



Archdiocese of Baltimore

SHINE THE LIGHT GALA

An Evening to Inspire and Honor



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"The Lord is seeking to create in each of us, at the core of our existence, 'a light brightly visible,' a light that shines distinctively, from the inside out."

A LIGHT BRIGHTLY VISIBLE 2.0.

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to welcome you to the Archdiocese of Baltimore's 2023 Shine the Light Gala. I am so delighted that we can gather in person once again for this signature event, something we have not been able to do since 2019.

The Archdiocesan Gala has always held a special place in my heart for the incredible good it does in our community, raising funds in support of families who seek a high-quality, faith-based education for their children within one of our Catholic schools. Since its inception in 2009, over \$9 million has been raised because of this Gala and our sponsors. Many of you joining us this evening have helped strengthen our schools or helped a family realize the dream of a Catholic school education for their child. Thank you!

In addition to the continued support of families in need, this year's gala event also provides us an opportunity to shine the light on some of our cherished friends, women and men who have significantly advanced the mission of our archdiocese and the Universal Church. As agents of positive change, all have radiated the Light of Christ outward into the world and nourished one or more of the five pillars of our archdiocesan mission: education, evangelization, liturgy, service, and stewardship. I encourage you to read more about our honorees in the following pages so you may become fully aware of how each has let Christ's Light shine through them and their works, and why we celebrate their remarkable contributions tonight.

On behalf of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and those we serve, thank you once again for joining us and for helping to bring the blessing of joy to bear on this fruitful occasion.

Faithfully,



William E. Lori

Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore

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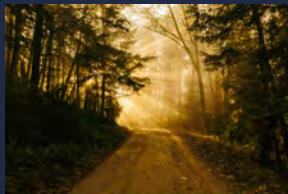


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(Ps 119:105)*



SHINE THE LIGHT GALA

An Evening to Inspire and Honor

*Presented by
Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore*

GALA EVENING **Cocktails**

Prayer | Sister Delia Dowling, SSND, Sisters Academy of Baltimore

Dinner

Evening Program

Master of Ceremonies | Andre Hepkins, News Anchor, WBAL-TV
2023 Archdiocese of Baltimore Gala Chair | Tyler Tate, President, Lewis Contractors

MEDALS OF HONOR CEREMONY

Archbishop William E. Lori & Bishop Bruce Lewandowski

KEYNOTE REMARKS

Tony Small, Grammy-Nominated Music Educator
& Choral Director of St. Bernardine Gospel Choir

PERFORMANCES

Danza Allegra
St. Bernardine Gospel Ensemble

DESSERT RECEPTION

Entertainment by SoulTET
Led by Tyler Bartram, alumni of Mount Saint Joseph High School

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ABOUT THE ARCHDIOCESAN GALA

In 2009, in celebration of the 200th Anniversary of opening the first Catholic school in the United States, the Archdiocese of Baltimore launched the Annual Gala for Catholic Education. Over the next 13 years, this signature event has celebrated the impact and legacy of Catholic education, spotlighted the successes of our educators and students, and raised more than \$9 million in support of tuition assistance for Catholic school families.

In addition to raising much-needed funds for scholarships, this year's gala will honor recipients of the newly revitalized Archdiocesan Medals of Honor. These honors are being conferred upon individuals, both lay and clergy, who embody the spirit of Archbishop Lori's pastoral letter, *A Light Brightly Visible 2.0*. They contribute to and strengthen the five core pillars of the Archdiocese of Baltimore's mission statement: education, evangelization, liturgy, service, and stewardship.

GALA COMMITTEE

The Shine the Light Gala Committee includes members of the community who are committed to ensuring a Catholic education remains affordable and accessible for families throughout the Archdiocese of Baltimore. On behalf of Archbishop Lori and the Archdiocese of Baltimore, we express our thanks to the following:

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THE REMARKABLE IMPACT OF YOUR SUPPORT

When the archdiocese began to plan the Inaugural Archdiocesan Gala in celebration of the 200th anniversary of Catholic education in the United States, staff and volunteers were both delighted and humbled by the reception and response from the many friends and partners they approached. By the time the Inaugural Gala was held, nearly \$600,000 had been raised from 70 sponsors, and 180 students benefited from this generous support.

Within two years, the number of sponsors nearly doubled, and the event in 2011 raised roughly \$700,000, helping to create about 200 scholarships for students in need.

By the time of the 10th Annual Gala in 2018, we estimate that 1,800 scholarships had been created. That same year, we recognized 20 ‘since-inception’ sponsors, partners who had supported the Gala for 10 consecutive years. Their generosity alone had totaled more than \$2 million.

Today, as we relaunch the Archdiocesan Gala, we are once again delighted and humbled by the generous support from our sponsors. Since 2009, more than 500 different entities have stepped up to support the event; 35 of them have done so at least 10 times, and 16 have done so every single time that we have asked them. Remarkably, more than 2,500 scholarships have been created, providing 2,500 gifts of hope.

Tonight, as we stand on the brink of a \$10-million-raised milestone, we simply wish to say...

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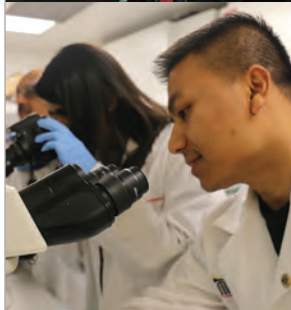
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ABOUT THE MEDAL OF HONOR DESIGN

With *A Light Brightly Visible 2.0* and the archdiocesan mission statement as inspiration, the medal design team* set about creating a new medal that would capture the spirit of what it means to be a missionary disciple, someone who shines brightly in the community.

The use of blown glass as the primary material for the medal is meant to evoke the stained glass prevalent in many places of worship. The five overlapping circles, which create a floret, represent the five pillars of the archdiocesan mission statement. In the center of the floret resides the Calvert Cross with a star in the upper left quadrant, which is taken from the Archdiocesan Coat of Arms. The Calvert Cross represents Christ, as well as the roots of the Catholic Church in the United States. The star is a symbol that represents Mary, the Blessed Virgin, under whose patronage the archdiocese stands.

The medal's presenting case was designed by BookArts, a world-renowned collective of artists, conservators and craftspeople, whose distinctive work and designs have been presented to Pope Francis and several U.S. presidents, among other global dignitaries.

**Medal Design Team: BookArts, Mikey Monaghan, Jennifer Kozak, Klutch, Inc., Corradetti Glassblowing Studio, Bijoux Jewels and HBP, Inc.*

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

On behalf of Archbishop Lori and the Archdiocese of Baltimore,
many thanks to our Medals of Honor Nomination Committee:

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Archdiocese of Baltimore*

Matt Anthony

*Senior Director, Engagement & Giving,
Archdiocese of Baltimore*

Reverend Patrick Carrion

Pastor, St. Ignatius of Loyola, Ijamsville

Adrienne Curry

*Director, Black Catholic Ministries,
Archdiocese of Baltimore*

Lia Garcia

*Director, Hispanic Ministries,
Archdiocese of Baltimore*

Nicole Germain

*Director, Public Relations,
The Catholic University of America*

Erin Younkens

*Director, Life, Justice & Peace,
Archdiocese of Baltimore*

Sister Delia Dowling, SSND

Recipient of the Seton-Sellinger Medal



Named for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Reverend Joseph A. Sellinger, S.J., and James B. Sellinger, retired chancellor of education, this medal recognizes an individual who has shown great leadership in the ministry of Catholic education.

Sister Delia Dowling, a seasoned and awarded educator and administrator has inspired countless young people through her dedicated instruction. She co-founded Sisters Academy of Baltimore in 2004, with the goal of educating young women of promise so they could realize their full potential, and she has served as its president since. In 2002, Sister Delia accepted the challenge of directing a feasibility study for a new school in southwest Baltimore. This study led to the decision by the Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Sisters of Bon Secours, and School Sisters of Notre Dame to sponsor a new Catholic middle school for girls, grades 5 through 8. This new school ultimately became Sisters Academy of Baltimore.

To say that Sisters Academy, which has provided scholarships for each student since its inception, has thrived under Sister Delia's leadership is a vast understatement. In 19 years, 99.5% of students at Sisters Academy of Baltimore have earned their diploma or are on track to do so. Many have earned college degrees and some have earned master's degrees. Sister Delia will retire at the end of this academic year.

What Sister Delia's faith, vocation, and ministry mean to her, in her own words:

"My faith, instilled and nurtured by my family, my vocation as a School Sister of Notre Dame, and my ministry as an educator, are the three defining elements of my life, giving me a sense of purpose and mission leading to service...The mission is so much more than any one of us. Each person in our care has been given to us through the Spirit of God. You have been chosen. Be humble. Be grateful. Be prepared to work hard in God's service."

Kelly Obermayer

Recipient of the Lange-Mortel Medal



Named after Mother Mary Lange, O.S.P. and Dr. Rodrigue Mortel, the late founder of the Mortel High Hopes for Haiti Foundation, this medal recognizes an individual who exemplifies innovation and entrepreneurship in Catholic social ministries.

As executive director of Mary's Home Maryland, Kelly leads her team in providing a safe, pro-life home environment and a myriad of services for expectant mothers in crisis and their children in need.

"I wanted to move to Maryland to be near my son, so I started looking at jobs here," Kelly says. "I saw the posting for Mary's Home, but dismissed it. I did not feel qualified for it – and it scared me in a sense of 'how can I truly walk with these moms and make a difference for them,' but God kept putting it in front of me."

"Kelly seeks to truly know and love each mom and baby that come to live at Mary's Home," Erin Younkins, director for the archdiocese's Office of Life, Justice, and Peace, wrote. "She tailors a nurturing environment to draw out their best potential and empower them as individuals to discover their value in Christ, always seeking out new ways to support them in their journey to independence."

What Kelly's faith and vocation mean to her, in her own words:

"God wanted me here, in this position. He called me here for the mothers and the babies, and He wanted me here for me."

Reverend Francis Ouma

Recipient of the Neumann-Valenzano Medal



Named after St. John Neumann and the late Monsignor Arthur F. Valenzano, the 24th rector of the Baltimore Basilica, this medal is given to a pastor who exemplifies what it means to build a vibrant faith community and help others find and share their light.

As pastor at St. Patrick Church in Havre de Grace, Father Ouma has made evangelization his top priority. In his short time since arriving, Father Ouma has significantly grown the parish's roster of registered families and increased attendance at Mass by a phenomenal 43%. Additionally, he re-established daily Mass at the parish and initiated nine new parish programs of outreach and evangelization.

Father Ouma's outreach to the next generation of Catholics is particularly noteworthy as he has invited young people to embrace the roles of lector and usher at Masses and has organized fellowship events where they are encouraged to bring their friends, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Father Ouma's innovative approach to evangelization has flourished throughout the entirety of the St. Patrick parish community. Mens and Ladies groups have been formed, as have support groups for survivors of loss or for family members of those suffering from Alzheimer's.

What Father Ouma's vocation means to him, in his own words:

"My vocation means everything to me. Since I was five years old, I have dreamed of becoming a parish priest. To me, the priesthood is about making the mystery of the Incarnation known to the world, a critical bridge to bring Christ and faith to humanity and offer healing to the hurting through the sacraments, prayers, formation, and comforting words of the Lord."

Walt & Diane Conolley

Recipients of the O'Neill-Baldwin Medal



Named for Thomas J. O'Neill, whose bequest funded the construction of the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, and Thomas and Peggy Baldwin, whose broad and deep support has significantly impacted the ministries of our Church, this medal recognizes individuals or couples whose "sincere and generous charity" bears witness to Christ.

It is a fitting testament to Walt and Diane Conolley's profound commitment to their faith that our Medals of Honor Nomination Committee received five completed forms, from five independent sources, in support of honoring them with this medal. Former pastors and fellow volunteers all came forward to advocate on their behalf, with good reason.

At St. Paul's Catholic Church in Ellicott City, where they are parishioners, they have served as sacristans and on its bereavement committee, which Diane continues to do today, preparing and distributing hot meals to grieving families after funeral receptions. Their service, however, extends beyond their parish doors, to the Towson University Newman Center. At this hub of evangelization for Towson's young people, the Conolleys have for years given significantly of their time, talents, and treasure.

"Walt and Diane are bright lights in the faith community," Father Kevin Ewing, Chaplain at the Newman Center said, "with their warm welcoming of all students. They offer inspiring witness, particularly to young people. No task is too small as they work tirelessly to organize, operate, and care for this spiritual home."

What Walt and Diane's faith and vocation have meant to them, in their own words:

"Our ministry gives us the opportunity to share our blessings with wonderful young people. It is a privilege to be able to encourage them and share with them the love of Christ. God gives each of us gifts to share with others. We discovered gifts we didn't know He gave us through our service to the students. If you seek to serve others, we believe you will discover unknown gifts also."

Sherita Thomas

Recipient of the Joubert-Miller Medal

Named for Father James H. Joubert, S.S., who worked closely with Mother Mary Lange to establish the Oblate Sisters of Providence and Monsignor Edward Miller, the late pastor of St. Bernardine, this medal recognizes individuals who have stood in solidarity with underserved and underrepresented communities of faith.



As interim director for the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Office of Black Catholic Ministries during the coronavirus pandemic, Sherita strengthened the office and helped advance the local Church, especially for the Black community, under difficult circumstances.

Sherita organized the archdiocesan Racial Task Force, presiding over community consultations, making informed recommendations, and establishing the Coordinating Council for Racial Justice. In this role, Sherita often facilitated difficult but necessary conversations to help ensure that the Black community has a leadership role in archdiocesan life.

What Sherita's vocation means to her, in her own words:

"My vocation means to follow God's call to serve Him in the world. My faith is a gift that brings me in a loving union with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This gift enables me to both hear the Word of God and try my best to live it. I enjoy serving God. I came to focus on my ministry after much prayer and reflection. I also had a desire to be a role model for my children and encourage the sanctity and dignity of human life. I felt the call to live the words as described in Micah 6:8 to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God.

These words from Shirley Chisholm are also always in my heart: Service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this earth."

Deacon Edison Morales, Carlos Arias, Jose Ezequiel Melo & Jose G. Ramirez

Recipients of the Joubert-Miller Medal

Early in 2020, the onset of the coronavirus pandemic quickly highlighted the economic disparities that permeate our society, such as in the neighborhood surrounding Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in southeast Baltimore City. Led by Edison, Carlos, Jose, and Jose, this family of faith committed itself to ensuring that those affected were served. They discerned the need for greater advocacy for the parish's Hispanic community and acted.

Each as he was able, provided tireless assistance. They risked their own health to personally deliver food and other essentials to those homebound, and checked on the less fortunate. They were able to cross language barriers to those they served, and as a result, they were able to earn their trust and forge bonds of safety.



Jose Ramirez



*Jose Ramirez (left) and Carlos Arias (middle)
with fellow Sacred Heart of Jesus volunteer,
Jose Reyes.*

What their service means to them, in their own words:



"For me, personally it means to live the gifts that I received during my baptism. It is to do God's work no matter where I am. Because all I do through my ministry is the will of God."

-Deacon Edison Morales



"For me, it means to be closer to God and my neighbors."

-Jose Ezequiel Melo



"My faith is the strength that God gives me to be able to help my neighbor, to be supportive of their needs, especially in the time of pandemic where there was a lot of uncertainty and need, where many people were not prepared to survive."

-Carlos Arias



"My faith is what I base my life on, and I have been that way since I was a child."

-Jose G. Ramirez

Dr. Joseph Orlando and Mr. Gilbert Hoffman

Recipients of the DuBourg-Pacione Medal

Named for Bishop Louis Dubourg, S.S., who ministered to refugees from the Haitian Revolution in the early 1800s, and the late Mark Pacione, a nationally respected leader in youth ministry for over 30 years, this medal recognizes laypeople or religious who have significantly impacted the work of evangelization.

Gil and Joe were both instrumental in establishing The Catholic Men's Fellowship of Maryland (CMF-MD), which blossomed from a men's prayer group at Church of the Immaculate Conception in Towson.

In those early days, Gil worked tirelessly to establish this group and its board, finding early success in reaching consensus on their goals. Utilizing his innate talents of humor, good sense, logic, and generally excellent communication skills, he was able to focus everyone's attention on one unifying principle: maintaining and promoting Catholicism in these challenging times.

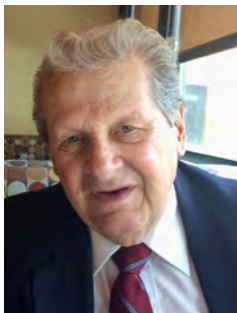
Joe, then took what Gil started, and grew this parish-centered group into a massive and diverse gathering of devout Catholic men, who strive to preserve and promote the faith. Notwithstanding his busy surgical practice, Joe spent countless hours obtaining speakers and venues for CMF-MD conferences while also recruiting new board members to grow the Fellowship and advance its mission.

What their faith and service mean to them, in their own words:



“The plan [for CMF-MD] was for the evangelization of Catholic men and for them to return to their families and parishes to do the same, to share with other men the joy of a personal relationship with Our Lord and with His Church.”

-Joe Orlando



“Faith is really the blueprint for living that reaches into all areas of life that affect a man: his core beliefs, his work, his play and ultimately, his legacy.

We must fight the good fight with brothers in Christ by our side, strengthened by the Word and Sacraments.”

-Gil Hoffman



Congratulations on receiving the Joubert-Miller Medal of Honor.

We recognize our associate **Sherita Thomas** for her outstanding work serving underrepresented communities of faith with the Archdiocese of Baltimore.



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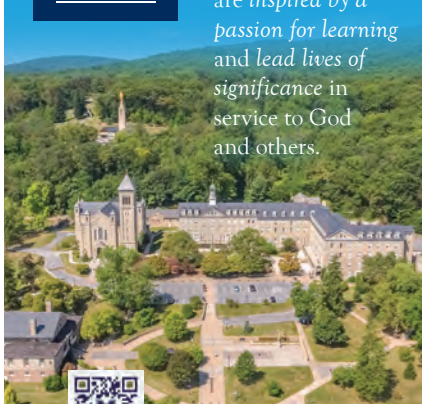
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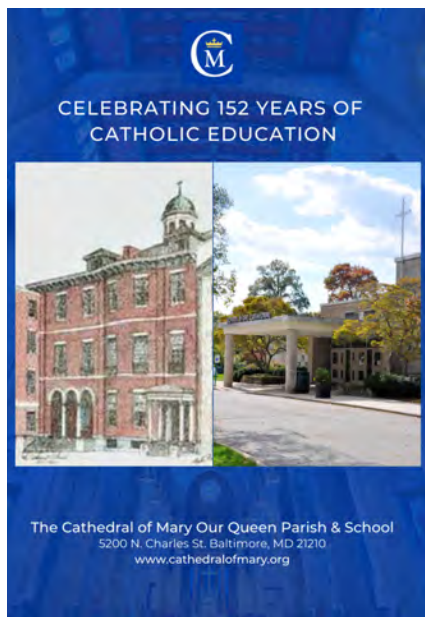
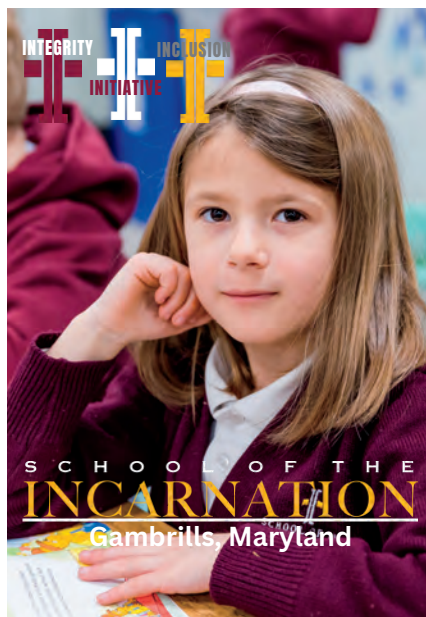
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