a foreign country, also learned Spanish. We got used to seeing armed guards everywhere in El Salvador.

We came back to Annapolis, and the trips we take now are the short kind. We started going to Manresa and the Epiphany Community in 1982, and stayed with them when Manresa closed in 1993. Our worship space in Cape St. Claire clubhouse, although not quite like Manresa, has been very satisfactory. We love it and the people we worship with. God has blessed us all. We are very grateful.

Fr. CHARLES BORGES, S.J., ADVENTURES IN VIETNAM

I have been going to Ho Chi Minh City every summer in the month of June for the past four years to teach Jesuit brothers at St. Joseph's Seminary as they prepare themselves to begin their studies in philosophy. We are usually a group of 4 teachers (priests and lay people) and we have a set of about 25 students each year.

The month long course begins on the first Monday of June and ends on the last Friday of the same month. Each class day consists of five hours of teaching during which we stress speaking, writing and comprehension in the language. The students are usually very focused and eager to learn and make remarkable progress by the end of the month. They do have some grounding of the language while they spend two years in their Novitiate studies prior to coming to the English course.

Weekends are free for students and teachers. It gives us in particular a chance to see memorable sites in and around Ho Chi Minh City and sample food in the wonderful restaurants or attend cultural shows.

The Vietnamese cuisine is simple yet rich and varied and a delight to eat. The people are very friendly and eager to interact with foreigners if they know some English.

One has to, however, be careful when moving around the city or country since tourists must stay in designated zones only according to government rules.



With Fr. Manipadam, SJ. (co teacher) on the Mekong River cruise

NEWS FROM FR. CHRISTY AROCKIARAJ, S.S.

Fr. Christy sent warm greetings to the community, with special prayers and blessings on our Epiphany feast day. He will spend Christmas in India with family.

COMMUNITY THANKS TO BARBARA WISE!!!

Barbara is one of the unsung heroes of Epiphany Community who does so much to keep everything running smoothly, volunteers for many tasks, provides floral arrangements weekly out of the kindness of her heart, and helps many of us behind the scenes. We were reminded again of Barbara's generosity and importance when she was going to be out of town for Christmas and several others were needed to cover what she normally does. Thanks, Barbara!!!

ST IGNATIUS LOYOLA ACADEMY

300 East Gittings Street, Baltimore 21230

In the days when Epiphany had excess funds at the end of each year, we always sent a donation to this middle school in Baltimore which was begun by the Jesuits to give academic preparation and opportunities to poor middle school boys in the city. This is the school's 20th year and its first year in a new building with expanded facilities. The results of this school are impressive with a 98% high school graduation rate for the Academy's graduates compared to Baltimore City's graduation rate 65% for males. Volunteers for after school tutoring and financial contributions are always welcome.

CHRISTMAS REFRAIN

The Virgin, weighed
with the Word of God,
comes down the road:
if only you'll shelter her.

St. John of the Cross