



The Visitation Visitor

VISITATION OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY CHURCH

Volume 19 Issue 1

August 2021

For the Love of Catholic Education

by Patricia Gavanus & Colleen Henderson

My, how life has changed! Back in the 1960s, Catholic grammar schools consisted of students from a particular community. They were heavily funded by the parish. It did not cost parents a lot to send children to the local Catholic Schools. The costs were a lot lower years ago because we did not need to hire many teachers, since the sisters were our teachers. We also did not have the expense of technology like we have today. Our book bills were only a few dollars a month.

Now, fast forward to 2021. Things in Catholic elementary schools are changing. We had an eye-opening experience when we spoke with executive chair member of the Board of Limited Jurisdiction (BOLJ), Grace Opdyke. The BOLJ consists of 15 members, including our school principal, Mr. Matt Joram and our parochial administrator, Rev. Robert Gross. The Board began its training with the Archdiocese in the summer of 2019 and was inducted officially at a mass during Catholic Schools Week in January 2020. The purpose of the board is to support the school, administration and faculty in the following areas: development, enrollment, facilities and finance. The positions have been filled with volunteers who possess expertise and knowledge in their committee's particular areas.

According to Grace, "The board doesn't have jurisdiction over curriculum or school personnel, but we are responsible for creating the budget for the school as well as helping to increase enrollment and funding from outside sources." Grace also shared that "The board wants to be a support for the principal, faculty and staff as they carry out the massive responsibility

of keeping Catholic education relevant and viable for families both inside and outside the borders of the parish. One of the main objectives of the BOLJ is to welcome all students, no matter their religion or where they live. Students are welcome to be part of Visitation's vibrant community."

Visitation is among the first schools to see the need for a BOLJ. Grace said, "The parish should not have to bear the entire financial burden of maintaining our catholic school. Our board is committed to creating financial independence for our school and getting the word out to the community that a Visitation education is a solid investment in children's futures."

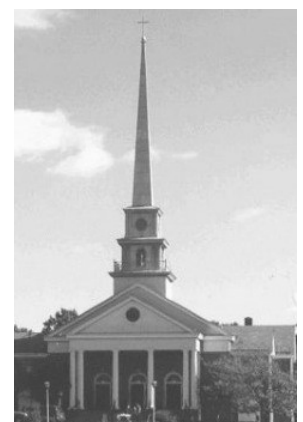
After their January 2020 induction, the BOLJ had to put some of its biggest plans on hold, as the pandemic changed the course of their first year. All attention went to getting the school through the pandemic. The BOLJ, and particularly the facilities committee, was highly involved in preparing the building for the safe arrival of students in the fall of 2020. With an end to the pandemic in sight, the Board is now setting its sights on a bright future for Visitation BVM School. *Grace asked, if you read this article and are an alumnus of Visitation, or have children who attended, please visit the new alumni website!*

<https://sites.google.com/view/visitationbvm/trooperalumni/home>

The parishioners of Visitation are lucky to have such a caring and dedicated group of people willing to volunteer their time to this new BOLJ. We wish them luck and are excited to see what goal they will accomplish.

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The Visitation Visitor

Parish Profile — Matt Joram, Principal Visitation BVM School

by Clare Hughes



Starting a new job can conjure up a mix of feelings such as excitement, stress, eagerness, anxiety and curiosity. That's typical. But to do it during a global pandemic? That's not so typical.

For Matt Joram, the new Principal at Visitation BVM School, it's been anything but typical. Matt began his role on July 1, 2020, and

on-boarded during a school year that ended with a virtual learning environment and was then tasked with coming up with a plan for students to return to in-person classes in a healthy, safe and compliant way. This was in addition to preparing for his new job as a first time Principal at a new school!

Matt came to Visitation BVM School after serving as the Assistant Principal at St. Martin De Porres Parish in Philadelphia. Prior to his role as assistant principal, he taught sixth, seventh and eighth grade Science at LaSalle Academy School. Originally from the Baltimore area of Maryland, Matt came to Pennsylvania to attend LaSalle University, where he earned his undergraduate degree. He went on to complete his graduate studies and Principal certification at St. Joseph's University. *(Spoiler alert: Principal Joram is a LaSalle Explorer fan!)*

As a teacher, Matt enjoyed working with students and helping them realize their full potential. As he took on leadership responsibilities in his teaching role, it inspired him to want to become a Principal.

In coming to Visitation BVM School, Matt was energized by the "community feel" of Visitation and noted that it was "something he was truly looking for in a school." He added that the dedication of the teachers and staff and the support of parents and families really stood out to him. He enjoys working with others and strives to make his principalship as collaborative as possible.

Outside of school, Matt enjoys spending time with his wife, Bridget, and 14-month old daughter, Emma. Their favorite activities include going to the

park and going for walks. And, when not in a pandemic, he enjoys traveling and dining out at new restaurants.

While much of the school year has focused on keeping the environment safe during the pandemic, Principal Joram looks forward to getting back to "normal" one day soon, where students can enjoy having all-school assemblies, attending in-person all-school masses, resuming after-school activities, using the science labs and participating in CYO events. He also looks forward to being able to spend more time visiting in the classrooms and interacting with the teachers and students.

Matt is appreciative to the Visitation Parish community for the continued support and generosity as they embrace the future and continue to make our parish school even better and realize all its greatness.

**Welcome to Visitation BVM School, Matt Joram!
We're glad you're here!**



Five Fun Facts

- ♦ Favorite Food: Pasta
- ♦ Top Sports Team: Phillies
- ♦ Last Book Read: "A Man Called Ove" by Fredrik Backman
- ♦ Best Day of the Week: Friday
- ♦ Fun Pastime: Going to the park



The Visitation Visitor

Letter from Our Pastor, Father Bob Gross



Beloved Parishioners,

What a joy it has been to come to Visitation and be with you over the course of the last (crazy) year. Everyone has been so welcoming and has made the transition very easy. Many people have called Visitation their home parish for their whole lives and love to be here and worship with their family and friends they have grown up with. There is a lot of energy and excitement over the direction of our parish and I rely on your prayers and involvement in making sure our parish family stays faithful and joyful with our Lord Jesus Christ as the cornerstone.

It is amazing to think that I am just the fifth pastor of Visitation in the last 67 years. This is a testament not only to the pastors who have been here before me but mainly to the people of the parish. The previous pastors have enjoyed their time so much at Visitation, they wanted to stay forever! This parish, in priestly circles, has always been seen as a "gem" of the diocese. Again, it is because of the people. Everyone is welcome to celebrate our parish at my installation Mass on September 19, 2021 at the 11:00 Mass. It is less a celebration of a new pastor as it is a celebration of the vibrant life of this parish.

It is a long-standing tradition that when you are assigned to a new parish as a pastor, you don't change anything for the first year or so. And this thought process makes sense - your calling is to be with the people. To get to know the parish family. And while many of you have been here your whole lives, to a new pastor, everything is new. As we move into the next year, with the help of the pastoral and finance councils, as well as many others who are very helpful at the school (such as the limited board of jurisdiction and our great new principal Mr. Joram), we will develop a 5 year plan. This plan will encompass what our goals and objectives will be in order to increase the already vibrant life of our parish as well as address some structural necessities around the campus.

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The Visitation **VISITOR**™

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The Visitation Visitor

Letter from Our Pastor, Father Bob Gross

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Some of the things that we will address in the five year plan include new windows at the school as well as looking at the possibility of air conditioning, assessing the parking lot, assessing the pews and carpet in the upper church, and discussing the feasibility of a parish life center. There are many things to address and I am just so grateful for the people that have already shown their love for Visitation in their service to address these areas.

The last year with the Corona Virus has hit everyone hard and placed everyone in a state of uneasiness with the present moment and the future. Our faith is our rock. This family, gathered around the table of the Lord, is the very heart of this parish. Let us hold firm to this faith and welcome back to the table as many people as we can. I know some people have left the parish in the past and it is through our people's faith that we can bring them back to the table of our Lord. Let us share the joy of this faith. It is the Good News.

I ask for your continued prayers for our parish family. I thank you again for your love of Visitation and your desire to see Her flourish. I pray that the Holy Spirit may guide us as we ensure the long term vibrancy and success of our parish family.

May the Lord give you His peace,

Fr. Bob

Hello, Yogi!

By Colleen Henderson

Was it love at first sight for you too in January when Father Bob's furry, friendly Australian Labra doodle came to live with us at Visi? It's fun to watch him play and grow. He will soon be his full weight of 60 pounds!

Here's some of Yogi's background:

- Born 11-6-20 in Kennett Square
- Pick of the litter of seven
- Full name is Yogi Berra Chrysogonus Gross
- Favorite past times are playing fetch and seeing the kids at school
- Die-hard Yankees and Jets fan
- Watches TV when golfer Tony Finau is playing

Welcome, Yogi, and thanks for coming to Visi. Remember...the game ain't over till it's over.





The Visitation Visitor

In Memoriam: Theresa Bernick

By Joe Gavanus



Theresa Bernick left us to be with the Lord on March 8, 2020. She has been missed very much by our Newsletter Committee, of which she had been a member since 2002. Theresa had been a member of the parish since childhood, with her family being one of the founding families of our parish. She knew the history of our parish much better than most of us do.

In addition to being a long-time member of the *Visitation Visitor* Newsletter Committee, Theresa also served the parish in many other capacities as a Eucharistic minister, a leader and scheduler for the Lectors that are Ministers of the Word in our church, an active member of the Speech

Committee and CYO board for many years and a long-time member of the former Women's Guild, which was discontinued in our parish.

Theresa was always willing and ready to serve our parish in any way in which she thought she could be of service. She was an active parishioner and volunteered at many events over the years. Theresa's legacy of faith and dedication to Visitation Parish serves as an example to us all. May she rest in the peace of Christ forever!

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL 7565 POPE JOHN PAUL 1

By Tina Bruckner

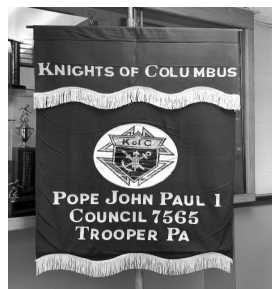
What do Babe Ruth, Vince Lombardi and President John F. Kennedy have in common? They were all members of the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization, with nearly 2 million members worldwide. The Knights of Columbus (KofC) has councils in over a dozen countries, and has donated \$1.62 billion (yes, billion!) to charitable causes over the past decade. The Knights have been huge supporters of the Special Olympics since day one. In 2017, they achieved their highest level of charitable service, volunteering more than 75 million hours of service in one year! They are responsible for the words "Under God" becoming part of the Pledge of Allegiance, have a long history with Mother Teresa and are major supporters of vocations—with councils adopting one or more seminarians and providing them with financial assistance and prayer.

In Spring 1980, a little closer to home, ***Knights of Columbus Council No. 7565, Pope John Paul 1***, which serves the parishes of Visitation BVM and St. Teresa of Avila, was created, and today, it has nearly 100 members.

KofC Council 7565 hosts a variety of annual events including a spaghetti dinner, an Easter egg hunt and a basketball free-throw contest. The council also assists Visitation and St. Teresa with their Christmas Bazaars, and does a variety of charity events, including pancake breakfasts to raise funds for seminarians.

Applicants to the Knights of Columbus must be 18 years of age or older, in good standing with the Holy See and must accept the teaching authority of the Catholic Church. The four degrees of membership are based on four principles: charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism.

The Council previously enlisted the services of a ladies auxiliary, but participation declined. Rumor has it the council is considering reinstating this group if some energized individuals show an interest. (*Count me in!*)





The Visitation Visitor

Word Search—Archbishops of Philadelphia

ArchBishops of Philadelphia

H	U	Q	T	D	U	O	D	O	U	O	A	V	L
A	I	Z	O	Y	A	N	O	R	A	O	A	O	Q
P	O	E	R	I	H	I	U	E	P	A	G	Q	T
A	A	C	W	R	L	H	G	P	E	R	E	Z	R
H	O	Q	I	L	R	L	H	N	A	Y	R	Q	N
A	C	H	A	P	U	T	E	E	U	R	P	A	B
E	A	U	A	Z	P	E	R	A	Q	K	R	O	L
A	T	I	A	A	E	L	T	R	A	A	E	O	L
K	R	R	R	B	U	H	Y	R	L	E	U	O	E
V	C	A	R	I	R	H	E	N	I	R	K	E	E
R	U	R	H	R	G	I	U	D	V	N	A	U	H
D	O	O	W	O	Y	A	R	D	E	K	E	Q	D
H	T	H	A	L	Y	E	L	I	B	E	P	C	K
H	O	D	O	L	O	R	H	I	U	A	U	A	R

OHARA
PEREZ
CHAPUT
KROL
BEVILAQUA
RIGALI
DOUGHERTY
RYAN
WOOD

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/881332/>



The Visitation Visitor

Visitation BVM School Profile—Eileen Csongradi

By Patricia Drewicz



Church Humor

Marriage and Coffee

Shortly after tying the knot, a young married couple started arguing over who should make the coffee. Being a good Christian woman, the wife went to the scriptures for her answer. She said that the Bible specifically stated that men should be the ones to make the coffee.

Puzzled, the husband asked her where in the Bible it said that. Very confidently, the wife opened up her Bible and said: "It's right here—HEBREWS."

I had an opportunity to sit down and chat with our parish school librarian, Mrs. Eileen Csongradi, recently for our parish newsletter. What I found out is she is an amazing person: a wife, married to Tom, a mother of four grown kids and an active member of Visitation. She has been involved in our school for many years, as both a preschool teacher, and currently, as the school librarian.

She told me the opportunity of becoming the school librarian came about around 10 years ago. She had volunteered a couple of days a week in the library and when the job opened up, she jumped on it. She loves books and loves to read, so it was a perfect career move for her. She feels the library, which she considers the heart of the school, is the one classroom that touches all students.

About the students she told me the little ones in the younger grades love to read, that graphic novels are a popular choice with the older students and that students, with all the activities they are involved in, can be easily distracted and forget to read.

She said that with many schools and colleges doing away with libraries, she is glad to see that Visitation still has an active library and she hopes to see it continue into the future. God bless you for your service to our school, Mrs. Csongradi.



Humorous Church Marquee Signs

"Under same management for over 2000 years"

"Soul food served here."

"Tithe if you love Jesus! Anyone can honk!"

"You can give without loving but you cannot love without giving."

"Seven days without prayer makes one weak."

"Can't sleep? Try counting your blessings."

"Forbidden fruit creates many jams."

VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY CHURCH

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The Visitation Visitor

Did You Know...?

Facts About the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

By Deacon Vince Drewicz

Did you know...

- ◆ ...William Penn's "holy experiment" of religious toleration in his colony, Pennsylvania, was a refuge for persecuted Catholics?
- ◆ ...Philadelphia was part of the original Diocese of Baltimore?
- ◆ ...the Diocese of Philadelphia was formed in 1808 with Bishop Michael Egan as the 1st Bishop?
- ◆ ...there were 4 bishops of Philadelphia before it became an Archdiocese?
- ◆ ...Bishop James Wood became the 1st Archbishop of Philadelphia in 1860?
- ◆ ...there have been only 9 Archbishops in Philadelphia?
- ◆ ...Archbishop Nelson Perez, a native Philadelphian, is now the 10th Archbishop in the Archdiocese?