

Archdiocesan pilgrimage to Washington is April 25

In celebration of the Year of St. Paul, the Archdiocese of Baltimore is sponsoring a pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. April 25.

The spiritual gathering will provide an opportunity for Catholics from throughout the archdiocese to come together in prayer with Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien and enjoy a guided tour of the largest Catholic church in North America, according to Father Erik Arnold, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ilchester and pilgrimage coordinator.

"It's going to be much more than a visit to one of the most beautiful churches in the world," Father Arnold said. "It's going to provide an opportunity for each of us to reflect on what the Lord wants to do in our lives."

The Scriptural theme for the pilgrimage is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians: "That I might know Christ and the power of his resurrection."

Father Matthew Buening, pastor of St. Paul in Ellicott City, will give a reflection on St. Paul.

There will be opportunities for praying the rosary, participating in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and receiving the sacrament of reconciliation. Archbishop O'Brien will celebrate a Mass at 2 p.m., preceded by a choral prelude by the Archdiocesan Choir.

The pilgrimage will include a separate component for children in grades 5-8, Father Arnold said. It will also mark the closing of the 200th anniversary of the raising of the Baltimore diocese to archdiocesan status.

Buses departing from parishes will arrive at the shrine at 10:30 a.m. and will depart at 3:30 p.m.

“It’s going to be a special day,” Father Arnold said. “It’s our first pilgrimage to Washington with Archbishop O’Brien and so that adds to making it even more special.”

Contact your parish to register or call 410-747-4334 for more information.