

St. Ann's Church 150th Parish Anniversary Celebration

Sunday – October 20, 2019 at 11:00am

Introductory Remarks by Rev. Msgr. James D. Watkins, Pastor

Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord!

Today we give profound and prayerful thanks to Almighty God for the gift of St. Ann's Parish for 150 years of service and mission. Built on the living stones of the faithful parishioners both past and present, St. Ann's continues to be a beacon of hope to so many who come to worship, to be educated in the faith, to be renewed by the grace of the sacraments, and to be served in truth and charity.

Tailored to the needs of every generation, our mission has remained fundamentally the same since this Parish was established long ago by the Jesuit Fathers of Georgetown College in 1869. Inspired by the vision of Anne Green who promoted the need for an independent Parish 150 years ago, we have witnessed three churches and a school on this property serving the spiritual and educational needs of the people of Tenleytown. We have been blessed by the Sisters of Providence and old Immaculata College, the Bon Secour Sisters and other religious, and even today we are blessed by the presence of the Fathers and Seminarians of the Saint John Society who live in the old convent up the street who serve our Parish and work diligently as chaplains at The American University to draw young adults to our ranks. Countless teachers for our school children at St. Ann's Academy were served for many generations, youth in CYO and basketball in our gymnasium, numerous wedding preparation and education programs, a plethora of priests in the rectory over the years ... and so much more here. These 150 years have given St. Ann's the respect as a player in local community. Even the Mayor has declared this day, "St. Ann Catholic Church Day" in the District! For all these reasons and more, we come to Remember, to Renew, to Rejoice, and to Celebrate! And what better or more fitting manner to do so than to offer our praise and thanks to God through his Divine Son by power of the Holy Spirit at holy Mass where we do what Catholics have done here and around the world every day in their principal identity and purpose: to commune with the living God in the eucharistic Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

In your name and as Pastor, I welcome Archbishop Gregory to St. Ann's Church on his first visit to our Parish since his installation as the Archbishop of Washington in May. Archbishop Gregory, we thank you for accepting the nomination to come to this local Church of Washington and for accepting our invitation to preside at this historic

moment in the life of St. Ann's Parish. You should also feel a bit at home here, since the art and architecture of this church building reflects in no small manner a striking resemblance to your former Cathedral in the Archdiocese of Atlanta built by the same architects, Henry Dagit and Sons of Philadelphia. (Helping you, as you are fond of saying, to keep a little bit of Georgia on your mind!)

I welcome all of the priests who gather in the sanctuary for this special Mass of thanksgiving. We have former Associate Pastors (Monsignor Vaghi and Father Butta, and yours truly), priests who served here in summer assignments (Msgr. Antonicelli), as well as priests of the Deanery (Monsignor Jameson, Msgr. Mellone of Annunciation Parish and Fr. Foley of the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament, which were missions of St. Ann's many years ago before they became canonically established). We are grateful to the Jesuit Community for their historic link to St. Ann's, represented by Fr. Paul Campbell, as well as the priests of the St. John Society and other guest concelebrants.

A very special welcome and word of thanks to Fr. John Raphael, priest of the Diocese of Nashville, for coming to preach this Mass. Welcome to our distinguished guests; in particular, to Fra' James-Michael von Stroebel, professed Knight of Justice and the members of the Order of Malta, as well as some representatives of other ecclesial communities from the neighborhood. As well, let me acknowledge with pleasure the presence of Robert Whitaker, former deacon of the Parish, Carol Pagi, former Parish Secretary, and Nancy Brewer, alumna of the parish school in the 30s and long-time parishioner. And a special word of gratitude to Rafaele DiGregorio of Rugo Stone who masterfully completed the marble surround in the chapel of Michelangelo's authentic copy of the famous Pietà.

To all who had a hand in organizing today's beautiful eucharistic celebration and reception, thank you! With special recognition of our Music Director, Mr. Robert Bright, who has served here in the ministry of music since the 1980s, all of our parishioner volunteers in the many groups and organizations of the Parish, and to all of you who gather today to Remember, to Renew, and to Rejoice! Thank you to all!

Happy Anniversary, St. Ann's!!



ST. ANN
CATHOLIC CHURCH

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

Established 1869 #StAnn150