



The Neumann News

St. John N. Neumann Assembly 1763

Bowie, Maryland



Volume XXIII, Issue 8 In the Spirit of God's Beloved Angels, We are Men for Others February 2018



Faithful Associate Friar's Report Deacon Andrew J. Nosacek

*Lord, You are merciful to all,
and hate nothing you have created.
You overlook the sins of men
and bring them to repentance.*

Ash Wednesday, Antiphon
Wis. 11:24-25, 27

Imagine! Ash Wednesday this year falls on February 14th, the day on which, under the tutelage of St. Valentine, we celebrate and exchange mutual love. (It is also normally the feastday of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the ones who brought God's love to the Slavic people.) It is this year a timely reminder of Lenten Love.

As we dream of Spring and the blessed psalms of Easter, let us begin this February reflection with a quick glance at the opening prayer of the Mass on that special second Wednesday of this month: *As we begin the discipline of Lent, make this season holy by our self-denial [and, let us add, by our self-giving love].*

We read in that marvelous little missalette, *Magnificat*: *"When Jesus came proclaiming the Gospel of God, Christ's first action was to call men from the sea to preach in the world. Nothing convinces us of the compassion, the love, the kindness, and the goodness of God like the witness of these humble believers who leave nets, boats, and father to follow Jesus."*

Let us follow after them in prayers and deeds.

As we do, let us keep in mind the thoughts of Saint Augustine: *No one ought to rely on his own feelings when he speaks out, not be confident in his own strength when he undergoes temptation. For whenever we speak as prudently as we should, our wisdom comes from Him, and whenever we endure evils courageously, our long-suffering comes from Him.* (Sermons 276, 1-2).

To begin at the beginning, before one takes on the physical abstinence one needs to take up private spiritual sustenance. In a pre-Lenten reading, the great pastor St. Francis de Sales advises that we must set our own

"vocation" in the "context of devotion." This will make our cares "more peaceful, mutual love between husband and wife becomes more faithful, the service we owe our [nation] becomes more faithful, and our work, no matter what it is, becomes more pleasant and agreeable."

That is to say, we begin with prayer. For this we have much help in many directions. Daily Mass, if possible, is a sure start. But devotion in the context of St. Francis is a private matter. One can set aside one hour a day for a private 'meeting' with the Lord in our home. Countless personal prayer books are a ready aid. There are the inspired writings of the declared Saints, especially those whom we publically celebrate during this Season, the Servite Founders, St. Peter Damian, St. Polycarp, St. John of God, St. Patrick. Many thousands, especially clergy, religious, and countless members of "Third Orders" rely daily on the Church's *Liturgy of the Hours*. There are many fine devotional writings: may one recommend the 'aid' of The Blessed Mother found in St. Louis Marie de Montfort's *Preparation for Total Consecration, or St. Francis de Sales's Introduction to the Devout Life*.

Eventually it is just the Lord and I, for a brief timeless moment!

We can chat. Sitting up in our favorite armchair, looking up, we can begin our devotion, our visit, reflecting on that spirit-warming hymn based on Isaiah's reflection (Is. 41.10):

*I will come to you in silence, I will lift you from your fear.
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice,
Be still and know I am here.
Do not be afraid, I am with you. I have called you each
by name.
Come and follow me, I will bring you home; I love you,
and you are mine.*

We close this reflection with Ash Wednesday's Mass closing prayer:

Lord, help us to resist temptation by our Lenten works of charity and penance. By this sacrifice may we be prepared to celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ our Savior and be cleansed from sin and renewed in spirit.

**THANK YOU LORD FOR ALL YOUR
GRACES AND BLESSING**

Faithful Navigator's Report

Rob VanRite

Worthy Sir Knights, when things go wrong, it is a natural inclination to try to find out the cause. After some soul searching (and some slight weeping and gnashing of teeth), the answer presented itself. In a nutshell, things went wrong because of the "C" Word: C being "commitment." The Renewal of Obligations ceremony conducted last month was announced at numerous prior meetings. It was the subject of two mass emails from the Faithful Navigator (FN). It was announced at two previous Council meeting and included in two months' worth Accolade articles and those in the Neumann News. When the smoke cleared, only ONE MEMBER of the Assembly was in attendance for the Ceremony. Knowing him as I do, the FN does not embarrass easily, but on that January night he was embarrassed in the extreme. The Worthy Former Master conducting the ceremony had to run through some hoops just to make the event. The same story goes for the District Marshal whose generous availability despite a very full schedule led to his participation. As Former Master Winfrey said in his remarks, "We are not required to renew our obligations to the Order . . . but it is a good thing to do." For better or worse, email is now the vehicle most used to communicate. It's not great, a phone call or face-to-face contact would be better; but, in these times in which we live, not always practical. A roster of the Assembly lists 123 Active members. Personally, the FN has never seen more than about twenty at a meeting and perhaps double that at events like the Pot Luck supper. His mother always told him ". . . anything worth doing is worth doing well." Is attending meetings and participating in the life of the Assembly worth doing? She wasn't original or insightful by nature, but 60 years later what she said is still the FN's guiding principal. Did your mother ever tell you that?



**Please Pray for Those
Serving US Today**

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Son of Bob & Jeanne Burkhardt
Stationed in Washington State

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Commander of Seals in Iraq et al.

MAJ John Marshall, US Army
Son-in-Law of Angelo Troisi
Stationed in Afghanistan

M/SGT Brian McMullen, USMC
Son of Jeff & Lorna McMullen
Stationed in Twentynine Palms, CA

CMSG Steve Poiani, USAF
Son of Claudio & Eva Poiani
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Son of Jerry Scheidhauer
Assigned to U.S. Capitol from Pentagon

Col Michael Sierco, USAF
Son of Mike & Mary Jo Sierco
Air Force War College, AL

Lt Dawn Weaver, USN
Grandchild of Bruno & Martha Seppi
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*"The Nation Which Forgets Its Defenders Will Be Itself Forgotten." -
Calvin Coolidge*

ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

Faithful Friar

Fr. Paul Sparklin (410) 721-5770

Faithful Associate Friar

SK Deacon Andy Nosacek (301) 262-5755

Faithful Navigator SK

Rob Van Rite PGK (301) 805-0091

Faithful Captain

SK Bill Saperro (410) 721-9163

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First Year SK Ray DeVous, PFN (301) 731-0073

Second Year SK Thomas Torrell, PFN (301) 262-8062

Third Year SK Joe Massimini, PFN (301) 997-0402

Editor *The Neumann News* and Webmaster SK George Vincent (301)
249-6399



**PLEASE PRAY FOR ALL OUR
DEPARTED BROTHERS AND
FAMILY MEMBERS OF SIR
KNIGHTS, ESPECIALLY,
FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK
AND RECOVERING,**

If you know of a SK or SK's family member who is ill, has died, or is in need of our prayers, please contact the Faithful Pilot.



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Dr. Natalia Nosacek Bassford

1329 W. Central Avenue

Davidsonville, MD 21035

410-798-5222

Dr. Ivan J. Nosacek, P.A. Family Foot Care

North Oak Professional Park

3006 Mitchellville Road

Bowie, MD 20716

301-390-3338

Dennis Doyle

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The St. John N. Neumann Assembly of Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus was established on August 12, 1978. It serves two Bowie Councils: **Sacred Heart #2577** and **Fr. Peter C. Boyle #12254**. *The Neumann News* is the Assembly's monthly newsletter, which is distributed on or about the first of each month. Send any correspondence to the Faithful Navigator, Boswell Hall, 6111 Columbian Way, Bowie, MD 20715.

Visit our website <http://www.kofc2577.org>

