



ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
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NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

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Celebrate Maryland Day at Maryland's Birthplace
St. Clement's Island Museum to Host Papal Nuncio, Full Day of Fun

LEONARDTOWN, MD – On Saturday, March 25, 2023, “Maryland Day” the public is encouraged to celebrate the founding of Maryland at the state’s birthplace, St. Clement’s Island. **St. Clement’s Island Museum will offer a full day of fun from 10 am to 5 pm**, including free museum admission, kids’ activities, free water taxi rides (10 am – 2 pm), lighthouse tours, a food truck, and special exhibits. The event will also include a public ceremony (10 am) held on the mainland and a public Mass (11 am) commemorating the first Mass said in the English-speaking New World, featuring the [Papal Nuncio](#) to the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre.

Maryland Day commemorates the first landing of English colonists on St. Clement’s Island on March 25, 1634 – a significant part of St. Mary’s County’s and the State of Maryland’s story. The St. Clement’s Island Museum, which sits just a half-mile from the island from which it takes its name, is under the care of the St. Mary’s County Museum Division and interprets the fascinating stories of the island and surrounding Colton’s Point from colonial times until the present.

“Maryland Day is the most important event in our program year, since it marks the beginning of both St. Mary’s County and the state of Maryland in 1634,” says Karen Stone, Manager of the St. Mary’s County Museum Division. “On this day, we honor the meeting of two cultures – the newly-arrived English and the native Piscataway – and the friendship and collaboration that ensued. It is also a day on which we celebrate Maryland’s religious history and its place in the development of the statutes of religious freedom that are so pivotal in this country’s history.”

Celebrating Maryland Day at St. Clement’s Island Museum

The official Maryland Day ceremony begins at 10 am and will include the Papal Nuncio, St. Mary’s County Commissioner President Randy Guy, the Piscataway Tribal Leader Francis Gray, and other dignitaries. Additionally, keynote speaker Lucille Walker will speak on the recent designation of Southern Maryland as a National Heritage Area. The ceremony also features an interpreter portraying Father Andrew White, S.J., who will make the ceremonial presentation of gifts from the English to the Natives. Students from Father Andrew White School will provide music and the students from Leonard Hall Junior Naval Academy will present the colors. A small public reception will follow the ceremony.

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Mass on the Island will follow the ceremony (11 am), featuring the Papal Nuncio as well as students from Father Andrew White School serving as the choir and cantors.

Back on the mainland, a food truck will be available from 11 am to 3 pm for the public. Attendees are encouraged to explore the museum and exhibits as admission is waived. There will also be a special display of Native American artifacts from the Piscataway Tribe, and a display of the original Maryland Charter. Further, a wonderful collection of local art will be on display in the changing gallery. As a bonus, the museum will display the plans for the upcoming, brand-new St. Clement's Island Museum building available for the public.

Also, starting on Maryland Day, the museum officially kicks off water taxi operations to St. Clement's Island State Park. Boat rides are available most days through October 31, 2023.

For those looking for more Maryland Day fun in St. Mary's County, head down the Potomac to Maryland's first capital and settlement at Historic St. Mary's City. For more information, visit hsmcdigshistory.org.

For more information regarding Maryland Day at St. Clement's Island Museum, please call the museum at (301) 769-2222. For hours of operation, programs, admission prices and more, visit [Facebook.com/SCIMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SCIMuseum) or museums.stmarysmd.com.

About the St. Mary's County Museum Division

The St. Mary's County Museum Division was established by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to collect, preserve, research, and interpret the historic sites and artifacts which illustrate the natural and cultural histories of St. Mary's County and the Potomac River. These sites include St. Clement's Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, the Old Jail Museum, and the Drayden African American Schoolhouse. With this as its charter, the Museum Division serves as a resource, liaison, and community advocate for all St. Mary's County public and private cultural assets. For more information, please visit: museums.stmarysmd.com.

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