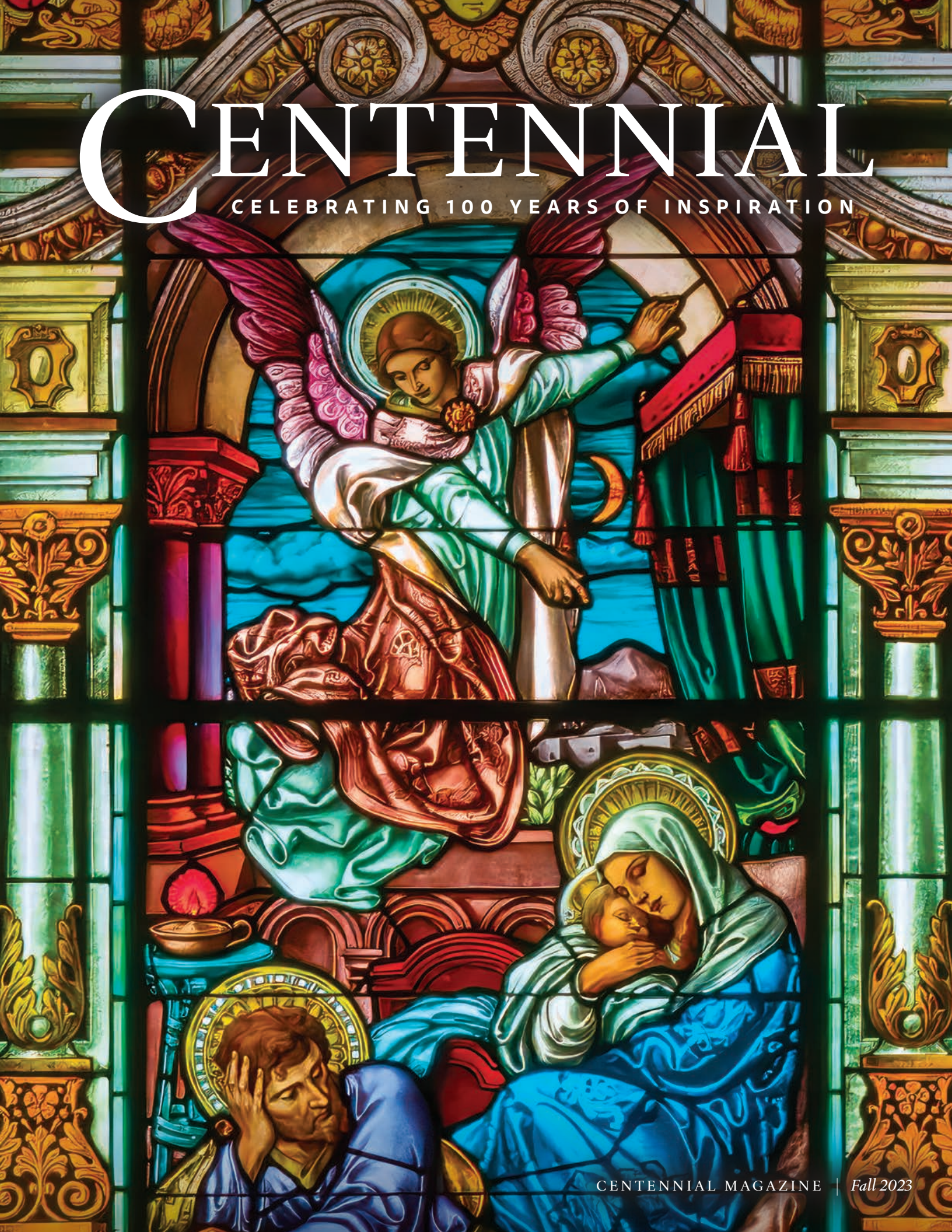
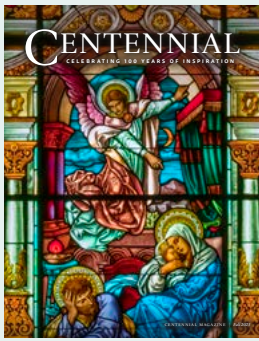


CENTENNIAL

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF INSPIRATION





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David J. Kersten

CREATIVE TEAM

Juliana Conidi
Tom Lucia

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Cindy Lee
Sister Dorothy Mueller, *osf*
Jane Rose

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A Father Baker Legacy

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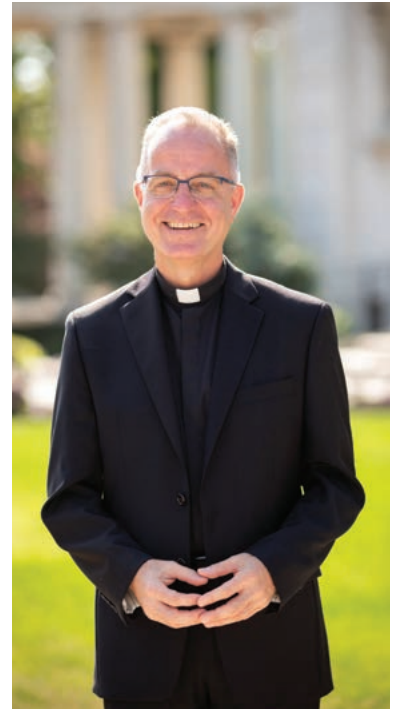
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About the Cover: The scene depicted here of the Angel visiting Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus is from one of the many beautiful stained-glass windows you can view at OLV National Shrine & Basilica.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Recently, we celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Victory. It was a glorious and momentous occasion honoring Our Lady. Many of you had a special presence in that celebration by attending the liturgy in person, by joining us in prayer at home, or by returning your piece of fabric (from a direct-mail appeal earlier in the year), creating a beautiful altar cloth used on this special feast day.



IN THE WORDS OF FATHER BAKER:

“As the feast of Our Lady of Victory again comes 'round, our hearts are filled with joy and tender gratitude, realizing how good she has been to us all during the past year.”

HER FEAST DAY IS THE ROOT
OF OUR HERITAGE HERE AT OLV.

Our Lady was a constant source of inspiration and hope in Father Baker's life and his ministry of service to others. And to this day, she continues to motivate and guide us as we strive to meet the ever-changing needs and challenges of today's society.

There is no question that these are challenging times. To cope with the many uncertainties facing us, we need hope just as the earth needs rain. Our Lady is a model of hope for us and our Church. Her whole life was a journey of hope. Mary trusted that God would do what he had promised. So did Father Baker and so do I!

I see hope in the eyes of the fragile whose lives are nurtured and changed through the programs offered at OLV Human Services. Hope can be seen in the eyes of those finding peace and comfort when visiting our magnificent Basilica. And the blessing of hope can be recognized in the inquisitive eyes of our children in our school settings and those attending Camp Turner.

In this issue of *Centennial* magazine, you will read about many hoped-filled experiences and occurrences. Because of you, hope surrounds me and all of us here at OLV. Thank you for being a sign of hope to those who have lost it.

May Our Lady of Victory continue to be a beacon of hope as she guides you in your life. And may the God fill you with joy and peace so that you may abound in faith, hope, and love!

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. David G. LiPuma
Pastor/Rector, OLV National Shrine & Basilica
President, OLV Organizations

CEO'S MESSAGE

Each November, not-for-profit organizations across the nation pause to celebrate National Philanthropy Day and to acknowledge the profound impact generous donors and leaders have made on their communities.

Rooted in the Greek, *philos*, meaning love, and *anthropos*, meaning humanity, philanthropy literally means “love of humanity.”

While charity tends toward providing immediate relief to individuals in need, philanthropy, when properly understood, tends toward serving the needs of others over the long term.

While OLV does, in fact, address the immediate needs of children and families throughout our community, much of what we do requires long-term support. Every day, our dedicated and compassionate staff members care for families who are suffering from the painful and persistent effects of trauma and challenged with behavioral health disabilities and challenges.

The healing, if and when it occurs, happens through the commitment and cooperation of our clients and team members. The programmatic resources that facilitate this healing are provided in part from many, many generous benefactors here in Western New York and across the United States. That's YOU!

As you peruse the following pages, I hope an image of hopeful futures emerges. Know that the entire OLV community remains grateful to you for your support which makes possible the advancement of Father Baker's legacy of caring.



With deepest gratitude,

David J. Kersten
Chief Executive Officer, OLV Charities

A GIFT *Returned*

With all of the restoration efforts underway within OLV National Shrine & Basilica over the last several years, it would be understandable if someone may have missed the newest addition to the Basilica's lower level: a new altar in the Sisters of Saint Joseph Chapel.

The beautiful marble piece is a gift from the Dominican Sisters as they moved from the East Side of Buffalo to Ohio. When looking for a new home for the altar, the Basilica was an easy decision.

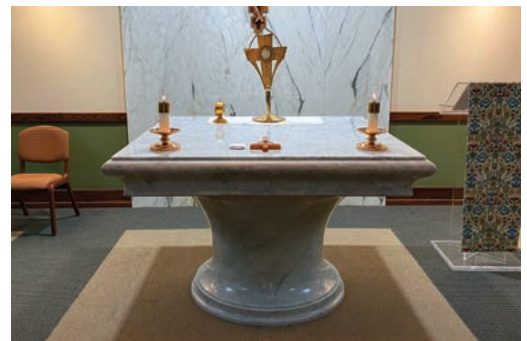
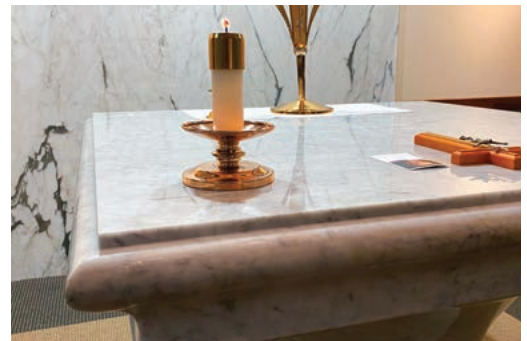
"The sisters had a great devotion to Father Baker," explained Jon Trabucco, a Third Order Dominican himself, who led the effort. "He was an early advocate for them and helped in several ways when they arrived in Buffalo more than 100 years ago, so they wanted to give the gift back after all these years."

Installation of the altar was a tedious and delicate process. The most difficult part was getting its 300-pound base into the Basilica, which had to be done on its side as it was too wide to fit through the doors. Once inside, a crew carefully stood it back up and lowered the base to the ground. They then cemented the mensa, the flat top of the altar, to the base.



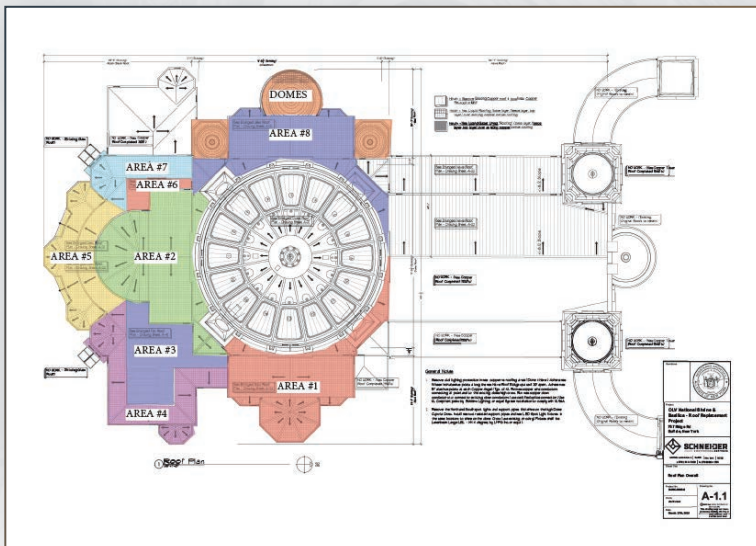
Scan the QR code with your smartphone to watch a short video about the altar and its installation and don't forget to look for it in the chapel located in the lower level of the Basilica.

By Jane Rose



Polishing the Crown JEWEL

OLV National Shrine & Basilica is often referred to as the “crown jewel” of Father Baker’s “City of Charity.” And for the tens of thousands of visitors who come through its doors each year, it is, indeed, a gem. That’s why the many restoration projects that have been completed, are underway, or are being planned, are so important.



A FACILITY ASSESSMENT REPORT was created a few years ago, laying out a comprehensive, multi-year restoration and maintenance plan.

WINDOW FRAME RESTORATION/ REPLACEMENT - Every one of the 200+ stained-glass windows will be touched up, including restoring and replacing century-old metal frames that are falling apart.



ROOFING SYSTEM REPLACEMENT - Work on replacing copper sections of the roof and dome that fail, leading to interior damage, is underway and expected to continue over the next few years.

PLASTER REPAIR & PAINTING - Once the roof leaks have been addressed, the work of repairing and repainting the interior plaster ceilings and arches will begin.



FLOOR RESTORATION - The project of restoring all of the Basilica's cracked and worn floors was recently completed.

Other completed projects include the renovation of the community rooms in the Shrine's lower level and the installation of new fire alarm, sound, and livestream systems.



To learn more about these exciting projects, scan the QR code with your smartphone or go to olvbasilica.org/restore.



Dante Richardson (left) with PipeDreamers co-founder Jodi Anderson Jr. (right)

The CHANGE- MAKER

Making a difference in one's community is not for the faint-hearted. The story of a local changemaker, one of OLV's own, took many twists and turns, but, eventually, came to its current chapter: a life that has been transformed and is dedicated to helping those in need.

Dante Richardson's book opens in 1993. He was born on the east side of Buffalo to an unknown father and a mother who had a bad drug addiction, one that forced her into prison. His turbulent home life as a youngster meant Dante ended up in several different foster homes. During this time, he became rebellious. Frequent outbursts and behavioral struggles required help and he was referred to OLV Human Services (OLVHS), at which residential programs are available for young people like Dante. The transition wasn't always easy, though.

"The first couple of years were rough. It was hard, but I could see I was surrounded by good kids that had come from bad backgrounds," he said of the time. "But I always felt and appreciated the concept of family."

One day on campus, a staff member who was running the agency's workforce development program, WAY (Work Appreciation for Youth), saw promise in him and turned him on to a youth mentorship opportunity. Through it, Dante took part in internship programs with Buffalo-based attorney Michael Taheri, M&T Bank, and Morgan Stanley. Upon successful completion of high school, he started his own company, an entertainment promotion agency. Seemingly, a happy ending to his story was inevitable.

"I kind of got lost in my business," he remembered. "I started hanging around with the wrong people, made some bad decisions, and it landed me in prison."

Never losing sight of the brighter future he desired, though, Dante took college classes while he was behind bars.

He returned to Buffalo after his release and then took some accelerated coursework focused on creating and designing smartphone apps at the prestigious Stanford University.

His attraction to the technology field was an easy one to explain: Dante saw opportunities everywhere. "Every company needs technology. It's a field you can't run away from. It's everywhere," he said.

From prison to Silicon Valley, he was now a tech guru. He won an award in Stanford's Digital Design Challenge, and while there, started the PipeDreamers Foundation with some friends. PipeDreamers is a non-profit organization that helps disadvantaged and at-risk youth by training them in technology, and partners them with professionals who work in the field.

Currently, Dante is back in Buffalo, serving as the Chief Visionary and co-founder of Stooty Technologies, a start-up company that helps entrepreneurs and businesses manage their creative assets (digital files). He also remains focused on preparing young people for "the world of work" like traditional trade programs did back in the 1960s and 1970s. His team is particularly interested in supporting incarcerated youth and at-risk kids, helping them re-enter society with meaningful employment opportunities.

This summer, the PipeDreamers Foundation rolled out a coding program for youth attending OLVHS' Baker Hall School. The initiative gave students the opportunity to learn all aspects of technology, including coding, functionality, and design. It is expected to lead to more coursework in the future.

"I'm successful today because OLV Human Services inspired me to make a difference. And because of that, I want to give back to OLV," Dante said.

Future steps for him include developing a workforce program for adults, certified through Stanford University, and expanding the program into high schools throughout Western New York. "My ultimate goal is to bridge the gap between tech, culture, and the community with entrepreneurship and new business development."

Dante's hard times in life led him to something better. He saw life as a challenge and as an opportunity. **He is a change-maker.**

By Sister Dorothy Mueller, osf



Help is on THE WAY

{ A new program at OLV Human Services will provide much-needed assistance to hundreds of young children and families each year! }

According to the most recent statistics from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network (ADDM), one in every 36 children in the U.S. is diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This figure was 1 in 44 in 2018 and 1 in 150 in 2000!

These statistics are alarming in that they point to a growing problem. They also highlight the critical need for early identification and service provision.

At OLV Human Services (OLVHS), we take our responsibility to respond to the needs of our community very seriously. Our goal is to consistently provide timely support and services to those who are experiencing challenges in various aspects of their lives. Children and adolescents who are struggling developmentally are at the top of our list and we are working diligently toward providing access to necessary assessments and corresponding services to help them overcome these struggles.

An area of focus for us is those individuals with suspected ASD and/or related developmental disorders.

Our agency, in collaboration with generous foundations and donors, will open an Evaluation and Treatment

Center in the Spring of 2024. It is expected that the work done at this new facility will help alleviate the current 12- to 18-month waiting list for evaluation and services that exists here in Western New York.

Needless to say, the amount of time that passes before a child can receive the help he or she needs is detrimental to their overall progress. Imagine that your two-year-old child is showing early indicators of disrupted development (ex. lack of or delayed expressive language, reduced eye contact, limited social skills, possible significant behavioral issues, etc.) and the evaluation to assess these issues doesn't occur until he or she is almost four years old. These delays can have long-lasting effects.



We are committed to providing families with early access to professionals who have expertise in diagnosing and treating those with various neurodevelopmental disorders, ASD being one of those. Once it has been determined that a child is on the Autism Spectrum, OLVHS is able to provide any services that may be recommended, such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, behavioral therapy, counseling, etc.



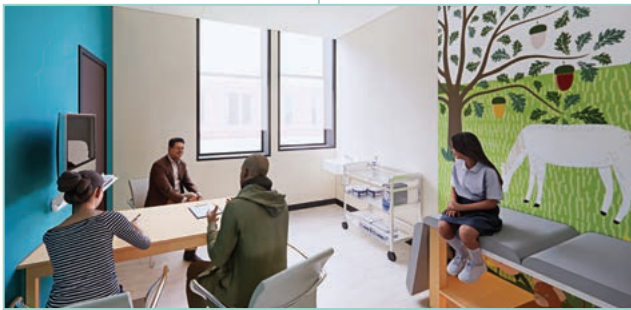


To learn more about this important project, scan the QR code here with your smartphone or go to olvhs.org/etc. For information about ASD, please visit cdc.gov/ActEarly.

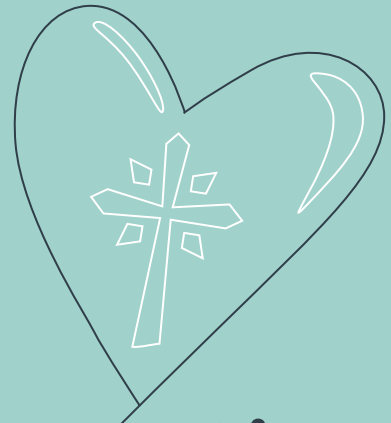
By *Cindy Lee*
Chief Executive Officer, OLV Human Services



Featured here are some renderings of what the Evaluation and Treatment Center will look like when completed.



Cindy leads OLV Human Services (OLVHS), one of the region's largest non-profit entities. OLVHS and its affiliates cared for between 10,000 and 12,000 children, teens, and adults last year through a variety of outpatient, residential, and educational programs. To learn more, visit OLVHS.org.



OLVHS' New REV UP CENTER *Benefits the Youth in Our Care*



In July, we cut the ribbon on the recently completed Rev Up Center on the OLV campus. Built with Father Baker's wish to help at-risk youth lead well-rounded lives in mind, this special place includes a dance/yoga studio, computer/writing workshop, kitchen, arts and crafts maker space, and a gymnasium with attached weight and exercise rooms.

Thanks to all of the generous donors who helped fund the project, as well as the Moore for Kids Foundation, the John R. Oishei Foundation, Foundation 214, and the James H. Cummings Foundation.



A WEEKEND OF FUN, FELLOWSHIP, AND NEW MEMORIES MADE!



Camp Turner celebrated 100 years this past July!

If you were one of the 250+ Camp Turner alumni who were with us on July 13th and 15th to celebrate this milestone, you know how impactful those days were.

It was a glorious celebration of Camp Turner—renewing lifelong friendships, reliving fond memories, and retelling stories of days as campers and counselors. The gathering for Happy Hour at Mr. Goodbar, the joyful celebration of the Eucharist with Bishop Fisher under the tent, and the magnificent buffet dinner were all capped off by camaraderie around the campfire.



Camp Turner has been a vital part of so many young people's lives, and will continue to significantly impact the lives of children and teenagers for years to come.

Scan the QR code or visit [OLVCharities.org/BenefitCT](https://www.olvcharities.org/BenefitCT) to donate and ensure Camp Turner is around for another 100 years!





CAMP TURNER

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

EST. 1923

YOUTH ENG

"I know the plans I have in mind for you—plans for peace, not disaster, reserving a future full of hope for you." JEREMIAH 29:11

If you are aware of the history of Venerable Nelson Baker's "City of Charity," you know that its founding principles have always been rooted in seeing to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of young people. That commitment continues today. This year, our mission has seen a surge of youthful energy and exuberance, inspiring us with hope for the future of our faith!

CAMP TURNER



It was an exciting year of growth for our campers this summer! In total, 448 young people attended Camp Turner, the second highest registration total in more than a decade. Through the generosity of donors, many new projects were completed or started, including repairs to the dining hall, the addition of a bike path, and construction of a new horse corral.

ENGAGEMENT

Two times a year, the Father Baker Museum is the location of these social events that are specifically designed to engage young adults and educate them about the saintly priest's life and legacy. Each event ends with a special tour of the Basilica.

FATHER BAKER ON TAP



WORLD YOUTH DAY: BUFFALO

In July, the OLV campus played host to a local celebration of young Catholics, World Youth Day: Buffalo. The festivities included a presentation by Joe Heschmeyer of Catholicanswers.com, Mass and confessions, food trucks, and live music by Cami Clune.





ONE OF OUR OWN

June 3, 2023, was truly a day of rejoicing as OLV parishioner Jeffrey Donovan was ordained a priest at St. Joseph Cathedral in downtown Buffalo. The very next day was just as special for him as he celebrated his first Mass as a priest here at OLV National Shrine & Basilica.

Father Jeffrey was born in South Buffalo and is one of five children. Growing up in a military family, he moved around in his early years, living at times in Massachusetts, Hawaii, and Florida before coming back to Western New York.



While in high school, he became more interested in his faith. Learning that OLV Basilica was just down the street from his home, he decided to stop by and was struck by its beauty. At the same time, his great grandmother, Eleanor, a faithful Catholic, could no longer drive to Mass. So, he would pick her up and they would attend services at the shrine regularly.

As he was prepping for a career in the military, he began to hear whispers: “You love the Church, why don’t you serve it?” That question remained in the back of Father Jeffrey’s mind as he joined the ROTC program and pursued an engineering degree at Canisius College. In his sophomore year, he became quite sure that he had a vocation. Discerning the call, he obtained a spiritual director and contacted the diocesan vocation office. That path led him to Christ the King Seminary for his theological studies and then to St. Mary’s Seminary and University in Baltimore where he received a Bachelor of Sacred Theology Degree and a Master of Divinity Degree.

“It was such a grand thing, for I could see God at work in my life,” Father Jeffrey said of that time in his life.

Through his formation and, even now, in his priestly life, three themes recur—service, self-sacrifice, and teamwork. He points to a quote from St. John Vianney that appeared on his ordination card as one he aspires to: “A priest is not for himself, but for you, the people of God, whom I serve and to whom I’m sent.”

Father Jeffrey will be working within a “family of parishes,” a relatively new concept here in Western New York. His assignments include several parishes in a region that lies just a few miles north of the Pennsylvania border. They include Immaculate Conception Parish in Wellsville, where he lives, SS. Brendan & Jude, St Mary in Bolivar, Blessed Sacrament in Andover, Holy Family of Jesus and Mary in Belmont, and St. Mary’s in Canaseraga. Additionally, Father Jeffrey will be helping out with campus ministries activities at Alfred University and Alfred State College. Distance will be challenging, but he is steadfast in his belief that he’s up to it!



“I want to share the joy of knowing God and helping others cultivate a deep relationship with him,” he said. “The joys of being a priest are the joys of the church—rejoicing, mourning and praying with the people.”

Father Jeffrey’s reflection on priestly ministry gives hope for the Church. Let us remember him in prayer as he ministers to the people of God in his new community!

By Sister Dorothy Mueller, osf

Archbishop Celebrates Ordination at OLV



Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer, archbishop of Atlanta and WNY native, ordained Father Emmanuel Wenke, OFM Conv., to the priesthood on Tuesday, Aug. 15, at OLV National Shrine & Basilica.

Archbishop Hartmayer, who served as the main celebrant for the Mass of Ordination to the Priesthood, opened his homily, “Pax et Bonum. Peace and all good. It is truly a great joy and privilege to be with you, my Franciscan family, to ordain our brother, Emmanuel, together as a people of God to welcome into our Church Universal a new priest, a priest of Jesus Christ.

“Ordination changes your being into the likeness of Christ the priest, Christ the teacher, Christ the shepherd. Allow this interior change to expand your friendship with Christ. Through the daily celebration of the Mass, this bond of friendship will be strengthened.”



CENTENNIAL *happenings*



Spring 2023



April 27: Father Baker on Tap
Dozens of young professionals and friends of OLV gathered in the Father Baker Museum to learn more about the saintly priest and his legacy of caring, the OLV organizations. The social event concluded with a tour of the Basilica given by Father David.



May & July: Paint Out
Spread over two days this year, “Paint Out” brought together local artists who gathered at the OLV campus to create their own unique visions of OLV National Shrine & Basilica. The works of art that were submitted were then judged, with awards being presented at a special event in the Father Baker Museum on July 30. Congrats to our winners!



May 21: St. John Paul II Schola Cantorum
Dedicated to performing and preserving traditional Catholic music, the talented singers of the Saint John Paul II Schola Cantorum delighted those who came to this free concert at the Basilica with their unique sounds.

CENTENNIAL *happenings*



July 29: Jazz Mass

Local musicians had attendees tapping their toes at our second annual Jazz Mass at the Basilica on July 29. Mass was preceded by a free concert for the hundreds of folks who arrived early.



July 30: Father Baker Day Mass

The annual Father Baker Day Mass paid tribute to the “Padre of the Poor,” Venerable Nelson Baker. Mass concluded with the traditional placing of a wreath at his tomb by members of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

glorifies the Lord,
rejoices in God my Savior,
looked with favor
on the piety of his servant
and will show on all generations
that he is blessed;
for one has done
great things for me,
and his name
will be praised for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has strengthened with his arm
and has overthrown the proud
in the heights of their hearts.
He has brought down the
princes from their thrones,
and has exalted the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and has sent the rich away empty.
He has shown his servant Israel
the kindness of his mercy,
and he has promised to help
our ancestors,
and to his descendants forever.

“AMERICA’S BOOK OF KELLS” COMES TO OLV



THE
SAINT
JOHN'S
BIBLE

A one-of-a-kind exhibit is coming to OLV National Shrine & Basilica during Advent this year and will be open to the public. At that time, a heritage (traveling) edition of the magnificent Saint John's Bible will be on display, inspiring all those who spend time with it.

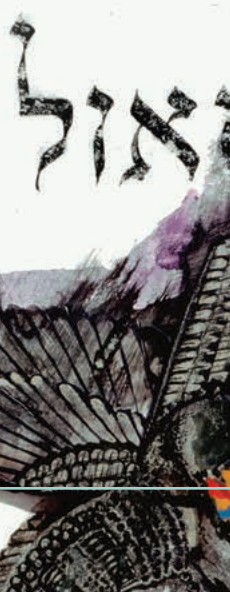
So, what exactly is the Saint John's Bible? In 1998, the Benedictine Abbey and St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, commissioned the creation of a hand-written, hand-illuminated, and hand-bound Bible. Creating books in this manner was common in the Middle Ages, prior to the invention and proliferation of the printing press in 1436. After that, though, the process faded away.

Eleven years after a team of dozens of artists and craftspeople—under the eye of legendary calligrapher Donald Jackson—began work on the ambitious project, it was completed. The finished masterwork



included seven volumes, 160 major illuminations, and 1,165 hand-written pages.

Later, the original Saint John's Bible was replicated for the purposes of sharing it with people all over the world. One of these “traveling” editions—Volume Six: Gospels & Acts—will be featured at OLV. All are welcome to come to the Basilica this Advent to be inspired and enriched.





LISTEN TO HIM

“TYPICALLY, WHEN YOU READ A BIBLE, YOU SEE ONLY BLACK LETTERS ON WHITE PAGES. BUT THE SAINT JOHN’S BIBLE BRINGS VIBRANT COLORS, ARTISTIC IMAGINATION, AND HAND-CRAFTED BEAUTY TO THE SACRED SCRIPTURES, MAKING THEM COME ALIVE,” SAID MSGR. DAVID LIPUMA, PASTOR/RECTOR OF OLV NATIONAL SHRINE & BASILICA. “IT TRULY IS A WONDER TO SEE!”

The Bible will be on display during regular Masses, starting on December 3, and at various times within the lower level of the Basilica. Special programs and events will also be available. Stay updated by following the Basilica on social media or visit olvbasilica.org/bible. You can also scan the QR code to learn more.



By Sister Dorothy Mueller, ofc

AND ON THIS ROCK
I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH
AND THE GATES OF
HADES WILL NOT
PREVAIL AGAINST IT

*Photos courtesy of Saint John's University,
Collegeville, Minnesota, 2014*

“National Ambassador” PROFILE

{ *The Woodworker* }

Saint Joseph holds a prominent place in the life and legacy of OLV National Shrine & Basilica. The Sisters of St. Joseph, inspired by faith and motivated by love, worked tirelessly to care for God’s children in need, establishing the foundation upon which Father Baker built his “City of Charity.”

Today, OLV is blessed to count among its faithful a man, like St. Joseph, who possesses deep faith and great love for God, as he strives to build and beautify the Shrine for parishioners and visiting pilgrims.

As a teen, Jon Trabucco embraced his father’s artistry of sculpting. As the years progressed, he became focused on wood as the medium. Jon recognized and appreciated that God had given him a special gift.

Years passed and he experienced a growing transformation in his art and, most importantly, in his spiritual life. With each church-commissioned piece he worked on, Jon experienced a growing

intimacy with God. It was like the monastic practice of iconography—Jon’s woodworking became his prayer and meditation on what God desired for his life.

When asked what he considers his finest work, he responds without hesitation: “The Eucharistic altar in the Basilica’s sanctuary!” Installed and dedicated in 2016, the Shrine’s main altar is a masterpiece unto itself. Jon laughs when he tells people that he “peaked artistically working on the OLV altar!”



OLV holds a very special place in Jon and his wife, Annette’s, life. They were first introduced to the campus by their longtime friend, Msgr. Paul

Burkard, when they attended Mass on Valentine’s Day at the Basilica years ago. Learning the breadth of OLV’s ministries profoundly impacted Jon’s life. To this day, he is inspired by Father Baker’s life, faith, and ministry.

OLV is blessed to be home for Jon Trabucco!





Bringing Faith to the FAITHFUL

{ OLV's Weekly Mass Broadcasts Fill a Critical Need }

In 2018, the Diocese of Buffalo closed its broadcasting division, Daybreak Communications, meaning that there was no longer a weekly televised Mass being shown. For the countless individuals who cannot make it to church for reasons such as poor health, a spiritual void was created.

Recognizing the critical need, members of OLV's leadership team began to formulate a plan to film, produce and broadcast Weekly Mass from OLV National Shrine & Basilica. The rise of the Coronavirus pandemic in early 2020 forced the team to work even faster as it became apparent that thousands of people were desperately searching for a way to worship during this period of terrible isolation.



OLV Charities swung into action! A videographer was hired in March of 2020 to shoot and edit the Masses. At the same time, partnerships were formed with a sign-language interpreter and the local NBC affiliate, WGRZ-TV. The former

allowed Masses to be accessible to the hearing impaired, the latter allowed them to be broadcast throughout the region and into Southern Ontario, Canada.

Since that time, the program has grown. In 2022, an estimated 1.4 MILLION people watched the Masses on television with another 6,000 watching via livestreaming. In addition, services from the Basilica were viewed more than 42,000 times on OLV's YouTube channel (youtube.com/@olvcharities8875).

OLV Charities is committed to continuing production of Weekly Masses. However, like everything else, the costs to do so are growing and we need your help!

Your support allows tens of thousands of individuals of all ages to stay connected with their faith and, at the same time, celebrate the beauty and wonder of the Basilica ... no matter where they are! Gifts of any size make a real difference. **To donate today, please scan the QR code with your smartphone or visit olvbasilica.org/Masses.**



FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF *Venerable Nelson Baker*



As we continue our centennial celebrations, a pilgrimage is being planned that will allow attendees to walk in the footsteps of Venerable Nelson Baker. This awe-inspiring experience is planned for April 30 to May 9, 2024.



While on this sacred excursion, we'll travel to Paris and Rome, retracing and reliving Father Baker's own life-changing pilgrimage that took place 150 years ago. In the spring of 1874, Nelson, at that time a 32-year-old seminarian, embarked on the ship, S. S. Periere, setting course for France to visit and worship at the holy sites and shrines of Europe.

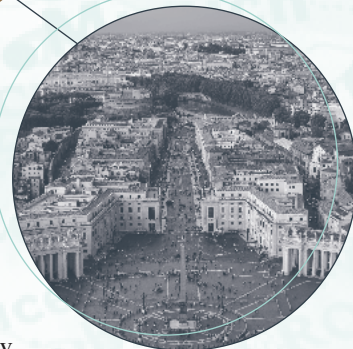
In Paris, he visited Notre Dame des Victoires, and it was there that his life was transformed. Upon entering the shrine, Father Baker's eyes focused immediately on the beautiful statue of Our Lady of Victory holding a little boy in her arms. As he knelt at the communion rail, he made a promise:

From now on I will devote my entire life to your service. I shall devote all my thoughts and actions to your name. I will spread devotion of Our Lady of Victory throughout America.

-FATHER BAKER | FROM *FATHER OF THE FATHERLESS* BY RICHARD GRIBBLE, CSC



Leaving France, the pilgrims journeyed to Rome where they explored "The Eternal City" and enjoyed an audience with Pope Pius IX. Influenced and strengthened by the journey, Nelson eventually returned home to Buffalo to begin a priestly career marked by incredible works of mercy and compassion.



And, as we know, he kept his promise. Father Baker's devotion to the Blessed Mother, under the title of Our Lady of Victory, became the central focus of his priesthood and ministry. She was not only a patroness but a friend, an advocate, and a source of continuing inspiration for all that he did.

You are invited to join Father David on this special pilgrimage of inspiration and prayer. It will be a time to enrich your spiritual life by walking in the footsteps of Father Baker and deepening your devotion to Our Lady of Victory.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Kim Kutera at (716) 828-9648 or email kkutera@olvcharities.org. Spaces are limited, so we hope to hear from you soon!



The Team Behind THE MISSION

You fill out your reply form and check, drop them both in the envelope and send it off to OLV Charities (OLVC). You feel good having contributed to Father Baker's legacy of caring and move on with your day. But have you ever stopped to wonder what happens from there?

Enter the OLVC Donor Services team!

From the moment every generous gift comes to the 780 Ridge Road building on the OLV Campus, a team of dedicated staff members begin the critical work of processing donations and requests in a timely manner. Each morning, mail arrives and is immediately sorted. From there, envelopes are carefully opened and reply forms are reviewed and scanned.

Every contribution is accounted for, and team members are constantly updating donor records to ensure OLVC has the most current information.

All prayer intentions sent to us follow a special process of their own. Whether you call, send an email, or pass on a

handwritten note, every prayer request is hand recorded and added to a list. Each week, that list is sent to the Basilica where it is printed and placed on the main altar for remembrance during Masses. Donor intentions are also included in prayers before weekly meetings by OLVC staff members.



The final step in the process is the most important: expressing our gratitude. Acknowledgment letters are sent out multiple times per week and personal "thank you" calls are made by Sisters Dorothy and Mary Ellen every single day (pictured left).

Truly, they are the team BEHIND the mission here at OLV.

If you want to speak to someone directly about making a donation, ordering cards, or lighting a candle for you, please give Donor Services a call at (716) 828-9648, option #1.

By Jane Rose

In Father Baker's FOOTSTEPS



THREE COMPASSIONATE INDIVIDUALS WERE RECENTLY HONORED BY THE OLV ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING THE LIVES OF THE NEEDY IN OUR COMMUNITY AND BEYOND.

As a part of OLV's new, signature gala, Victory Nite, Martha and Paul Lamparelli and student Petra Ogwu were presented with awards bearing the name of Father Nelson Baker, whose lifetime was spent in service to the underserved.



PRESENTED BY THE FRIENDS OF FATHER BAKER

FATHER BAKER LEGACY AWARD

MARTHA & PAUL LAMPARELLI

Life-long residents of Buffalo, Martha and Paul have made it a priority to give back to our community. Over the years, the couple has given of their time and talents frequently, serving as chairs for a number of local philanthropic organizations. Martha and Paul work tirelessly behind the scenes as forces for good in WNY and are a true reflection of what compassion and generosity looks like.

FATHER BAKER YOUTH SERVICE AWARD

PETRA OGWU

Petra Ogwu is an honor student at Mount St. Mary Academy in Buffalo. Born in Nigeria, she arrived in the U.S. as a child. She is a leader among her peers at school, participating in a number of service activities, including at St. Luke's Mission of Mercy, and on a cultural immersion trip to New Orleans. A devout Catholic, Petra is passionate about serving others.

Congratulations to these special people for living Father Baker's mission!





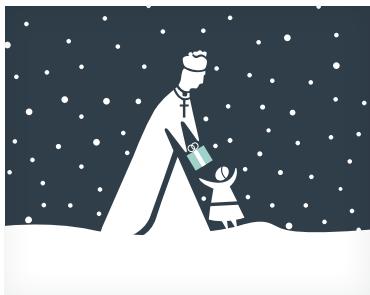
Remembering MIKE SULLIVAN

Michael J. Sullivan, a dedicated employee of the Diocese of Buffalo for 38 years and a friend to OLV, died after a brief illness on August 7, 2023.

Since 1998, Mike served as Director of Buildings and Properties for the Diocese of Buffalo. While in that position, he assisted many parishes and schools. At the time of his death, he was project manager for the restoration program at OLV National Shrine & Basilica. His leadership, expertise, and knowledge will be greatly missed.

We celebrate the life and qualities of this remarkable man while deeply mourning his loss. In the words of Msgr. David LiPuma: “There will never be another Mike Sullivan.”

Requiescat in Pace, dear friend!



Spread the Joy of CHRISTMAS

Christmas—with all its sparkles and festivities—is almost here! It’s a season of giving and sharing joy with others. For some, it’s a wonderful time of year, but, for others, it can be difficult.

For many of the children and teenagers in the care of OLV Human Services, severe mental, emotional, behavioral, and physical issues prevent them from being together with family and friends to celebrate the season. For many more who are affected by poverty, Christmas is just another cold day ... one devoid of the presents, dinners, and memories many of us have.

With that in mind, can you make it a special day for those in our care? If you’d like to bring joy to a child, take part in our annual Christmas Gift Gathering Drive.

If you’d like to play Saint Nick and ensure our children have a present to open, simply scan the QR code below with your smart phone. From there, you can purchase an item (or two) from our Amazon registry list. All the donated gifts will then be sorted and delivered to the appropriate families. It’s that simple!

*Contact Shannon Donovan at (716) 828-9610 if you have a question.
Make Christmas special for a child or family in need!*



Upcoming EVENTS

In August of 2021, we celebrated 100 years since the Basilica's cornerstone was laid and blessed ... *but that was just the beginning!* Over the next five years, the Centennial Celebration will honor the Shrine's first century and blaze a vibrant path for the next 100 years.

November
26

Handel's Messiah | 7:30 p.m.

A beloved holiday tradition returns when the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus performs Handel's *Messiah* at the Basilica. Ticket information will be available in the near future.

2023 - 2024 Advent Season | St. John's Bible Exhibit

OLV National Shrine & Basilica is proud to host a volume of the wondrous Saint John's Bible. Dubbed "America's Book of Kells," the heritage edition is a copy of the hand-scripted, hand-painted, and hand-bound masterpiece that took 11 years to create! This is a rare opportunity to see and interact with this work of art. Visit olvbasilica.org/bible or follow the Shrine on social media for a full listing of viewing times and events.

December
3

St. John's Bible Exhibit Community Kick-Off | 1 p.m.

Immediately following noon Mass, Rev. Dr. John Ross, executive director of the Saint John's Bible Heritage Program, will be on-hand to introduce the beloved book to the OLV community and talk more about its creation. Attendees will be among the first to view and enjoy it at the Basilica.

December
10

Festival of Lessons & Carols | 7 p.m.

For the third year in a row, we will be celebrating the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, a joyous marriage of scripture and song, in the Basilica.

For information on these events, visit our website, OLVBasilica100.org, or call (716) 828-9444.