ChristLife Series Becomes Main Adult Faith Formation Program

By Melissa Egan

S
oon after Fr. John Dillon arrived in 2013 at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Derwood, MD, he lunched with two old friends at Mother of God Community who encouraged him to look at an adult evangelization program reaching parishioners in that Gaithersburg community. Knowing that his new parish needed a program to help parishioners encounter Christ, Fr. John watched a video testimony from Baltimore Archbishop William Lori, extolling the graces the ChristLife Series had brought to many parishes in that archdiocese. He prayed on it – and decided to take a leap of faith.

The ChristLife Series (Discovering Christ, Following Christ, and Sharing Christ) is a three-part evangelization process that brings Catholics together in small groups at the parish level, reintroduces them to Christ and provides the foundational course that brings Catholics together in Christ, and Sharing Christ program. It’s the work of the Holy Spirit to work on you.”

“The reality is I see myself in the people who are stuck or struggling in their faith,” said Fr. Jack, the pastor at St. Francis, “and preaching the Gospel for the people.”

“I have seen enough changes in people since we began to offer the courses in the ChristLife series to know that something wonderful and authentic was happening in the lives of participants,” he said.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish is offering a new Discovering Christ session from September 28-November 16 at the Goshen House, Mother of God Community in Gaithersburg. For more information, contact DeAusen at SFADCHRIST@comcast.net.

New Parochial Vicar Relishes Bringing Young People Back to Flock

By Melissa Egan

B
efore completing his studies earlier this year at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Fr. Jack Berard had amassed some very practical experience for his future vocation as a priest – discussing his Catholic faith as a missionary for FOCUS at the University of Pittsburgh, which exposed him to college students’ struggles, doubt and hostility toward Catholicism.

“The reality is I see myself in the people who are stuck or struggling in their faith,” said Fr. Jack, the new parochial vicar at St. Francis of Assisi Church. “I wasn’t always on track to become a priest and, because of that, I know how important it is to give personal attention to help draw people back into faith in the Church and Christ.”

A former resident of Glenn Dale, MD, Fr. Jack is the fifth of 10 children and graduated from the Lawerence St. Hugh of Grenoble School, now the St. Joseph’s Regional Catholic School. He graduated from Eleanor Roosevelt High School in 2004, Temple University with a degree in political science in 2008 and from the Pontifical North American College, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in sacred theology (S.T.B) from the Angelicum and his license in sacred theology (S.T.L) from the Gregorian, specializing in Fundamental Theology.

Fr. Jack arrived at St. Francis of Assisi Parish on July 12, adapting easily to the routine of cele-