

# The Catholic Church Of The Visitation

8462 General Puller Highway  
P.O. Box 38

Topping, Virginia 23169

Phone:(804) 758-5160

Fax: (804)758-0676

E-Mail: office@COVTopping.org

Website: www.church-of-the-visitation.org



3rd Sunday of Advent “Gaudete”

December 17, 2023

Year B

### Church Hours

Sunday Mass 9AM

Wednesday Daily Mass 9AM

Thursday Daily Mass 9AM

Parish Office Hours 9AM-2PM

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

Pastor, Johnny Mintah-Mensah “Koo”

119 Club Drive

Hartfield, VA 23071

Phone: 804-286-9271

Please call the office about arranging Baptisms, Marriages, the RCIA Program, Sacraments of Anointing, Reconciliation, Sick Calls, the schedule for Holy Days, and our Rosary Ministry.

### PARISH MINISTRIES

Worship/Liturgy: Germaine Hayes  
Justice & Peace  
Religious Education: Zaida Wohleking  
Parish Life: Johnna Harris  
RCIA/Adult Formation: John Weidner  
Pastoral Care: Lynne Richardson  
Administration, Ray Kostaskey

### FINANCE COUNCIL

John Charbeneau  
Lisa Forte  
Debby Harriman  
Ray Kostaskey-Chairman  
Fritz Sitterding

### PARISH COUNCIL

Kevin Hayes  
Cindy Jessee-Vice Chair  
Steve Kirsch  
Helen Linden  
Roseanne Moncure-Secretary  
Cindy Powers  
Kathy Swinehart  
Mary Sychterz  
John Weidner-Chair

Church Secretary, Andrea Moore  
Webmaster/IT, Mike Dreelin

### MASS/MUSIC

Entrance: O Come, O Come Emanuel #39 (advent wreath song inside bulletin)

“Loving and Forgiving” #662

Penitential Act: page 4

Lord Have Mercy #914

Glory To God #915

### *Liturgy of the Word*

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11

Responsorial Psalm: My Soul rejoices in my God.

Second Reading: Thessalonians 5:16-24

Gospel Acclamation: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor.

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Homily: Father Koo

Nicene Creed: page 9

Prayers of the Faithful Response: Lord hear our prayer

### *Liturgy of the Eucharist*

Offertory: Bread of Life #328

Holy: #918

Memorial Acclamation: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again.

Lord’s Prayer: page 26

Lamb of God: #923

Communion: Waiting in Silence #51

Meditation: Lo How A Rose E'er Blooming #94

Recessional: Ready The Way #63



### December Birthdays

1st-Tom Shoemaker, 4th-Mike Ballato, 5th-Louise Petralia,  
8th-Frank Lohr, 12th-Jerry Suyes, 16th-Cindy Powers,  
17th-Ivony Kennedy, 18th-Mary Dorman & Lynne McMurtrie,  
19th-Lois Kramb, 22nd-Linda Gray, 23rd-Christine Williams,  
24th-Elena Wunder, 25th-Colleen Hoffman, 26th-Tom Hawksworth  
& Debbie McNeil, 27th-Patricia Figueroa & Betsy Brown, 31st-Doug Olsen.

If you would like to add your name to the Birthday/Anniversary list please contact the office.



### December Anniversaries

1st-Chuck & Carol Walsh, 8th-Robert & Paula Wilson,  
14th-Bob & Ingrid Borden, 22nd-Branch & Michele Meanley,  
30th-Bill & Donna Brandl

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Today-3rd Sunday in Advent-Gaudete Sunday  
December 24th-4th Sunday of Advent 9am  
Sing-a-long/Pageant 6:30pm/Christmas Eve Mass 7pm  
December 25th-Christmas Day Mass 9am  
December 31st-Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph  
January 1st-Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother Of God  
January 7th-Epiphany of the Lord  
January 14th-2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time  
January 21st-3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time  
January 28th-4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR!

### THIS WEEKS ASSIGNMENTS: December 17, 2023

Sacristy Duty: Jessee

Community Leader: Harriman

Altar Server: Dorman

Lectors: Kostaskey/Dreelin

Eucharistic Ministers: Hosts: Wolski

Chalice: Marcil/Richardson/Donovan/Harvey

Music: Meanley

Counters: Tutak/Harvey

### NEXT WEEKS ASSIGNMENTS: December 24, 2023

Sacristy Duty: Harvey

Community Leader: Hayes

Altar Server: Smith

Lectors: Sherwood/Sychterz

Eucharistic Ministers: Hosts: Wolski

Chalice: Harvey/ Seay/TBD

Music: McCormack

Counters: Harris/Hollingsworth

### OFFERTORY COLLECTION from December 10, 2023

Collection:	\$ 3,130
Second Collection:	\$
Total Offertory Collection Year to Date	\$ 60,512
Total Budget Projection:	\$ 57,280
Loan Balance	\$ 146,187

Our second collection today is for Catholic Charities.

We signed the following principal checks this week:  
\$805 November electricity.



### LEGACY

By including the church in your estate plan, you are securing the future of our parish. Making a legacy gift to our congregation doesn't have to be difficult.



It is as easy as making the church the beneficiary of all or part of one of your retirement accounts (traditional IRA, 401(k), 403(b), etc.). You can do the same thing with a life insurance policy.

The process is simple and costs you nothing: Just contact your plan administrator or insurance representative and request a new beneficiary designation form. In many cases the form will be completed and mailed to you for your signature. No lawyer fees, no complicated processes. It's something you could do this week!

### RECURRING EVENTS



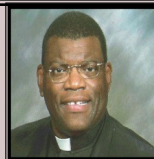
Weekly-Sunday 8:30am-New Worship Area Rosary (Cindy Jessee)  
Weekly-Thursday 9:30am-Women's Group (Louise Petralia)  
1st-Thursday of the month-Adoration 9:30am-10:30am (Cindy Jessee)  
2nd-Monday of the month-Visitation Singers 9:30am (Carol McCormack)  
3rd-Wednesday of the month-K of C meeting starts 5:15pm (Al Langer)

**SUPPORTER OF  
OUR SCHOLARSHIP**

Vera & John England  
Christine & Peggy Williams  
Kathy Kauffman  
Tommy & Donna Lange  
John & Diane Weidner  
Mike & Gretchen Borzelleca  
Charles & Louise Hartz  
Jim Angell  
Terry Skovera  
Don Tyrrell  
Norbert & Kathryn Bliley  
Dan & Linda Peterson  
Frank & Terry Sisto  
Gene & Anne Wolski

**FATHER JOHN BODDIE SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

In memory of our pastor and friend, Fr. John Boddie, from whom flowed love and kindness to all who knew him. May his soul rest in peace. Money from these ads are used as scholarships given to the youth of our church.



Please make your checks payable to  
**THE FR. JOHN BODDIE SCHOLARSHIP FUND.**

Checks and ads can be deposited in the church office. The charge per space is \$100.  
Thank you for your continued support. **The Scholarship Committee**

Website for scholarship application: [www.church-of-the-visitation.org](http://www.church-of-the-visitation.org)

Application deadline: **Early March 2024**

In memory of  
**Mollie McMurtrie**  
my long time friend.  
I will miss you.  
**JoAnn Nolte**

In loving memory of  
**Joseph H. Nolte Jr.**



Forever,  
**JoAnn**

**Advent Candle Lighting Song**

Light the Advent Candle three.  
Think of happy harmony.  
Angels singing "Peace on earth"  
At the Savior's blessed birth.



Candle, candle, burning bright,  
Shining in the cold winter night.  
Candle, candle, burning bright,  
Fill our hearts with Advent light.

**CHRISTMAS SOCIAL THANKS**

A big thanks to all who made this event a huge success. Many members contributed to its success and for fear of leaving someone out who did, we will refrain from listing all the wonderful helpers. We do however desire to recognize the Knights who contributed rosaries made by their wives and books explaining the Rosary to our children and Roseanne who did the centerpieces. Even Santa showed up and was awesome.



**ADMIN NOTE**



As we continue to improve our new email address, we have issued the following address for those parishioners desiring to contact Ray: [admin@covtopping.org](mailto:admin@covtopping.org)

**2024 ENVELOPES**

Our 2024 envelopes are available for pickup in the Narthex. For parishioners who are exclusive e-givers, we have not published envelopes for you. For these parishioners who use e-giving intermittently, we have published envelopes for you to use as appropriate.



**ADVENT REMINIDERS**

For those who desire to engage in a 6 minute reflection on the infancy narrative of Luke, please take home a blue book for your pleasure. They are located in the Narthex.



**SECOND COLLECTION**

Our second collection today is to benefit the work of Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia (CCEVA) in the Hampton Roads region. The collection comprises most of the financial support that CCEVA receives from the Diocese and is critical to our ability to respond to the needs of our community.

**GAUDETE SUNDAY "JOY"**

The color of the Season of Advent is violet. In order to distinguish between Advent and Lent, the bluer hues of violet may be used. Rose colored vesture will be worn on the Third Sunday of Advent, which is termed Gaudete Sunday.

What is special about the Third Sunday of the Church's history? This Sunday has a special name: "Gaudete" Sunday. On this day the season of Advent shifts its focus. For the first two weeks of Advent, the focus can be summed up in the phrase, "The Lord is coming." But beginning with Gaudete Sunday, the summary might be, "The Lord is near." This shift is marked by a lighter mood and a heightened sense of joyous anticipation. Liturgically, the colors lighten as well. The priest usually wears rose colored vestments, a hue seen only on Gaudete Sunday and Laetare Sunday in Lent. On this day, we light the third candle of the Advent wreath, which is also rose-colored, or if you prefer, pink.

Why is the third Sunday of Advent known as Gaudete Sunday? Its name is taken from the entrance antiphon of the Mass, which is:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.  
Indeed, the Lord is near.

This is a quotation from Philippians 4:4-5, and in Latin, the first word of the antiphon is Gaudete (Latin, "rejoice" it's also pronounced with three syllables: gau-de-te).

**SING-A-LONG**

One of the features of our Christmas Eve sing-a-long (starting at 6:30pm) is the Children's pageant, which will occur concurrently. This is a change from the past when the pageant took place during the Mass.

**ATTENTION TO DETAIL**

Recently, we have encountered several instances of the misuse of utilities or a failure to safeguard the premises, after a parish entity, group, or even an individual has used our building. (Please view our November electricity bill in the financial section).

Notably, lights are left on, the heat is left on high or air conditioning set low, or an outside door left open.

If you are using the building after normal office hours, (or the last one to leave), please be vigilant about these things and ensure we have a secure building that's not lighted, heated, or cooled unnecessarily.

We all share a responsibility to shepherd our resources.

Thank you

Take Home Lesson

December 17, 2023

**Prepare the Way of the Lord**

During this Liturgical Year B which we are just beginning, the Gospel readings will be primarily from Mark. Mark's account is the shortest and the earliest written of the four Gospels, starting with seven Greek words a first century Jewish person would find especially bold and startling: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God." (Mark 1:1) The "good news" story that Mark will tell is radically different from the long line of stories of teachers and prophets familiar to that first century Jewish person.

As with the other two liturgical years that draw Gospel readings primarily from Matthew or Luke, there will be several Sunday Gospel readings during this year that are drawn from the Gospel according to John, and today's reading is from the prologue of John's Gospel.

Near the beginning of all four Gospels, the Evangelists feature John the Baptist and quote Isaiah: "A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the Lord." (Isaiah 40:3)

While the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke begin by listing Jesus' human ancestors and the narrative of his human birth, the Gospels according to Mark and John announce Jesus' divine nature from the very beginning.

Today's Gospel reading, like last week's from the very beginning of the Gospel according to Mark, also emphasizes the role of John the Baptist in preparing the way of the Lord.

We hear that John the Baptist was sent by God to testify to the light. John is clearly characterized as "not the light," thus highlighting Jesus as the light to whom John is a witness. This is reinforced later in John's Gospel when Jesus states, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12)

Bishop Robert Barron offers this commentary of today's Gospel:

"From time immemorial, God has sent messengers, spokespersons. Think of all the prophets and patriarchs of Israel, indeed every sage, philosopher, artist or poet who has communicated something of God's truth and beauty. All of these could be characterized as witnesses to the light."

"The point is that the one to whom the Baptist bears witness is someone qualitatively different - not one more bearer of the Word, however impressive, but the Word himself. This counters the tendency - as prevalent today as in the ancient world - to domesticate Jesus and turn him into one more in a long line of prophets and seers."

The beginnings of the Gospels according to John and Mark help us reflect upon this week's question:

***What is different about Jesus that sets him apart from just another teacher, prophet, or seer?***



Developing a Vision for The Catholic Church of The Visitation

Father Koo and the Parish Council, along with a few other parishioners, have been discussing and developing a Vision for our parish. Our beautiful worship space would not be what it is today without the whole parish working toward a vision. Now that that space is built, what is our vision? What shall we accomplish or what shall we become?

Vision gives a sense of purpose and meaning, providing focus, energy, and willingness to risk. It points the way into the future that God envisions for all of us. Visionary people grow through knowledge of the Scripture, and reflection on the Word helps them to discern what God calls them to be and to do.

Consider this visionary image of a community of believers as an example of goodness, presented by Jesus to his disciples and embraced by the early church:

*“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)*

The early church envisioned itself as a light to the world. Through its actions of justice and service, it would reveal the presence of the God who had acted powerfully through Jesus.

Our vision is informed by our parish Mission Statement:

*Our mission is to prayerfully study, proclaim, and live the Word of God; celebrate the Eucharist; and serve the local community.*

Please prayerfully consider your response to the questions on the Vision Survey Form, especially these two:

- What is something you would love to see happen at Visitation in the next 5 years?
- What is a big goal you have for our parish over the next 20 years?

If writing is not your strength, please contact a member of the parish council and talk through your responses. We will be listening.

If you are able to volunteer your time and talent for more in-depth work on our parish vision, please contact John Weidner, by cell 240.780.1872 or by email [jaweidnerl@verizon.net](mailto:jaweidnerl@verizon.net).

*“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18)*



Please pray for the following:



Nennie Lennon, Mary Elbourn, Tony Kurek, Audry Sidoli, & Jodie Riley

PARISHIONERS

Lynne Dreelin, Paula Wilson, John & Carol McCormack, Lynne McMurtrie, Barbara Smith, The Hollingsworth family, Don Tyrrell, David Rector, Lorraine Kirsch, Tom Shoemaker, Tom & Bea Foley, Jack & Laurie King, Shelley Katsuki, Donna Thompson, Brendan O'Brien, Spike & Becky Nunn, Lois & Skip Kramb, Marianne Krop, Michele Meanley, Louise Petralia, Grace Anderson, Natalie Smith, Pat Paul, Margaret Hock, Steve Kirsch, Marilynne Cerullo, Tom Hawksworth, Nancy Wirth, Bettie Hodge, Linda Gray, Pat Reamy, Lynn Vajda

FAMILY OF PARISHIONERS

Lynn Messina, Gene Sullivan, Dr. Nicole Touchet, Gloria Powell, Chloe Pearson, Barbara Daly, Mia Angelis, the Angelis family, Debbie Stockhorst, Susie Reber, Joanne Ferrari, Jill Shores, John Gahagan, Todd Bowmam, Diane Petralia, Anthony Pace, Mildred Bair, Mary Levine, Susie Maddrich, Carolyn Harvey, Eric Currie, Mike & Katy Shea, Rhonda Wells, Polly Beall, Dick Patton, Sue and Lisa Ferrari, Barbara & Ron Burkhardt, John Calvin Barnard, Joseph Borzelleca, Andy Hetzer, Sandy Alter, Ryan Jessee, Larry Hersh, Shirley Schultz, Dominick Perry.

FRIENDS OF PARISHIONERS

Allison Miksenas, Cynthia Freeburger, Mike Gorin, Carroll Brown, Robin Brown, Boyd Newhouse, Bill Benson, Mike McCullean, Delores Barry, Jim Durburo, Richard & Sharon Fitts, Karen Armstrong, Kenny Marshall, Ann Chatos, Genie Kauffman, Page Wittkamp, Pattie Sobieski, Cliff Dean, Christopher Hutton, Mason Goodrich, Olga Hall, Elizabeth Panzer, Tom Sennott, Gary Campbell, Jim & Inga Peddicord, David Gunn, Hunter Jacobs, Kathy Goyne, Peg Meushaw, Rita Blommel, Linda Cryer, Allen Hines, Tyra Freed.

*If you need to add to the prayer list or would like a Mass intention please call the office, email, or leave a note in the box outside the office. Remember to put family or friend by their name. You may offer Mass intentions for the living as well.*

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

If you donated to the special collection for Christmas flowers and wish to honor a loved one, please email the office with the names of your loved ones or drop off a note with the names. The names will be published in the Christmas Bulletin.

A HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEW PARISHIONERS



Jacob & Kimberly Lovejoy  
182 Barricks Mill Road  
Topping, VA 23169  
Jake: 315-391-3502  
jacoblovejoy40@yahoo.com  
Kim: 315-246-2040  
kimgilday13@icloud.com



OUR LADY OF THE BAY COUNCIL 11210 OF MATHEWS AND MIDDLESEX COUNTIES

K of C is a not-for-profit organization whose principles are Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism.

Donations support:

Gloucester, Mathews, Northern Neck & Middlesex Free Health Clinics (KOVAR) Virginians with intellectual disabilities, the VA Veterans Services- Golf Tournament, Families in need, Hands Across Middlesex & Mathews, and The Father John Boddie Scholarship Fund.

Activities that provide funding:

Pancake Breakfast, Italian Feast, St. Pat's Dinner, KOVAR Collection, Dave Marchant Golf Tournament.

We are active participants in many ministries to include Alter servers, Choir members, Collection counter, Community Leaders, Eucharistic Ministers, Parish Council Members and Ushers.

The KOC meet at 5:15pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Church of the Visitation. We start with the Rosary.

**All are welcome!**

**Any questions call Our Grand Knight-Al Langer at 804-815-1328.**



*"Dedicated to Helping Our Neighbors Celebrate Every Life"*

Faulkner Funeral Homes & Cremation Services

PO Box 228

Saluda, VA 23149

bhogge@faulknerfuneralhcs.com

804-758-2315



In Loving Memory of Bobby Warren

Your Family  
Arlene,  
L.C., Faye,  
Caitlyn & Courtlyn

*"Gone but not to be forgotten"*

In memory of

*Lillian M. Reiffel,*

Teacher



PRAYERS  
MEMORIES  
LOVE  
Jerry  
McMurtrie

SAINT THERESA OF CALCUTTA'S "ANYWAY PRAYER"

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered; forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; be kind anyway. If you are successful, you will win some false friends and true enemies; succeed anyway. If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; be honest and frank anyway. What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; build it anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; be happy anyway. The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; do good anyway. Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; give the world the best you've got anyway. You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God; it was never between you and them anyway.

**Breathe in Love,  
Exhale Peace.**



In Loving Memory Of  
**David E. Brinkley**

In Loving Memory of  
Vincent "Poppy" &  
Vinnie Recupido

The Recupido &  
Hollingsworth Families

*"The Retirement Plan Of Christ Was His Passion. Is Yours The Same?"*

Josiah Reffo



In Loving Memory Of  
Alma and Fritz Sitterding

Supporting Our Youth


**TO SUPPORT OUR YOUTH, THEIR DREAMS, & OUR FUTURE.**

*Lynne & Gary Richardson*



Thanks for always supporting us in everything we do!  
Emily & Anna 

**"DOC" JONES** Since 1970  
Pre-Tested New & Used Auto & Truck Parts  
-Junk Cars Removed-  
Hours: 9AM-1PM  
Closed Monday/Sunday/Holidays/Rainy Days  
Route 3, Box 205, Hartfield, VA 23071  
Phone:(804) 776-6900 FAX:(804) 776-9330  
Toll Free: 1-800-552-4035  
-Clarence D. Jones, Prop.-

WE WISH OUR YOUTH  
CLEAR SAILING  
  
DEBBY AND ED HARRIMAN



In Loving Memory of  
Jack Petralia

Michael W. Garrett Theresa R. Pace  
Owner Owner



SHORE SHINE LLC  
"GET YOUR SHINE ON!"  
804-832-6080 Licensed & Insured

FREE ESTIMATES

- Soft Washing
- House Washing
- Roof Washing
- Gutter Cleaning
- Gutter Brightening
- Surface Cleaning

Commercial & Residential  
shoreshinellc@gmail.com

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."  
-Benjamin Franklin  
Tom & Cindy Jessee

In support of our Future Leaders  
"Our Youth"  
The Kirsch Family

FOR OUR CHURCH KITTIES  
Choco, Tabby & Rufus  


In Memory of  
Thomas R. Shepherd, Jr. 8/28/1943 to 3/18/2020  
Thomas R. Shepherd III 11/05/1970 to 3/31/2022

In Loving Memory of  
Bob and Catherine Borden  
Fred and Betty Meister

We Support The Youth Scholarship  
John & Carol McCormack  


MUSTARDSEEDMARKETVA.COM  
804-684-5389


Nothing Artificial Farm Fresh  
Real Food Eat well Live well




Mustard Seed Natural Market  
4858 GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL HWY.  
HAYES, VA 23072



M-F: 10AM-6PM  
SAT: 10AM-6PM  
SUN: CLOSED

In Memory of  
Bob Hartman  
My Love of My Life  
Jenny



In loving memory of  
Marty Hawksworth  
Tom & Sharon



   
In loving memory of our Father Bob Nash

In Loving Memory of  
"Lee Hollingsworth"  
We love and miss you!  
Barb & Tori

BY THE BAY  
STAINED GLASS  
Al Langer ..... 804-815-1328

Thank you for supporting our education  
Michael, Colin, Kathryn,  
John & Kevin Walsh


Frank & Gerrie Lohr  
Supporting  
Higher Education


In Loving Memory of  
Morgan Wells  
Forever,  
Marianne



Helping Our Youth Build Their Future  
Limerick II  
Limerick II Enterprises  
Construction Management Services  
Tom Shoemaker  
In Memory of JoAn


  
Kenneth Anderson  
"Say not in grief 'he is no more' but in thankfulness that he was".  


  
Lewis Forte


  
C. Ben Lennon, D.D.S.  
Mathews Dentistry 804-725-9485  
Deltaville Dentistry 804-776-9484

Best wishes to all the youth at Church of the Visitation  
Mary Virginia & Tom Bliley

BE A KNIGHT  
Contact: Grand Knight  
Al Langer  
804-815-3515  
OUR LADY OF THE BAY  
COUNCIL 11210  

In Loving Memory  
"Ricky" David Richard Suyes III & Marie M. Suyes



Ballato  
LAW FIRM, PC  
• Business Law and Collections  
• Landlord Tenant Law  
• Simple Wills & Powers of Attorney  
• Traffic Violations  
Michael B. Ballato, Attorney  
~ Serving Clients Since 1980 ~  
3721 Westerre Parkway Henrico, VA 23233  
(804) 433-1060  
www.BallatoLaw.com

In memory of  
Michael Tebbs Nunn &  
Douglas Arthur Nelson Nunn  
"Our Beloved Sons"  
Spike and Becky Nunn

True Value  
HURD'S, INC.  
Where Shopping Is Fun  
Deltaville, VA 23043 (804) 776-9241