



# FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

JANUARY 2018 | VOLUME 35, NUMBER 1 | CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK ISSUE

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Villanova University, Philadelphia

Wednesday, February 7, at 7 p.m.  
University Commons



CONTEMPORARY CATHOLIC CONVERSATIONS



# Holy Land Pilgrimage

## Walking 'The Way of the Cross'

What a remarkable journey! Twenty-two members of the Young Adult Group of the Diocese of Bridgeport recently returned from a week-long pilgrimage to the Holy Land—one that deepened their faith and changed their lives.

The young adult pilgrims from the Diocese of Bridgeport stood on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, visited Bethlehem and Bethany, climbed Mt. Tabor and visited other spiritual sites in the Holy Land.

On the final day of their pilgrimage, the young men and

women continued in the footsteps of Jesus by walking "the Way of the Cross."

The night before, they prayed at the Mount of Olives and at the rock on which Jesus prayed on that first Holy Thursday. They also journeyed to the Western



Wall, where they prayed for all of the intentions people from the diocese had sent on social media.

During the trip, the group led by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano also visited the Church of St. Stephen, the first martyr, and attended morning Mass at the Basilica of the Annunciation. After reflecting on Our Lady's "yes," the group spent time together discussing how we could respond to God in the same way.

"The Sea of Galilee was one of the most anticipated stops on the trip," said John Grosso, diocesan social media leader, who reported on the trip through Facebook and Twitter entries. "It proved to be emotional, prayerful, and stunningly beautiful. We first arrived at the Mount of Beatitudes, and we prayed over the Scripture passage where Jesus preaches the Beatitudes to the crowd. Next, we took a short trip over to the Church of the

Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes, built over the site of that great sign of wonder," he said.

"Pilgrims were unable to contain their joy and awe, rushing to the water to put their feet into it. The peace and tranquility of this lake, where Jesus walked on water, calmed the storm, and preached near, cannot be understated. We could have stayed there for hours."

The young adult pilgrims also walked to the Church of the Primacy of St. Peter, and prayed over the Scripture passage in the Gospel of John: "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

The pilgrims stopped in the biblical city of Capernaum, the town where Jesus lived during his ministry, including the synagogue where Jesus fulfilled the words of Isaiah.

The Young Adult Scripture Study Week program was coordinated and sponsored by the diocesan Leadership Institute. ■



### ON THE COVER

Students at St. Aloysius School in New Canaan hit the books for a classroom lesson. The diocese sponsors 26 schools that educate 9,000 students throughout Fairfield County. Catholic Schools week celebrates Catholic schools that "form, inform, and transform" students over a lifetime.

(PHOTO BY AMY MORTENSEN)

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# Latest News

## Deacon Toole named Delegate for Administration

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

Deacon Patrick Toole of Westport, a retired IBM executive, has been named Episcopal Delegate for Administration of the Diocese of Bridgeport.

The appointment, made by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano and effective January 2, represents a new position similar to Chief Operating Officer in the business world. He will work directly with Bishop Caggiano and Msgr. Thomas Powers, diocesan vicar general.

"We have been blessed by many exceptionally talented deacons in our ranks who serve the Church while also leading successful careers," said Bishop Caggiano. "As we move forward with change and renewal, Deacon Pat Toole brings the vision and experience to ensure the highest level of efficiency and responsiveness in diocesan services to schools, parishes and



DEACON PATRICK TOOLE

other diocesan institutions."

In his new role, Deacon Toole will serve as administrative leader responsible for the oversight of diocesan departments including Human Resources, Technology Services, Safe Environments,

Real Estate, Catholic Cemeteries, Strategic and Pastoral Planning and Communications.

Deacon Toole currently serves as deacon to St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Trumbull. He was ordained to the permanent

diaconate in June 2011, and served at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield until going to St. Catherine's in 2015. He also serves as an assistant master of ceremonies for Bishop Caggiano.

He is a professed member of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCDS) and serves as the spiritual assistant to the Mother of Sorrows OCDS community. Deacon Toole is a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Deacon Toole officially retired from IBM on December 31 after serving as senior integration executive of The Weather Company, an IBM business. His appointment coincided with IBM's acquisition of The Weather Company's product and technology businesses in order to accelerate its Watson business strategy.

After joining IBM in 1984, he held a variety of executive and management positions, including the global chief information officer, general manager of technical

support services and general manager of intellectual property.

Deacon Toole holds a master's degree in business administration from Queens University of Charlotte, N.C. He has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Notre Dame and serves on the university's College of Engineering advisory council.

His community commitments include service as chairman of the board for the Center for Ignatian Spirituality of Fairfield University; vice chair of the board for Unshattered, an enterprise partner of Hoving Home program for women recovering from addiction; and a member of the board of directors of St. Joseph High School in Trumbull.

Deacon Toole and his wife, Lyndy, who serves as a music minister at St. Luke Parish in Westport, are the parents of five grown children. They have two grandchildren. ■

## \$500,000 donation to Foundations in Education

GREENWICH—Mary Alice and Thomas O'Malley, longtime Greenwich residents, have committed \$500,000 to Foundations in Education over the next five years to establish the The Mary Alice and Thomas O'Malley Scholarship for children of current police officers, firefighters and nurses attending Trinity Catholic High School in Stamford. The O'Malley gift is the first of its kind for Foundations in Education.

Students and prospective students who have at least one parent who has worked for a minimum of one year as a Greenwich or Stamford firefighter or police officer, or as a nurse at either Greenwich or Stamford hospitals, are eligible to apply. The grant, which covers 80 percent of tuition beginning with the 2018-19 academic year, is contingent upon students maintaining a strong academic performance. Tuition assistance is based on available funding each year.

"We are pleased to support Trinity Catholic High School," stated Mary Alice O'Malley.



BISHOP CAGGIANO, acting chair of Foundations in Education, enjoys time with Mary Alice and Thomas O'Malley

"Both Tom's and my family have served their communities in nursing and as members of police and fire departments in the northeast."

The scholarship application process and management will be administered by Foundations in Education, a non-profit initiative created to assist the Diocese of Bridgeport's ongoing mission to support Catholic education in Fairfield County.

"I am grateful for the O'Malley's commitment to the

students of Trinity Catholic High School and the Greenwich/Stamford area," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, the acting chair of Foundations in Education. "The O'Malley Scholarship Program will serve a group of students for whom I trust the experience will be transformational."

Foundations in Education has begun promoting this scholarship through Greenwich and Stamford fire and police departments and to the nurses at Greenwich and

Stamford hospitals.

Trinity Catholic High School has begun spreading the word of The Mary Alice and Thomas O'Malley Scholarship to both current and prospective students. The school will continue to publicize the scholarship at their upcoming "Take A Look" Tuesday tours scheduled for January 30 and at their Open House on March 18.

The high school is currently accepting applications for the 2018-2019 year.

Trinity Catholic High School Principal Dave Williams commented, "This gift comes in time for our national observance of Catholic Schools Week, when we join communities across the country in celebrating the value of Catholic education. Service to others is one of the core principles of our school's mission. We are so thankful to the O'Malley family for this opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the community."

Both Mary Alice and Tom have served on many philanthropic boards. Mary Alice

graduated from St. Vincent's Nursing School in New York City as a registered nurse and Tom is a graduate of Manhattan College. They are members of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Riverside.

The mission of Foundations in Education is to strengthen and transform Catholic education in the Diocese of Bridgeport by supporting innovation in academic and extra-curricular programs, fostering opportunities for the professional development of school leaders in innovation and leadership and providing scholarship assistance to families in need. Evolving from the Bishop's Scholarship Fund, which was established by Bishop Caggiano in 2015, more than \$6,933,000 in aid has been awarded to 4,130 students in diocesan-sponsored Catholic schools since its inception.

(To learn more about Foundations in Education or to learn how your gift can help transform the lives of Catholic school students, visit the Foundations in Education website: [www.foundationsineducation.org](http://www.foundationsineducation.org).) ■

# Annual Catholic Appeal

## Chair couples make Annual Appeal a priority

By PAT HENNESSY

"It's about spreading the word," says Elena Schlegel, lay co-chair with her husband, Steve, for the Annual Catholic Appeal 2018. "It's educating people about what the appeal does. Steve and I are fortunate to be part of this."

The Schlegels are assisted by vice-chair couples Carol and Conrad Calandra and Jason and Roxanne Melaragno. The couples find themselves on a voyage of learning even as they tell others of the ministries and programs supported by the appeal.

"A woman we met at Catholic Charities in Danbury was involved in outreach to the homeless," says Carol Calandra. "She was bringing them socks. Socks are such a need, because homeless people spend so much time on their feet. That's something we take for granted."

"When people understand where the money is going, they're more willing to give to the appeal," adds Jason Melaragno. He and Roxanne, whose son Justin will be one year old next month, are the youngest vice-chairs of the appeal.

"When we go over to St. Catherine Center for people with disabilities, we go to share the joy with them," says Elena Schlegel.

The St. Catherine Center



ELENA AND STEVE SCHLEGEL

for Special Needs includes St. Catherine Academy, a special education school for students impacted by autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities, founded on the principle that each person is unique and valued. An adult day program on the campus encourages adults through art, swimming, and music and assists them to become part of the wider community.

"You walk out of there and you think, 'Wow! Our problems are so little.' And yet they are so happy," says Elena.

She and Steve volunteer at St. Catherine's, and at Malta House for women with crisis pregnancies. They are in the process now of joining the Order of Malta.

In addition, Elena is a Eucharistic minister and Steve has become part of the parish council at St. Aloysius Parish



CAROL AND CONRAD CALANDRA

in New Canaan, in spite of his demanding job as COO for Jones Lang Lasalle in Manhattan.

"We just make it a priority," says Elena. "We just do it."

With their three children moving toward adulthood, the Schlegels are pleased by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano's emphasis on young adult ministry. All three children have been active in youth and parish activities and are dedicated to helping others, and their daughter Kathleen is also a Eucharistic minister at St. Aloysius.

Carol and Conrad Calandra, members of St. Lawrence Parish in Shelton, are also the parents of young adults, a son and a daughter. They had been appeal chairs at St. Lawrence and were vice-chairs for the 2017 appeal. "This has opened my eyes to everything the diocese is doing," says Carol,



ROXANNE AND JASON MELARAGNO

who makes time for her appeal obligations and her role as trustee at St. Lawrence despite her position as a partner and Group CFO at Ernst & Young in Manhattan.

The appeal gives them the opportunity to share their enthusiasm. "We learned things upfront and personal," says Conrad. "We were able to sit at a table across from young seminarians, and feel their enthusiasm for their life down the road."

Other visits led them to see the assistance is provided by Catholic Charities to the homeless and the comfort offered to retired priests at the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of the Clergy residence.

At a C4Y youth concert they saw the passion they put into their performance. "As we talked to them, we could see the way their faith grows," says Carol.

Jason and Roxanne

Melaragno were married in 2009. Jason works for Pfizer pharmaceutical company; Roxanne was an assistant principal in Seymour before Justin was born. They have been active at Holy Family Parish in Fairfield, where they were on the parish Task Force. Additionally, Roxanne is a member of the sub-committee for faith formation, a lector, and a parish champion for Matthew Kelly's Dynamic Catholic organization. Jason has served on the parish's finance committee.

"We contribute financially to the appeal, but we also wanted to be involved," says Roxanne.

"It is important for parishioners to understand that their contributions are being used locally, and in places that are in line with their beliefs," adds Jason.

Although they support all the programs and ministries assisted by the appeal, Jason has personally experienced education in both public and Catholic schools and was impressed by the impact of faith-based education in his life.

"We see everything the appeal helps, including taking care of the elderly, encouraging teenagers—who are the future of our faith—and Catholic Charities helping people in need. The ACA does good in so many ways," he says. "If everyone works together, we can ensure a positive future for the diocese and the people it serves." ■

## March for Life 2018

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The 2018 March for Life, held on January 19, is the largest pro-life rally in the world.

The March is always held on or around the anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision legalizing abortion in the case of Roe v. Wade. Diocesan high schools and parishes throughout the diocese organized buses to the rally, with the teens also attending the Youth Rally at the Capital One Arena.

Braving the January weather, the March opened to music with best-selling Christian music artist Plumb on the grounds of the Washington Monument at 11:30 am. At a

rally starting at 12 noon, speakers included NFL/MLB star Tim Tebow's mother Pam Tebow, former NFL player Matt Birk and his wife Adrianna; U.S. representatives and Sister Bethany Madonna from the Sisters of Life.



Marchers stepped off at 1 pm and headed up Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court. There they heard testimonies from Silent No More and had the chance to visit their Representatives or Senators. ■

Please join the  
Barnum Festival's 2018 Ringmaster Johnny Vazzano  
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The Inaugural  
*Faith & Festival*  
Sunday, January 21, 2018  
9:30 am Mass at St. Augustine's Church of the Cathedral Parish  
399 Washington Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604

Join us as The Most Reverend Bishop Frank Caggiano celebrates Sunday Mass  
and blesses the Kickoff of the 2018 Barnum Festival Season  
Escorted by the  
Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Color Guard

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# Thank you for your generosity!

## Sharing God's Gifts...

The 2017 Annual Catholic Appeal, "Sharing God's Gifts, Transforming Lives," raised \$11,499,108 in gifts and pledges on a goal of \$11 million thanks to the generous donors in the Diocese of Bridgeport. A total of 6,240 donors increased their giving by an astounding \$1,137,563. Over 145 volunteers assisted pastors and Development Office staff, making the 2017 Appeal a success.

The Annual Catholic Appeal enables the Church in the Diocese of Bridgeport to continue its mission of renewal; help youth develop their minds and grow in faith; feed and counsel the homeless and hungry who live among us; sustain our priests; provide Catholic education through scholarships; and much more. The 2018 Appeal begins on the weekend of January 20 and 21.

(To learn more, visit [www.2018ACAbidgeport.com](http://www.2018ACAbidgeport.com).)

**PLANNING TO BE IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA THIS WINTER?**

You are invited to join Bishop Caggiano for an afternoon reunion in Naples.

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2018**

*See you in the Sunshine State!*




Please contact Connie Von Zwehl for further details and your personal invitation by email at [ccvz@att.net](mailto:ccvz@att.net) or call 203-216-1608.

**Council of Religious of Bridgeport  
Free Lecture Open to the Public**

▶ **"Living our Faith Through Prison Ministry"**  
**Speaker: John Santa, Order of Malta**  
**Date: Monday, March 5, 2018**  
 (Snow Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2018)  
**Time: 7pm**  
**Place: The Catholic Center, Rm. L14,**  
**238 Jewett Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06606**



*"...I was in prison and you came to visit me."  
Matthew 25:36*

RSVP: Sr. Nancy by 3/1/18, 203-416-1511

### Individual Parish Results

		Pledged	Goal	%	
<b>DEANERY A</b>	Blessed Sacrament, Bridgeport	\$14,025	\$15,000	93.50%	
	Our Lady of Fatima, Bridgeport	31,590	30,000	105.30%	
	Saint Andrew, Bridgeport	76,331	75,000	101.77%	
	Saint Ann, Bridgeport	33,779	45,000	75.06%	
	Saint Charles Borromeo, Bridgeport	36,851	30,000	122.84%	
	Saint George, Bridgeport	11,790	17,000	69.35%	
	Saint Mary, Bridgeport	26,741	28,000	95.50%	
	Saint Michael the Archangel, Bridgeport	44,330	45,000	98.51%	
	Saint Peter, Bridgeport	36,125	45,000	80.28%	
	Saints Cyril and Methodius, Bridgeport	20,605	18,000	114.47%	
	Shrine of Saint Margaret, Bridgeport	41,217	33,000	124.90%	
	The Cathedral Parish, Bridgeport	86,665	95,000	91.23%	
<b>DEANERY B</b>	Holy Name of Jesus, Stratford	50,640	55,000	92.07%	
	Our Lady of Grace, Stratford	90,541	88,000	102.89%	
	Our Lady of Peace, Stratford	52,426	65,000	80.66%	
	Saint James, Stratford	136,296	130,000	104.84%	
	Saint Joseph, Shelton	92,527	90,000	102.81%	
	Saint Lawrence, Shelton	214,794	195,000	110.15%	
	Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, Shelton	68,155	51,000	133.64%	
	Saint Mark, Stratford	147,195	137,000	107.44%	
	Christ the King, Trumbull	73,834	80,000	92.29%	
	Saint Catherine of Siena, Trumbull	211,910	190,000	111.53%	
	Saint Jude, Monroe	166,879	190,000	87.83%	
	Saint Rose of Lima, Newtown	289,243	235,000	123.08%	
<b>DEANERY C</b>	Saint Stephen, Trumbull	132,034	125,000	105.63%	
	Saint Theresa, Trumbull	193,788	182,000	106.48%	
	<b>DEANERY D</b>	Holy Trinity Parish, Sherman	66,705	65,000	102.62%
		Immaculate Heart of Mary, Danbury	19,800	21,000	94.29%
		Our Lady of Guadalupe, Danbury	32,117	26,000	123.53%
		Sacred Heart, Danbury	49,315	42,000	117.42%
		Saint Edward, New Fairfield	205,615	200,000	102.81%
		Saint Gregory the Great, Danbury	101,613	100,000	101.61%
		Saint Joseph, Brookfield	135,970	130,000	104.59%
		Saint Joseph, Danbury	148,804	130,000	114.46%
		Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys, Brookfield	70,690	73,000	96.84%
		Saint Mary Parish, Bethel	170,059	160,000	106.29%
Saint Peter, Danbury		134,837	120,000	112.36%	
<b>DEANERY E</b>		Notre Dame, Easton	93,245	115,000	81.08%
	Our Lady of Fatima, Wilton	295,743	225,000	131.44%	
	Sacred Heart, Georgetown	48,834	90,000	54.26%	
	Saint Elizabeth Seton, Ridgefield	135,397	105,000	128.95%	
	Saint Francis of Assisi, Weston	121,430	105,000	115.65%	
	Saint Mary, Ridgefield	369,234	305,000	121.06%	
	Saint Patrick, Redding Ridge	98,910	60,000	164.85%	
	Assumption, Westport	213,026	195,000	109.24%	
	Holy Cross, Fairfield	22,173	18,000	123.18%	
	Holy Family, Fairfield	73,479	70,000	104.97%	
	Our Lady of Assumption, Fairfield	155,247	150,000	103.50%	
	Saint Anthony of Padua, Fairfield	156,375	140,000	111.70%	
<b>DEANERY F</b>	Saint Emery, Fairfield	23,853	21,000	113.59%	
	Saint Luke, Westport	214,964	225,000	95.54%	
	Saint Pius X, Fairfield	332,564	275,000	120.93%	
	Saint Thomas Aquinas, Fairfield	242,207	200,000	121.10%	
	<b>DEANERY G</b>	Saint Aloysius, New Canaan	925,871	600,000	154.31%
		Saint Jerome, Norwalk	99,070	85,000	116.55%
		Saint John, Darien	289,524	250,000	115.81%
		Saint Joseph, South Norwalk	55,020	55,000	100.04%
		Saint Ladislaus, South Norwalk	15,911	16,000	99.44%
		Saint Mary, Norwalk	128,101	107,500	119.16%
		Saint Matthew, Norwalk	202,368	200,000	101.18%
		Saint Philip, Norwalk	91,392	78,000	117.17%
Saint Thomas More, Darien		712,296	500,000	142.46%	
Saint Thomas the Apostle, East Norwalk		95,318	115,000	82.88%	
<b>DEANERY H</b>		Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist, Stamford	129,533	110,000	117.76%
		Holy Name of Jesus, Stamford	46,178	42,000	109.95%
	Holy Spirit, Stamford	158,981	106,000	149.98%	
	Our Lady Star of the Sea, Stamford	102,091	105,000	97.23%	
	Sacred Heart, Stamford	41,134	45,000	91.41%	
	Saint Benedict-Montserrat, Stamford	38,555	40,000	96.39%	
	Saint Bridget, Stamford	61,582	58,000	106.18%	
	Saint Cecilia, Stamford	109,301	105,000	104.10%	
	Saint Clement, Stamford	56,475	53,000	106.56%	
	Saint Gabriel, Stamford	63,445	57,000	111.31%	
	Saint Leo, Stamford	490,625	325,000	150.96%	
	Saint Mary, Stamford	36,950	45,000	82.11%	
<b>DEANERY I</b>	Saint Maurice, Stamford	58,875	60,000	98.13%	
	Sacred Heart, Greenwich	50,000	50,000	100.00%	
	Saint Agnes, Greenwich	48,005	55,000	87.28%	
	Saint Catherine of Siena, Riverside	209,448	200,000	104.72%	
	Saint Mary, Greenwich	380,705	400,000	95.18%	
	Saint Michael, Greenwich	436,658	350,000	124.76%	
	Saint Paul, Greenwich	132,456	116,000	114.19%	
	Saint Roch, Greenwich	58,312	55,000	106.02%	

Unspecified 62,414

Total \$11,499,108

# Fifth Encuentro energizes Hispanics

## Pastoral event of the decade

By FATHER GUSTAVO FALLA

A few months after Pope Francis revived the expression "Missionary Discipleship" in his encyclical letter "The Joy of the Gospel," a fresh wave of missionary initiatives came over the Church throughout the world. In our country, this wave is at the core of a remarkable missionary effort that is slowly being implemented through the Office of Cultural Diversity of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. This missionary effort is known as the V Encuentro (Fifth Encounter) and it is, without a doubt, the pastoral event of the decade in the Catholic Church in the U.S.

The Fifth National Encuentro is a process of evangelization, consultation and mission that was officially launched to discern ways for the Church in the United

States to help Hispanic Catholics strengthen their response as missionary disciples for the entire Church. These findings will bring increased energy, not only to Hispanic Catholics but to the entire Church in this country.

The Diocese of Bridgeport has been involved in the Encuentro process since the First National Encuentro, Encuentro 2000, held in Los Angeles, California, on July 6-9, 2000.

It was an opportunity for the Church in the United States to discover ways in which Catholic communities can be one Church yet come from diverse cultures and ethnicities. By this year, one hundred and sixty-three dioceses have engaged in the Fifth National Encuentro.

Nationwide, 38 percent of adult Catholics identify their ethnicity as Hispanic. In the Diocese of Bridgeport, it is over

20 percent, and nearly 40 percent among young adults.

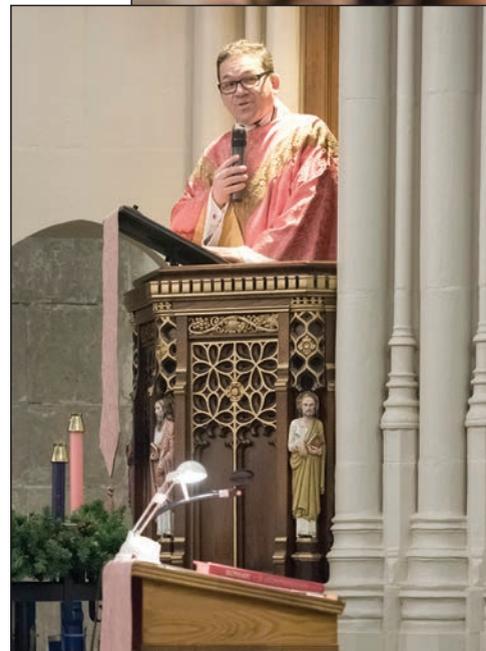
Forty percent of all growth in registered parishioners in Catholic parishes between 2005 and 2010 was from Hispanic Catholics. In surveys, the vast majority say their faith is an important part of their daily life, and they are proud to be Catholic.

To better understand what the V Encuentro is all about, it is essential to revisit the Pope's encyclical and, particularly, to read what he says about Missionary Discipleship. In the words of Pope Francis: "By virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized.

"Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love."

And personal involvement is what the V Encuentro emphasizes. Described as a process rather than a program, it is designed to lead participants to a personal encounter with Jesus through the implementation of five simple yet profound Bible-based modules. A straightforward meeting format designed for small groups, it has the power to guide and engage people of all ages, cultures and traditions in the rediscovery of Christ's presence and message.

When implemented, five modules that are based on the events that took place on the road to Emmaus reach into both the mind and heart in such a way



THE FIFTH NATIONAL ENCUESTRO was launched to help Hispanics Catholics strengthen their response as missionary disciples for the entire Church. Hispanic faithful of the Diocese of Bridgeport will attend a diocesan Encuentro on February 17 at St. Mary Parish in Stamford, followed by regional and national conferences. (PARA ESPAÑOL, VÉASE LA PÁGINA 27)

completed and, thanks to Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, faithful of the Diocese of Bridgeport are preparing to attend their own diocesan Encuentro, which is scheduled for February 17 at St. Mary Parish in Stamford. After our diocesan Encuentro, fifty delegates will be attending a Regional Encuentro in Hartford on March 10.

In late September, the National V Encuentro conference will be held at Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. The results of this conference are expected to have a tremendous impact in the life of the Church in the United States.

that it allows participants an opportunity to experience God's saving love, preparing them to do what Pope Francis calls a Christian challenge: to go out and proclaim the love of God.

As one leader in the Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri, so

eloquently put it, "People who were alienated from the parish have come closer. People who have never led a group, now feel a desire to share their gifts. The communities and leaders with more experience are realizing that there is great potential in individuals who they have never considered or really seen before."

Glory to God!

At the national level, 104 diocesan Encuentros have been



(Father Gustavo Falla is diocesan vicar for Hispanic Catholics and pastor of both St. Mary and St. Benedict-Our Lady of Montserrat parishes in Stamford.)

(For more information on the V Encuentro visit [vencuentro.org](http://vencuentro.org))

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# Diocesan Finances

## Transparency is 'key' to diocesan viability

BRIDGEPORT—In the continued practice of full transparency, the Diocese of Bridgeport has released its Consolidated Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2017.

The consolidated audited report is posted online on the diocesan website. The development and implementation of the diocesan turn-around strategy over the past three years has resulted in positive results consisting of a surplus in operations. A stronger financial position is presented with an increase in assets, controlled liabilities and positive net assets for the first time in many years.

"Transparency is key as we continue to work toward long-term financial sustainability for the diocese and continue to be good stewards of resources entrusted to us," said Michael Hanlon, CPA, chief financial officer of the diocese.

"Our priorities continue to be the presentation of clear, timely and comprehensive financial reports, particularly as the diocese moves forward with synod initiatives, mission-related programs and investment in the future," Hanlon said.

The diocesan fiscal policy continues to focus on a strategy of returning the diocese to financial stability, viability, long-term growth and sustainability, he added.

Many initiatives from the synod have been implemented and funded, including the Catholic Leadership Institute and ongoing pastoral and strategic planning for parishes.

Hanlon said he was very pleased to learn that the Diocese of Bridgeport ranked near the top of a much-reported Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) nationwide study of diocesan financial transparency practices and policies.

The VOTF study reviewed the financial transparency and accountability of 145 dioceses and 32 archdioceses by analyzing transparency practices and policies. On a scale of 0-60, the Diocese of Bridgeport received a score of 55 for its efforts toward financial transparency.

"The VOTF analysis affirms the fact that we continue to follow transparency and industry best practices mandated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano upon his arrival

in 2013. Under Bishop Caggiano's leadership, we remain committed to full financial transparency and best practices," he said.

The newly-released consolidated financial statements report operational revenues, support and other changes totaling \$44.6 million, and total expenses from operations before depreciation of \$42.6 million, resulting in income from operations before depreciation of \$2 million for the 12-month period ended June 30, 2017.

Hanlon said the consolidated financial statement includes activities related to diocesan operations, employee benefits and insurance programs, cemetery operations and other activities.

Diocesan operations report total revenue and support and other changes of \$23.2 million, resulting in a \$10,000 surplus from operations. The audit reports positive operational results, however slight, for the first time in many years.

Additional revenues and other changes from non-operating activities and depreciation, and other pension-related expenses, resulted in an increase of net assets totaling \$5.5 million for the year.

A large portion of this increase is related to priest pension and postretirement medical expense projections totaling \$4.2 million, related to an increase in interest rates used in actuarial assumptions as well as strong investment returns.

Employee benefits and insurance programs continue to be the largest expense recorded within the diocesan financial statements totaling \$17.2 million, or 38.8% of \$44.3 million in total expenses including depreciation. Religious and lay personnel salaries totaled \$9.8 million or 22.1% of total expenses. And grants and contributions totaled \$6.7 million or 15.1% of total expenses.

Grants and contributions to support mission related, educational and youth programs include the Bishops Scholarship Fund within Foundations in Education, Catholic Charities, the Cardinal Shehan Center, the McGivney Center, St. Catherine's Center for Special Needs and other diocesan-related programs.

The consolidated diocesan statement of financial position reports total assets of \$87.1 mil-



MICHAEL HANLON,  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

lion, liabilities of \$44.1 million and total net assets of \$43 million.

Hanlon explained that the positive change in net assets from prior year deficits was a result of examining the accounting treatment for the large, underfunded lay pension obligation, which has been reported within the diocesan consolidated financial statements since 2004.

He said a sub-committee of the Diocesan Finance Council was formed early during 2017 to explore alternatives and develop recommendations to resolve the underfunding of the lay pension liability. In exploring the

lay pension plan document, the treatment and recording of the obligation within the diocesan consolidated financial statements was questioned under accounting rules governing U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

The diocesan auditors concluded, following a review of accounting rules and a legal opinion, that the lay pension obligation should not be reported as a liability within the diocesan consolidated financial statements but rather reported within its footnotes according to the accounting rules for a multi-employer pension plan. This change resulted in the removal of approximately \$107 million in lay pension obligations from the diocesan consolidated financial statement. The finance council sub-committee continues to explore solutions for the underfunded lay pension obligations and recommendations will be finalized at the Finance Council meeting later this month.

"As we continue on our path of stability, viability and sustainability we continue to search for alternative sources of revenue, examine all operational expenses, and to eliminate our outstanding debt," Hanlon said.

As of June 30, 2017, the Knights

of Columbus obligation was \$ 8.3 million (down from the original \$15 million note.) Since the issuance of the consolidated financial statements, this debt has been reduced to \$6 million, utilizing proceeds from the sale of the Augustana Homes in October 2017.

Hanlon said a strategy will be finalized in the near future to identify asset sales or other funds that will be used to eliminate the remaining debt balance which will save approximately \$270,000 annually in interest expense from the diocesan operational budget.

A recent reorganization of Catholic Cemeteries operations and the engagement of Catholic Management Services to manage cemetery operations has led to a plan for major improvements, efficiencies and strategic vision for enhanced resources to support the 15 diocesan cemeteries in Fairfield County.

Hanlon said the continued work of the school Education Commission, which is partnering with schools in developing plans for reorganization and/or operational viability, is reducing the medical premium and insurance burden absorbed by the diocese, while synod-initiated pastoral

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## A Night of Unity in Christ

STAMFORD—A "Night of Unity in Christ," an evening of prayer, personal testimony and music will be held at Trinity Catholic High School on Thursday February 1, from 7-9 pm in Stamford.

"This is our third Night of Unity, and our theme this time is 'All Things New'. It will be an ecumenical evening of great contemporary worship music, prayer and speakers," said Liz Sweeney, who is one of the event coordinators.

Speakers are from different ministries in the area and will be introduced by Trinity students who will also share their testimonies, their stories of Christ's work in their lives.

Speakers include Trinity Catholic Chaplain Father Joseph Gill; Bill Gestal of the Presbyterian Church of Old Greenwich; Franklin Farquhar,



Focus Youth Ministry; and Trinity Catholic students

"Each speaker will give his or her testimony, telling the story of God's work in each life in becoming a new creation," Sweeney said.

Music will be provided by Angelo Natalie and Dani Wasserman, with a special

appearance by Zabbai, a Christian Rap artist from the Stamford community. He is currently working on his second album and shares a powerful message in his music.

(Trinity Catholic High School is located at 916 Newfield Avenue in Stamford. All are welcome and admission is free.)

# Faith Formation

## Untangling Marriage Prep snag affirms faith

By PAT HENNESSY

“A Catholic marriage adds a sense of the importance of our relationship with each other and our relationship with God,” says Monica Alvarez.

For Monica and her fiancé, Pedro Fonseca, the importance of the Sacrament of Matrimony made them willing to put in extra effort to bring it about.

On a spin-off of the saying “It takes a village,” their wedding day approaches fulfillment this February with the assistance of Rose Talbot-Babey in the office of Faith Formation, and the time, education and support of Father Andy Vill, parochial vicar of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Stamford.

Pedro and Monica met for the first time on the train platform in Stamford. Oddly, Pedro was living in New York City and working in Stamford; Monica lived in Stamford and was commuting to Manhattan. It took several encounters before Pedro could gather courage to ask the “girl on the platform” to go out for coffee. “I’m from Brazil, and we don’t do things that way,” he says. “I had never asked a girl out.”

A few weeks later, after plenty of texts and phone calls, they went to Cortina Restaurant in Stamford after work.

“We talked and talked. Our dinner started at 6 pm and lasted till ten—four hours! What was so impressive was that we didn’t

see the time passing,” Pedro remembers.

Six months after the first date, at a New Year’s Eve dinner in Toronto, Canada, Pedro went down on one knee and asked Monica to marry him.

“I think from the beginning we always knew,” says Monica. “For us, I think God placed us together. I told him that I had strong religious beliefs and wouldn’t move in with him before our wedding, and he felt the same way.”

Happy plans got underway. But there was a drawback.

Raised in Stamford, Monica had been born in Guatemala. Most of her extended family still lived there. “I wanted to get married in Antigua, Guatemala, in the church where I was baptized,” explained Monica. “I had dreamed since I was a little girl of a wedding in that place.”

Pedro comes from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Guatemala was a midpoint for everyone. The parish priest welcomed them, and they arranged the wedding date. “The only thing he asked,” said Monica, “was for Pedro to have all his sacraments.”

That wasn’t so easy. Pedro had been baptized and had his First Holy Communion in Brazil, but had never been confirmed. A visit to the diocesan website and a flurry of phone calls followed, leading the couple to Rose Talbot-Babey.

“The bishop talks about accompaniment and journeying with people one-on-one,” says Talbot-Babey. “I wanted Pedro and Monica to have a good feeling about the Church, and experi-



BLESSING UPON BLESSING—wishing to have their wedding celebrated in the Catholic faith, Pedro Fonseca studied for and received the Sacrament of Confirmation. He and his fiancée, Monica Alvarez, shown here at Pedro’s Confirmation, found a re-affirmation of faith in the help of those who made their dreams a reality.

ence Christ here.”

She connected Pedro to Father Vill at St. John’s for an intensive adult formation course.

“I visited him in August and we started Confirmation classes. I read the book, and then we met every week. At eight every Thursday morning, Father Andy put on coffee and we started talking about religion, going back through history and leading up to why it is important today. It became a friendship.”

“It was a great experience for me,” agrees Father Vill. “Pedro would pop in and we’d have coffee. He was the best prepared student I ever had. We’d start talking about the faith and then we’d move on to talk about how his marriage preparation was going. Rose had looked into possible Confirmation dates, so we could make sure he was confirmed in time to get the

paperwork done and sent to Guatemala.”

On All Saints Day, November 1, Pedro received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Frank J. Caggiano at St. Cecilia Church in Stamford. Both families were there. Although Father Vill couldn’t make the ceremony, Rose was on hand to join the celebration.

“Rose and Father Andy were awesome,” Pedro said. “For me, the experience was a re-affirmation of my faith. Having people who were there for me was a real blessing.”

On Saturday, February 17, Pedro and Monica will exchange wedding vows in the church where Monica was baptized. Their blessed, sacramental marriage will reflect their love of God, who will continue to be present as their lives move into the future. ■

## Preparing for Rite of Election

TRUMBULL—This year’s Rite of Election will take place on Sunday, February 18, the First Sunday in Lent, in St. Theresa Church, 5301 Main Street, Trumbull, at 2 pm.

This event symbolizes the desire by all catechumens and candidates to become fully received into the Catholic Church by presenting themselves before Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. A catechumen is a person who has never been baptized; a candidate either was baptized in a different Christian denomination and wishes to enter the Catholic Church, or an adult who received the Sacrament of Baptism as a Catholic but did not receive First Holy Communion or Confirmation.

As in past years, the Rite of Election will have close to 300 individuals from over 82 parishes throughout the diocese who have spent several months in formation and discernment with Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) teams. Their journey into the fullness of faith will culminate with the reception of their sacraments at the Easter Vigil Mass in their home parishes.

“It is always exciting to accompany individuals as they explore just what kind a difference having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ can make in your life! I am so proud of their accomplishments and the spiritual growth they experience through the RCIA process,” said Rose Talbot-Babey, coordinator of faith formation.

(For more information about the Rite of Election or the RCIA process, contact Deirdra Kearney in the Office of Faith Formation: [dkeraney@diobpt.org](mailto:dkeraney@diobpt.org)) ■



### FINANCIALS FROM PAGE 7

and strategic planning is ongoing within our parishes.

The \$3.5 million Queen of Clergy expansion project has been completed, along with the first phase of the remodeling of St. John Fisher’s Seminary. Both residences are in Stamford.

The establishment and growth of various diocesan-sponsored foundations now includes Foundations in Faith (formerly named The Faith in the Future Fund, Inc.), Foundations in Education, and the near-future establishment of Foundations in

Charities, all of which will provide much needed support for diocesan mission-related activities.

Programs included within the diocesan financial statements include the St. John Fisher Seminary; the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of Clergy Retirement Home for Diocesan Priests; the Newman Center at Western Connecticut State University; Teresian Towers and Carmel Ridge Estates, life use and rental properties for elderly residents; and pastoral care services for residents in nursing homes formerly

owned by the diocese.

Hanlon said the diocese will continue to address ongoing challenges including medical and benefit costs, caring for a growing number of retired priests, the continued development and implementation of viability plans for schools and parishes, synod-related initiatives and programs and finding solutions for long term pension liabilities.

(The complete audited reports are available online. To learn more, visit the diocesan website: [www.bridgeport-diocese.com/financialreports](http://www.bridgeport-diocese.com/financialreports).) ■

# St. Mary Parish, Stamford

## Standing with immigrants

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

"I come here with a very simple message: our Church and its people stand by all who are here with us, whether documented or undocumented," Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said to members of St. Mary Parish in Stamford on December 17.

The bishop's visit to the parish, which was founded in 1907 and built by Irish and other immigrants, began with Mass in the historic church on 566 Elm Street.

Almost 1,000 turned out for the 1 pm Mass in Spanish, followed by lunch in the large basement room under the church. The bishop celebrated the Mass, assisted by Father Gustavo Falla, pastor, and Father Abelardo Vasquez, parochial vicar.

The Mass was occasioned by a growing concern about the impact of immigration policies that are

from your brothers and sisters across the diocese."

During the panel discussion after lunch, men and women, many with young children sitting quietly beside them, listened intently as Bishop Caggiano shared his own family's immigration experience. He said that his father came to the United States in 1955, and

for years, paid taxes and have been good citizens. Others fled for their lives when they entered illegally, and many receive bad legal advice.

The bishop said he is also deeply troubled by immigration policies "that are beginning to break up the family of God, in addition to individual families."



"WE WILL ALWAYS BE A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS," Bishop Caggiano said to almost 1,000 faithful who turned out for the 1 pm Spanish Mass at St. Mary Church in Stamford. The bishop celebrated the Mass in Spanish, assisted by Father Gustavo Falla, pastor, and Father Abelardo Vasquez, parochial vicar. During the panel discussion after lunch, men and women, many with young children sitting quietly beside them, listened intently as Bishop Caggiano shared his own family's immigration experience. He said the Church will stand by all those in need.

his mother followed in 1957.

He told the Spanish-speaking parishioners that his father arrived here with a third-grade education and his mother had completed eighth grade. They left their poor Italian village for economic opportunity, and were fortunate to come to a country that welcomed immigrants.

"The nation is beginning to forget its soul," the bishop said, "but the Church has not forgotten. We will always be a nation of immigrants. We stand with you."

Bishop Caggiano said the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has advocated for immigration reform that supports the presence of the "Dreamers," who were brought to this country as children, and creates a path to citizenship for those already in the U.S.

The bishop added that "one of the finest diocesan seminarians is a 'Dreamer' who is at risk of deportation if Congress does not amend the law."

He said most of the undocumented have lived in this country

Attendance in some Spanish-speaking parishes in Bridgeport is down by 30 percent. Likewise, fewer families are attending events or enrolling their children in schools.

"This is breaking my heart," said the bishop about the fear that is driving many people into hiding. "I need for you to know that everyone is welcome. Do not be afraid to come and worship at Mass or attend programs."

The bishop said that the present immigration laws are not working and that the U.S. bishops will continue to advocate for justice and outreach to immigrants.

Alex Arevalo, director of immigration services for Catholic Charities, shared his own path to citizenship and discussed the services available to those in need of help.

Just before the final blessing, the bishop told the gathering, "This is only the beginning of our conversation. We will do more outreach in the months ahead. We stand with you and also ask for your prayers." ■



dividing young families and creating fear in the community.

Just before Thanksgiving, a woman and mother of two young children from the parish received a deportation notice. Earlier in the year, parishioners of St. Jerome Church in Norwalk rallied to support another mother who also faced deportation.

"The Church does not approve of this kind of behavior. It does not want to see families broken up," the bishop said.

"We live in a troubled time and there are many challenges we face together," the bishop said in remarks at the end of Mass. "I come here to assure you that you are never far from my heart and

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Gospel for January 28, 2018  
Mark 1:21-28

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B, when Jesus began to speak. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

CAPERNAUM	SABBATH	SYNAGOGUE
TAUGHT	AS ONE	AUTHORITY
A MAN	UNCLEAN	SPIRIT
CRIED OUT	NAZARETH	KNOW
HOLY ONE	REBUKED	COME OUT
AMAZED	WHAT IS THIS	OBEY HIM
SPREAD		REGION

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U R N L B E T P A N S A  
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## EDITORIAL

## Changing Face

The American Catholic Church is experiencing one of the largest demographic and cultural shifts in the history of the U.S., according to research by Father Tom Gaunt, SJ, director of CARA, a leading Catholic research institute located at Georgetown University.

Father Gaunt visited the diocese recently at the invitation of the Leadership Institute, and in an insightful and challenging presentation he described a Church undergoing profound change as the population shifts from the Northeast and Midwest to the South and West.

However, demographics are only part of the story. A growing number of people who identify as "Catholic" in national surveys do not attend Mass on a regular basis or at all. Likewise, their children receive little if any religious education and do not receive the sacraments.

There is a riddle in this information: when inactive Catholics are surveyed, they readily identify as Catholic, place value on prayer and the Eucharist, and agree that children should be raised within the Church. But many will not drive their second grade children to church on Sunday.

Father Gaunt, a noted sociologist, said that at present 104 million people in the U.S. say that they are or were Catholic at some point in their lives. Fifty-three million of those attend Mass on Christmas and Easter, another 25 million never go to Church, and 19 million, representing about 24 percent of all Catholics, attend Mass weekly.

While the research poses many challenges, there was much good news in the explosive growth of the Church in the South and West and the attitudes of young people. Researchers were surprised to find that even among teenagers who have little knowledge of the faith, Catholic identity is strong.

There is also much good in our own diocese. Under the leadership of Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, the diocese has asked the right questions and created a process of renewal that engages the young, makes our parishes more welcoming, and invites those who have left the Church to return.

And Father Gaunt believes the lifetime identification with Catholicism keeps the door open for re-engagement with the Church. "Catholic identity is like the water you drink, the air you breathe. It persists even if you don't show up," Father Gaunt said. "We can't forget how powerful the Catholic imagination and culture are and how enduring they are in people's lives."

## Entering the Desert

Bishop Caggiano recently led a diocesan delegation of young adults on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The group experienced powerful moments as they walked in the footsteps of Jesus through many biblical sites. In this reflection, written upon his return to the diocese, the bishop shares an extraordinary insight he experienced in the Judean desert about the need for us to walk into the desert and empty spaces to find God. As we prepare to begin the season of Lent, his words are an invitation to deeper prayer.

"One of the most powerful moments during my recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land was an unexpected detour into the Judean desert. Our guide, Father Paul, called it his "surprise." In fact, the Lord also had many surprises to offer my fellow pilgrims and me during the 30 minutes we spent in the desert.

The spot that we visited was a cliff that overlooked a deep valley in which an ancient Roman aqueduct continues to this day to provide water to an ancient Greek Orthodox monastery carved into the stone wall located on opposite side of the valley. The landscape was stark and seeming dead. Father asked us to sit quietly, to empty our minds and discover why the desert played such an important role in the life of St. John the Baptist and more importantly, the Lord Jesus.

As I stood in silence, I became quickly aware of the sound of the water echoing in my ears. I began to feel at peace despite the harshness of the surroundings. While there was a great emptiness, I also began to sense that the desert had its own life that I did not initially recognize. As I began to calm my mind and heart, I soon began to feel a great sense of belonging—a feeling that the Lord was very close to me, offering himself to me without the distractions of my ordinary life. I soon found myself praying deeply without even realizing it.

Since that afternoon, my thoughts have often returned to that stark and empty place, precisely because it was not empty at all. The Lord dwells there in his power and love, offering anyone who wishes to find him in his quiet and simplicity. Now that I am home, I want to re-enter the desert every day. For the desert is anywhere you and I are willing to sit in quiet, empty our thoughts and allow the Lord to come to us in his love." ■

## EDITOR'S CHOICE

## Deanery G priests put faith in action

STAMFORD—Msgr. Walter Orłowski, pastor of St. Matthew Parish and leader of Deanery G, joined ten other priests from the Diocese of Bridgeport's Deanery G, Mary, Mother of Divine Grace, in service at New Covenant Center, Stamford. They prepared and served a full meal to 67 guests, sorted and stocked vegetables and produce in the food pantry, and assisted 40 guests who were shopping in the pantry.

First row: (left to right); Msgr. Walter C. Orłowski; Father Juan Gabriel Acosta, pastor, St. Ladislaus, Norwalk. Second row: Father Sudhir D'Souza, pastor, St. Philip Parish, Norwalk; Father Robert Kinnally, pastor, St. Aloysius Parish, New Canaan; Father Christopher Perrella, parochial vicar, St. John Parish, Darien; Father Tomi Thomas, parochial vicar, St. Matthew Parish, Norwalk; Father Paul Murphy, pastor, St. Thomas More Parish, Darien; Father Paul Sankar, chaplain, Norwalk Hospital, St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Norwalk; Father Rojin Mammachan, parochial vicar, St. Jerome Parish, Norwalk; Father Richard Cipolla, pastor, St. Mary Parish, Norwalk; and Father David Blanchfield, pastor, St. Jerome Parish, Norwalk.



## CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

The Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano, Bishop of Bridgeport, has made the following clergy appointments in the Diocese of Bridgeport:

## PASTOR

FATHER ELIO A. SOSA, IVE, from Parochial Administrator of Saint George Parish, Bridgeport, to Pastor of Saint Ann Parish, Bridgeport. Effective date is January 22.

## PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATOR

MONSIGNOR J. PETER CULLEN, P.A., to temporary Parochial Administrator of Saint George Parish, Bridgeport. Effective date is January 22.

## PAROCHIAL VICAR

FATHER DONALD L. KLOSTER, JR., from ministry in the Archdiocese of Guayaquil, Ecuador, to Parochial Vicar of Saint Mary Parish, Norwalk. Effective date is February 5.

## CHAPLAIN

FATHER BRUCE F. ROBY, from Episcopal Chaplain, Sacred Heart University, to Chaplain, The Newman Center, Western

Connecticut State University. Effective date was December 15. Father Roby will reside at Saint Peter Parish in Danbury.

FATHER FLAVIAN BEJAN, new to the Diocese from the Diocese of Iasi, Romania, to Parochial Vicar of Saint Theresa Parish, Trumbull. Effective date is December 21 through June 21.

Father Joseph A. Marcello  
Vicar for Clergy, January, 2018

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# Editorial



## Our bodies, ourselves—naturally

### A WOMAN'S VIEW

BY JANIE NNEJI

*Janie Nneji is a member of St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield, where she is active in adult faith formation and the Respect Life committee.*

There is a growing national movement, a new feminism, to help women understand the power of their cycle and in so doing help them be confident and proud of their fertility and femininity. This self awareness also empowers a woman to become more comfortable with choosing a family planning method the Catholic Church advocates, frees her from the use of inorganic contraceptives, and increases the level of intimacy and communication with her spouse.

How did I come to believing in the new feminism?

Let me start by saying that I am a convert to the Catholic faith

and that I am always experiencing continuous conversion as my relationship with the Trinity deepens.

In my 20s, in the 1980s and in the age of the feminism movement, I somehow thought being a woman meant “being more like a man.” I even had to wear tie-neck blouses with my suits! I thought that to be successful I had to compete like a man on men’s terms. That was how to naturally be the best at being a woman.

I was sold on the notion that contraception and abortion allowed me to take control of my reproductive rights, which was posited by the women’s rights movement as empowering women.

Over the years as I grew in

my Catholic faith, I read Pope St. John Paul II’s document on the feminine genius. I took a class on Theology of the Body. I read parts of *Humanae Vitae*. I participated in many Scripture studies. I couldn’t help but observe the different answers my Catholic faith was offering to women’s reproductive challenges, which I thought I understood well as a woman.

I was also aware of what was happening in the world: the rise in the rate of infertility, depression, prescription abuse, domestic violence, children lost to chemical and surgical abortion and post-abortion angst. Could these in part be the result of a culture that is overly dependent on medication and the technological solution?

Fertility is not a disease, so why is it one of the few areas where medication is prescribed when you are healthy? Since fertility is not a disease, why can’t a woman use natural methods to avoid risks associated with the use of artificial contraceptives? A woman can take advantage of effective pregnancy planning with fertility charting. Independent studies have shown that fertility

awareness methods and natural family planning methods, when used correctly, are as effective as the pill. Note these natural methods ARE NOT the rhythm method, which had a high failure rate due to the fact that it was not specific to each woman.

You are empowered if you know how to interpret the information your body provides by daily charting. You discover your inherent value and behavioral norms. You are able to make better decisions including how to avoid getting pregnant. On the other hand, fertility charting has the added benefits of helping you get pregnant when the objective is to get pregnant, a choice hormonal contraceptives cannot help.

It took years, but I went from Pro-choice to Pro-life and I still feel a lot of work needs to be done to support the Pro-life position. The work includes educating on Theology of the Body, fertility awareness and support through all stages of reproductive life, affordable health care, and equal pay for equal work.

How is one supposed to live her faith and be the best woman

she can be if the resources are not readily available? Why are there so few fertility care practitioners?

The good news is that others are like-minded and are working to effect change. Angela Marchetti and Alexandra McLaughlin, two fertility care practitioners in our diocese, are launching a program called Beyoutifully Made this January. The program seeks to cultivate an appreciation for the beauty of womanhood in pre-teens, teens, singles and married women.

In addition, Project Beloved is a newly created non-profit seeking to uphold the dignity of women and bring truly pro-life healthcare to our area. This non-profit seeks to raise at least \$1 million—the approximate cost of opening a comprehensive women’s medical clinic in Stamford, and operating it for one year. This clinic will provide proactive, effective and life affirming physical and emotional health services and education programs, including natural birth methods for all women.

*(For more information on these programs, visit [www.beyoutifullymade.life](http://www.beyoutifullymade.life) and [www.projectbeloved.com](http://www.projectbeloved.com).)*



## Keys in the Song of Love

### A DAD'S VIEW

BY MATTHEW HENNESSEY

*Matthew Hennessey and his family are parishioners of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Stamford.*

The elevator that takes you up to the Gramercy Typewriter Company is as ancient as the machines they sell there, though nowhere near as cool. The names ring distant bells: Royal, Underwood, Remington, Corona. Restored to original glory, they gleam like vintage showroom Buicks.

I visited the Manhattan store twice in December, both times looking for something real and rooted to plant under the Christmas tree. Kids seem always to want the newest and latest

things. Parents dream of passing on the sturdy and meaningful things.

Can a business machine have meaning? These beauties did—at least to me.

If it’s been a while since you used a typewriter, you will likely have forgotten the truly piercing sound the typebar makes when it strikes the ribbon. You will also probably underestimate the substantial downward fingerforce required to make the thing go. You gotta really whump it.

\*clickety-clack clickety-clack ding ziiiiiiip\*

Gosh, I love the noise it makes. It’s elemental. The rhythm pricks something permanent in my pituitary. No mouse click can produce the glee of slamming home the carriage at the end of a line. No ctrl+P comes close to the sweet satisfaction of tearing a finished page up and away from the cylinder, which is by the way known as a platen.

Get yourself one of these time machines and a long-lost vocabulary emerges from the slush pile of memory: bail bar, ribbon reverse, paper finger, cam. What masterpieces they are—of design, of utility. What a lost world. How familiar it remains.

My wife and I are doing our best to raise our kids in a pre-digital fantasy land. Homeschooling helps, but we don’t live in a biosphere. Our kids know what’s out there. They think they know what they’re missing. Those of us enslaved to the false idol of “staying connected” understand that the digital world isn’t much worth missing.

Still, kids want the news and the latest. Our Clara is nearly 14. She takes some online courses, and is driven by the teenager’s natural desire for constant contact. We gave her an email account. But that’s about it—no social media and no smartphones for as long as we can get away with it.

So far, so good. Check back in a year or two. Pray we’re doing the right thing. It feels right. Who knows?

To call the Gramercy Typewriter Company a store is a stretch. There are two rooms, both cramped, one a workshop bramble of tools and parts, the other an office-showroom combo. Father and son run the place, restoring old machines with the same passion you find among fanatics of the Ford Mustang or Fender Stratocaster.

Everything is perfection. Everything is gorgeous. And everything works, reassuringly, like a dream. They are a little platoon of competence, pursuing a vocation abandoned by the big

world—and making a go of it too. The heart smiles at the thought.

Don’t take this for a commercial. I didn’t even buy anything from them. The fact of the matter is these guys are working the high end of the antique typewriter market. Too rich for Hennessey blood, and too good to boot. But game respect game, as they say in the NFL.

I ended up snagging Clara a 1967 Smith Corona Super Sterling on eBay. This sucker is straight out of Mad Men, and fun for the whole family. It has proved popular for post-Christmas thank you notes and group composition of a running story about a heroic mouse leading a band of rebels against a tyrannical king. We never did this before we had a typewriter.

Everyone has supplied a sentence to the story. The little ones dictated their contributions. The big kids played secretary. The parents sat back and enjoyed the old-time music.

\*clickety-clack ding ziiiiiiip\*

# Danbury

## Immaculate High initiates Distance Learning Program

DANBURY—Immaculate High School has opened its doors to students enrolled in regional Catholic elementary schools through its innovative online Distance Learning (DL) Algebra I Honors course.

Unlike many distance learning courses, this course is highly interactive, engages students in collaborative thinking and creative group projects. The DL program not only satisfies the academic opportunities for students, it alleviates the social pressure of middle school students enrolled in a classroom with high-schoolers.

“The DL program was designed to assist our partner Catholic middle school math teachers by providing higher-level math classes for some of their stu-

dents. Although the middle school teachers had students participating in enrichment activities and providing peer tutoring, students with exceptional talents were not being challenged,” said Mary Maloney, president of Immaculate High School. “In 2014, we offered to have middle school students enroll in our early morning Algebra I class, but that posed some logistical problems for parents and was socially uncomfortable for the students. In 2016, we realized that we had the technology, talent and staff to be able to offer virtual DL classes to the students.”

Immaculate High School launched its first virtual Distance Learning (DL) Program in the 2017-18 school year. Program coordinator and math teach-

er Monica Ortega teaches an Algebra I Honors course to 15 eighth-grade students from local Catholic elementary schools electronically. Students are selected during the spring of their seventh grade year. To be eligible to enroll in the program, students must have achieved 90 percent or higher in mathematics and 85 percent or higher in reading standardized test scores as well as score a 90 percent on an IHS prerequisite exam. In addition, students must have the endorsement of their school principal and middle school math teacher as well as have parent permission.

Unlike traditional courses, a distance learning course is self-directed. Students complete assignments based on a teacher-created



MONICA ORTEGA, PROGRAM COORDINATOR and math teacher for Immaculate High School's Distance Learning Algebra I Honors course, connects with her students from Catholic elementary schools taking the virtual course.

schedule. Each morning, students and Ortega log into a daily meeting module where they communicate through video/audio conferencing as well as text chatting. To ensure the safety of the elementary students enrolled in the program, a teacher monitor is assigned by the elementary school to be present in the classroom.

Ortega uses Educreations to post lesson videos for the students to use to take notes, learn vocabulary and engage in independent problem-solving activities. Through Google Hangouts, students engage in some flipped classroom sessions, which provide an opportunity for students to peer-learn through group work with enrolled virtual classmates. The Algebra I Honors DL course requires two or three face-to-face meetings, parent-teacher conferences and individual student meetings.

Immaculate High School credit is awarded to DL students who complete the two-semester course requirements, including an official high school final examination. The credit and grade are recorded on the student's Immaculate High School accredited transcript during their eighth grade year and transfers to their first year of any high school where the student enrolls.

The Immaculate program introduces students to selected high school courses outside the traditional classroom setting. Principal Maloney said that the decision to launch the program was also based on providing elementary students an opportunity to begin their high school experience and transition easily into

AP and Early College Experience courses during their high school years. “The Algebra I Honors course seemed to be the right place to pilot the DL program, and it has proved highly successful,” she said.

Ortega believes that the students are embracing the virtual learning. “I am especially proud

of how they approach a challenge; they are hungry for learning and enjoy the rigor of applying their skills to real world situa-

tions,” she said.

“The principals have been pleased with the results, and parents appreciate that their children are receiving a preview of the expectations of honors level work. The DL program also provides students lessons during class times, encouraging all math students to succeed at their own level and pace,” Ortega noted.

Student feedback has been positive. “My experience in this class has been great. I am challenged more than I was in previous math classes. My teacher addresses all my needs even though we are not in the same room. I feel like I will have a step up going into high school,” said Caroline Tucker of St. Mary School in Bethel.

“This course is amazing—every day is a new experience of learning; the topic is always well covered and we use simple real-world examples to understand how math is incorporated in everyday life. This course is giving me an upper hand for high school,” said Magdalena Swierczek, also from St. Mary's.

Kiera McCoy of St. Joseph  
▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

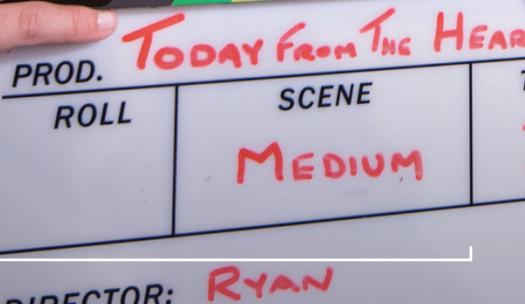
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# Sacred Heart Greenwich

## New head for Upper School

GREENWICH—Sacred Heart Greenwich has appointed Jennifer Phelan Bensen as the next head of its Upper School beginning on July 1, 2018, for the start of the next school year.

Bensen will succeed Jayne Collins, who has led the Upper School for the past 18 years, a period of tremendous growth and expansion in enrolment, curriculum and facilities at the all girls' Catholic, independent day school.

Collins will remain at Sacred Heart where she will serve as the dean of faculty and curriculum in the Upper School.

Bensen has been an experienced educator for 32 years and a highly effective communicator whose strength lies in building relationships with colleagues, as well as with students and their families. She started at Sacred Heart in the fall of 1995 as the director of physical education and athletic programs, a position that spanned the Lower, Middle and Upper Schools. Bensen graduated from Gettysburg College with a bachelor of arts degree and received her master's in education from the University of New England. She has one daughter,



JENNIFER PHELAN BENSEN

Tory, a graduate of the Class of 2010.

At Sacred Heart, Bensen has served in many roles, including teacher, coach, advisor, academic dean, dean of students for both the Upper and Middle Schools and coordinator of the international exchange program. Most recently, she has fulfilled the roles of director of the Summer Enrichment Program and co-chair of the Formation to

Mission Committee in addition to serving as Upper School academic dean and exchange program coordinator.

"Whether motivating Upper School students on the playing field as a coach, mediating parent-teacher conferences or leading our exceptional academic program, Jenn always promotes inclusivity, honesty and understanding," said Pamela Juan Hayes '64, head of school. "As an independent school educator, she believes in the holistic development of each student and challenges them to be engaged citizens, articulate critical thinkers, and compassionate community members."

"Her fellow faculty and staff members deeply respect her collaborative approach and her dedication to living out the Goals and Criteria of a Sacred Heart education," Hayes said.

Bensen said she is looking forward to taking on the responsibilities of her new position next year. "Sacred Heart Greenwich provides an empowering learning environment for young women with many opportunities for leadership development which

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



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# St. Joseph High School

## St. Joseph dedicates new wellness center

By PAT HENNESSY

“May this be a place of growth and fulfillment, a friendly place where students will be strengthened in mind and body,” said Head of School Dr. William Fitzgerald to open St. Joseph High School’s newly-constructed Health & Wellness Center with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony on January 7.

The two-level 4,500-square-foot facility includes cardio and strength-training areas for the school’s more than 40 athletic teams and 800 students.

The ceremony also included remarks from St. Joe’s principal, Dr. James Keane, vice principal for athletics Kevin Butler, and the school’s director of health and wellness, Alisha Thresher.

The ribbon cutting was attended by a crowd of nearly 100 guests, who after the official opening were welcomed inside to tour the facility and test the

equipment. The 4,500 square foot facility provides one floor dedicated to aerobic and cardio training, and a lower floor for strength conditioning.

“This facility was fully funded before a shovel went into the ground,” emphasized Dr. Fitzgerald. “This improvement won’t affect tuition.”

In his remarks, Dr. Fitzgerald recognized the late Robert O’Keefe, who put away seed money for the project, and the late Charles Martin, a St. Joe’s alum who had donated funds for the original workout room for athletes, affectionately called “The Pit” by team members. His family and alumni friends made contributions in his name and held a golf tournament last year to raise \$50,000. The strength room on the lower floor of the new wellness center is named after him.

Dr. Fitzgerald also thanked the ranks of alumni, families and

friends whose contributions made the \$1.5 million center possible.

Under Thresher’s direction, St. Joe’s is using the opportunity to kick off a “Fitness for Life” program for all students and staff. The course will incorporate aspects of a traditional physical education class, but also touch on topics including healthy eating and the effects of drugs and alcohol. Students will learn basic human anatomy, how to properly use the equipment and how to exercise different muscle groups.

Fitness for Life cultivates life-long fitness habits, and involves instruction in diet and nutrition, stress management and movement exercise, and provides cross-training programs for athletes in the off-season.

“It’s an extension of our academic program,” said Dr. Keane. The equipment in the Wellness Center can be moved to provide space for group discussion and a variety of activities from yoga and Zumba to meditation and spirituality.

“St. Joe’s is a college prep school. We know there is a lot more to succeeding at college than just a great GPA. Good health, stress reduction, personal discipline, along with good study skills and a solid faith foundation are the strengths we want our



graduates taking with them to college,” said Dr. Fitzgerald.

“The Health & Wellness Center is truly for every student and teacher,” said Thresher, “as well as providing conditioning and nutritional education for the 42 athletic teams at St. Joe’s.”

Members of St. Joseph’s Student Council were on hand for the dedication of the center. “I’m not an athlete, I’m more focused academically, but this opens new opportunities for me to grow as a person, says junior Gus LeRous, who is particularly interested in history and literature.

His classmates Ben Talbot, on the baseball and soccer teams, and Kyle Burbank in football and lacrosse, are excited to use the new equipment. “It adds another level to our strength and conditioning,” said Ben.

Given that St. Joe’s took home

three State titles in one season this year—a first for the school—it will be interesting to see what another level of conditioning can produce.

Student council president Greg Jazwinski, a senior who will be attending Yale University this fall, is captain of the outdoor track team. “Two different athletes will use these machines for two different reasons,” he explained, noting that the facility needed for a sprint is quite different from the endurance necessary for long-distance running.

In addition, he sees the center as promoting a stronger sense of camaraderie among students. “We can work out together before class, and after school is over. Who would go off to a gym by themselves when we have such a magnificent facility right here?”

	amount awarded	number of students
Year 1	\$2,111,052	1,573
Year 2	\$2,240,793	1,255
Year 3	\$2,582,000	1,302

**BISHOP'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

2017-2018 scholarship recipients

\$2,582,000 awarded in tuition assistance

\$41,502 average family income

### Bishop's Scholarship Fund Applications Open February 1, 2018

Foundations in Education is pleased to announce that applications to the Bishop's Scholarship Fund open February 1st.

Families who have a child registered, or are new applicants, in a Diocesan-sponsored Catholic elementary school and are in financial need are eligible to apply for 2018-2019 tuition assistance.

Consideration may be given to families with multiple children enrolled in Catholic elementary schools.

Apply online via the FACTS Grant & Aid application and complete all questions relative to the Bishop's Scholarship Fund. Annual applications are required. ([www.FACTSmgt.com/aid](http://www.FACTSmgt.com/aid))

For more information, please call (203) 416-1509 or visit [www.foundationsineducation.org](http://www.foundationsineducation.org).



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# TRANSFORM

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THEY ARE MEANT TO BE.



**Catholic Schools Week** offers us the opportunity to celebrate the many successes of our Catholic Schools and the many options that each one of our communities can offer you and your family. While each of our individual schools enjoys their own unique environment, all are built on the solid foundation of academic excellence and faith. We provide a balanced academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture and real world learning. We emphasize moral development and self-discipline, and prepare students to be productive citizens and future leaders.

All of our schools celebrate Catholic Schools Week with Masses, open houses and various activities for students, families, parishioners and community members. Through these events, our schools focus on the value Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to our Church and our communities. We welcome you to visit our schools during Catholic Schools Week, and see how we can partner with you to **form** the heart, **inform** the mind and **transform** the life of your child.

Dr. Steven Cheeseman  
Superintendent of Schools



**St. Raphael Academy • Bridgeport, CT**  
We are initiating **BLENDED LEARNING**, pushing tablets into the classroom to assist with learning using adaptive software.

## INNOVATION THAT TRANSFORMS HERE'S A SAMPLE OF WHAT'S SHAPING THE FUTURE

### St. Ann Academy • Bridgeport, CT

**STUDENT LEADERSHIP** at St. Ann Academy is realized through student leaders who work together to develop a positive climate and encourage exposure to literature to build a caring, empathetic community. The leadership skills necessary to lesson plan, facilitate student activities, and manage a classroom are all part of the program.

### Holy Trinity Catholic Academy • Shelton, CT

Our school has partnered with Lockheed Martin to bring an innovative program to 8th grade. The Generation Beyond Program is a first of its kind, preparing the next generation of **INNOVATORS**, explorers, inventors and problem solvers in Science and Math.

### St. Mary School • Bethel, CT

**INTEGRATED CURRICULUM**, creative connections, and blended learning are the third-grade classroom experiences through the Rainforest program. This program and reinforces that our students are globally aware and multicultural. Learning language and that they can learn a lot about others and cultures. Learning with students from another country is an experience in itself. They have formed their own opinions and ideas on what the students like, but the video conference showed them otherwise, and it becomes possible with this program, and truly life changing.

### St. Catherine of Siena School • Trumbull, CT

The **MUSIC** program is very progressive. Students experiencing accapella! They use state of the art instruments to improve their skills. School students enjoy the "Boomwacher" instruments that they use to create music.

### St. Mary School • Ridgefield, CT

Encouraging participation by all students, one of our teachers uses a technique that gives even the shyest student a voice in class discussion. This technique, it, and while teaching and discussing information the teacher uses a technique really helps to engage students in whole group discussions.

### Greenwich Catholic School • Greenwich, CT

Our students are engaged in more **PERSONALIZED LEARNING** through effective questioning, visualizing curriculum application, and using technology to clearly communicate and demonstrate their learning through projects.

### St. James School • Stratford, CT

A **HEALTH AND WELLNESS** Committee comprised of faculty and staff meets regularly to support a positive, healthy school environment through eating demonstrations. All grade levels offer Faith Sharing opportunities for peer mentoring in faith, academics and healthy living. Students get to know one another while strengthening our school community. Healthcare, provides our students with a toolkit to assist them in making healthy choices.

### St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School • Fairfield, CT

St. Thomas Aquinas celebrates being a **COMMUNITY**. They grow their own vegetables and donate produce to local needy families. They have everyone gathers to stargaze using telescopes. Currently they have competitions within the local community!

### St. Mark School • Stratford, CT

Upper grade students (5-8) get one-on-one time on chromebooks through a vocabulary program that tailors the lessons to each individual student. Look at **BLENDED LEARNING** and has allowed each student to learn at their own pace.

# TRANSFORMS

## RAISING LEADERS IN OUR SCHOOLS

Through the Wingman Wednesday program. Wings of Light engage the entire student body in role playing, games and unity. Students work with Teacher Champions to develop student groups and reflect on their performance.

An exciting STEM program to students in PreK3 through 5th grade, a national education program designed to inspire the young pioneers in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering,

Building bridges are a few of the powerful opportunities offered by the West Art Exchange program. This program communicates globally courageous. Students understand that art is a global culture through art. The opportunity to video conference with artists from other countries. As students have learned about a country, they have learned what they would be wearing or what their classrooms would look like. This in itself is a lesson they won't forget. The impossible is possible.

Students learn to play and appreciate culturally diverse music and learn to harmonize and incorporate rhythmic lessons into the curriculum. Middle school students help to teach pitch and melodic structure.

Teachers have employed an **ENGAGING** teaching strategy called Qball. The Qball is a foam ball that has a microphone in the center. The teacher tosses the ball to students to answer questions. This strategy works in any classroom setting.

**LEARNING**, learning in the context of "why." Teachers plan lessons for academic and personal development, giving our students the ability to learn through writing, speaking and multi-media.

A program for faculty, staff and parents has been launched and meets weekly. They plan Bike to School events and organize healthy living challenges. Partners, teaming up younger classes with older grade students to make healthy lifestyle choices. Through these weekly exercises students build a sense of community. The practice of Mindfulness, longed used in schools, helps students during stressful times, such as meditation.

At St. Thomas Garden where students grow vegetables. They have a Planet Party in science where, as a community, they are reaching out to organize interscholastic math

Teachers use books using programs such as Membean. This is a program for every student. Membean has transformed the way teachers work and help students to work towards their full potential.

### St. Gregory the Great School Danbury, CT

During **STEM** the third graders are already preparing for Robotics competitions. They research, watch informational videos, and use models of simple machines before designing their own.



### St. Rose School • Newtown, CT

The fourth grade Genius Hour **EMPOWERS** students of all levels to explore their own passions and take ownership of their learning, while the teacher coaches the students through the process of research, problem-solving, skill-building, communication and presentation. The drive, love of learning and mindset to persevere is evident in the amount of effort the students are willing to put into the process. In addition, a boost in confidence and mutual respect between peers transforms the classroom into a place where students want to come and learn.

### St. Aloysius School • New Canaan, CT

The partnership with the University of California at Berkely has really enhanced the **SCIENCE** program. They also pair up with University of Connecticut at Storrs, the NY Botanical Gardens, the Bartlett Arboretum and Xylem Corporation, which allows the school to match students with experienced mentors in the students' Science Fair topics. They are advised by these "experts" and benefit from collaborating.



### St. Joseph School • Danbury, CT

The **ROBOTICS** program is rigorous at our school. Students work in groups, and use mathematical, technological and creative writing skills. They must be able to communicate their work at competitions.



## THERE'S A SCHOOL FOR EVERYONE FIND YOURS AND SCHEDULE A VISIT

### BETHEL

#### St. Mary School

Open House: Tuesday, January 23, 6:00pm - 7:30pm

### BRIDGEPORT

#### St. Andrew Academy

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 12 noon - 2:00pm

Latino Open House: Saturday, February 3, 12:00 noon - 2:00pm

#### St. Ann Academy

Open House: Saturday, January 27, 12 noon - 2:00pm

#### St. Augustine Academy

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 12 noon - 2:00pm

#### St. Raphael Academy

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 12 noon - 2:00pm

#### Kolbe Cathedral High School

Call to schedule a tour

### BROOKFIELD

#### St. Joseph School

Call to schedule a tour

### DANBURY

#### St. Gregory the Great School

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 1:30pm - 3:30pm

#### St. Peter School

Call to schedule a tour

#### St. Joseph School

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 10:00am - 2:00pm

#### Immaculate High School

Call to schedule a tour

### FAIRFIELD

#### Assumption Catholic School

Open House: Sunday, February 4, 10:00am - 12:00pm

#### St. Thomas Aquinas School

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 10:00am - 12:00pm

#### Notre Dame Catholic High School

Call to schedule a tour

#### St. Catherine Academy

Call to schedule a tour

### GREENWICH

#### Greenwich Catholic School

Open House: Sunday, January 28, K-5, 12:00pm - 1:30pm

and Thursday, February 1, Gr 6-8, 6:30pm - 8:00pm

### NEW CANAAN

#### St. Aloysius School

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 11:00am - 1:00pm

### NEWTOWN

#### St. Rose of Lima School

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 12:30pm - 2:30pm

### NORWALK

#### All Saints School

Open House: Sunday, January 28, 12:00pm - 2:00pm

and Monday, January 29, 8:30am - 10:00am

### RIDGEFIELD

#### St. Mary School

Open House: Thursday, February 8, K-8, 9:00am - 10:00am

and Friday, February 9, Pre-K, 9:30am - 10:30am

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followed by school tours, 10:00am - 12:00pm

### STAMFORD

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### TRUMBULL

#### St. Catherine of Siena

Open House: Tuesday, January 30, 8:30am - 11:00am

#### St. Theresa School

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#### St. Joseph High School

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### WILTON

#### Our Lady of Fatima

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# School News

## IMMACULATE FROM PAGE 12

School in Danbury describes being in the class as a “fantastic learning opportunity” and a chance to meet other students before she attends Immaculate High School. “Although the class is challenging, it has been so wonderful to become close with such amazing people from different schools,” she said.

And Arshei Flores of St. Gregory the Great School in Danbury noted that the IHS Algebra 1 course “has been a fantastic learning opportunity, and it is a privilege to be able to challenge myself with a faster pace curriculum and larger workload with other math-oriented

students.”

Bridging high school programs with partner elementary schools has gained support from the Diocese of Bridgeport. Because of the success of the program and its innovative methods, Foundations in Education recently awarded Immaculate an Innovation and Leadership grant for \$2,000 so that Ortega may participate in a Learners Edge professional development program to introduce additional technology and methodology for the DL program.

Immaculate High School plans to offer other courses as well as extend the participation into additional parochial schools. ■

## SACRED HEART, GREENWICH FROM PAGE 13

provides an outstanding foundation for success in college and in life,” she said. “As a school leader, I hope to encourage, support and inspire our young women to become intelligent, confident and compassionate leaders who will to use their knowledge and insights to change the world.”

(Founded in 1848, Sacred Heart is located at 1177 King Street, Greenwich. It has a co-ed early childhood education program and is all-girls from kindergarten through twelfth grade. For more information, go to [www.cshgreenwich.org](http://www.cshgreenwich.org).) ■



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# Notre Dame High School Honoring Our Lady

By JILL K. CASERIA

Students at Notre Dame Catholic High School in Fairfield swapped their usual Monday class schedules in late December for a full range of activities to honor the patroness of their school, the Blessed Virgin Mary. "Our Lady's Day," designed and coordinated by Notre Dame's director of campus ministry Jessica Medoff, celebrated the fellowship, generosity of spirit and faith of the school's community.

The morning opened with a Mass in the Sacred Heart Chapel of the Holy Spirit led by Father Ed McAuley, a 1965 graduate of Notre Dame. Mass intentions included the mothers of current students, who were invited to sit in the front pews with their children by their sides. A spe-

cial musical performance by the Yale University a cappella group Mixed Company added to the celebration.

The day continued at school with live performances by Notre Dame's band and chorus. Rounding out the schedule were several speakers, a viewing of a student-directed video, and rotations of service activities, crafts and trivia games with questions about Notre Dame and Our Lady.

Lunch featured selections from Mexico, Ireland, France, Italy, and China—countries in which Mary has appeared.

Students, faculty and staff also packaged 10,000 meals of rice and protein that will be sent to undernourished children in Africa by an organization called Rise Against Hunger. And many students crafted Christmas cards and

decorations that were later donated to local nursing homes.

Events concluded with the first annual Notre Dame Marian Awards, which students and faculty were awarded for their out-



standing moral character, faith, patience and generosity.

Our Lady's Day also ampli-



PHOTOS BY MICHELLE ROGERS

"Our Lady's Day embodied the Transforming Faith pillar of the plan. It is a promise to strengthen the knowledge, love, and practice of the Catholic faith. These events enhanced our opportunities for faith practice and to learn more about our devotion to Notre Dame, Our Lady."

"It really was a wonderful day during which we saw the students be disciples of Jesus," Medoff reflects. "They were able to hear God's Word in Mass and then live out their faith by performing acts of service and celebrating community in Christian fellowship. It was a celebration of who we are and

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

fied an important aspect of Notre Dame's new strategic plan, Raising the Bar—ND 2020. "The overall plan is our commitment to what we want Notre Dame to become over time," Principal Christopher Cipriano explains.



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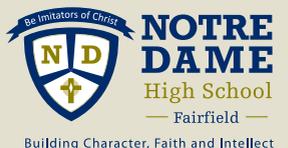
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# Immaculate H.S.

## Remembering Sandy Hook

DANBURY—The Immaculate High School track team ran a special marathon on December 14 to honor the 26 children and staff who lost their lives five years ago at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

The student-athletes started with a prayer circle, then ran a total of 26 miles, one mile for each person lost, on the IHS track holding signs with the names of each person. The memorial marathon took more than three hours to complete on a cold, snowy afternoon, as the student-athletes were determined to show their reverence for the deceased.

Immaculate High School students performed more than 24,650 hours of community service last year.



NOTRE DAME H.S. FROM PAGE 20

our dedication to our faith.”

“I really enjoyed the Mass honoring the Blessed Mother and all mothers in attendance,” reflects parent Debbie Carrara, whose son, Matthew is a student at Notre Dame. “The music was exceptional and it was a great way to start preparing for the Lord by honoring Mary.”

Her son Matthew agrees that the Mass was his favorite part of the day. He also enjoyed the service activities. “I felt good knowing that packing the rice for Africa and making Nativity decorations would make a difference in people’s lives,” he says. “I knew we were helping others and bringing them joy.”

Deacon John DiTaranto, who

was involved in the planning, was touched by events of the day. “It was incredibly successful. One of my favorite parts was during our closing assembly, when we had students line up with blue and white balloons and they lifted them up as they prayed decades of the Rosary in several languages. It was a beautiful representation of our community of faith.”

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# Fairfield University

## Art of the Gesù: Bernini and his Age

The Fairfield University Art Museum is presenting a major international loan exhibition "The Holy Name, Art of the Gesù: Bernini and his Age," which will be on view in the museum's Bellarmine Hall Galleries from February 1 through May 19, 2018. Its focus is the Church of the Gesù in Rome, the mother church of the Jesuits.

The Art of the Gesù exhibition, which coincides with Fairfield University's 75th anniversary, features masterpieces

from the Gesù itself, never before seen in America, including the great Baroque sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini's marble bust of Jesuit theologian Cardinal Roberto Bellarmine (Robert Bellarmine is the patron saint of Fairfield University), and Gaulli's monumental painted wood model of the apse, in addition to more than forty paintings, sculptures, objects, drawings, prints and illustrated books by Bernini, Gaulli, Ciro Ferri, Carlo Maratti and Fra Andrea Pozzo, among others, from museums and

private collections around the country.

Together these masterpieces tell the fas-



inating and interwoven stories of the Church's early history and splendid interior decorations, and the foundational chapters of the Society of Jesus: the long and at times challenging campaign undertaken by the Jesuits and their patrons to build the Gesù, a monument to the power and prestige of the new religious order

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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# Youth News

## Diocese walks with youth on faith journey

By PRISCILLA MAHAR

In bringing young people deeper into their faith, success comes from “connecting them to the events where there are opportunities to connect to the larger Church, but also by walking with them at their parishes,” said Evan Psencik, coordinator of Young Adult Formation.

This month I will begin my final semester as an undergraduate student. I can say with confidence that in May when I say goodbye to my campus Newman Center, my faith will continue to be nurtured as I come home to the Diocese of Bridgeport. As it is written in John 14:18, “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.” These are the words the Lord continues to speak to us in

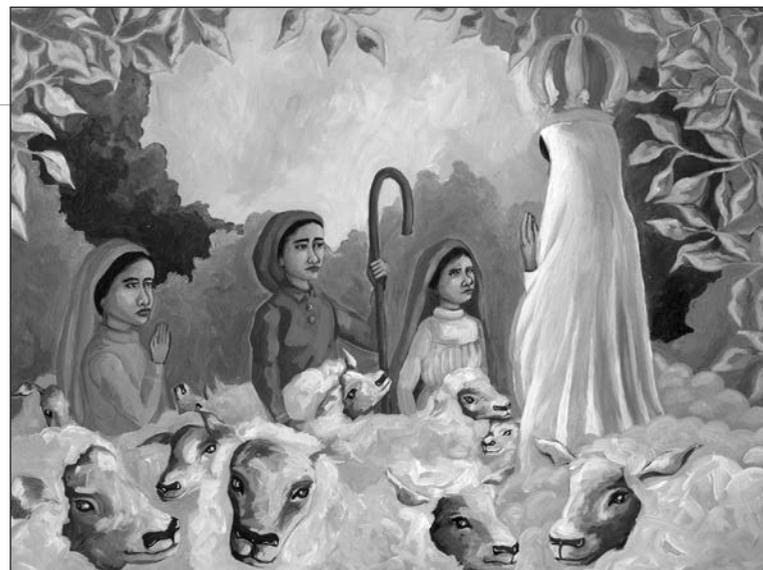
any time of desolation.

Desolation can especially be found in the lives of young people in the Catholic Church. At a time when they are trying to figure out what their own desires are for themselves with regard to careers, relationships and the future in general, it can be difficult to add the question “what does God desire for me?” on top.

This past year I got to witness on multiple levels the dedication in fostering the faith of young people in the Diocese of Bridgeport. I’ve served on the youth group CORE team at one of our parishes, group-lead and coordinated Convivio 2017 and now Convivio 2018, not to mention the endless opportunities as an intern at the diocese, which I started last May.

On top of the social media segment, The Illustrated Word, one of my responsibilities in the Communications Department was to interview people and write for *Fairfield County Catholic*. I will be honest and say that as an art student I was a bit hesitant to try my efforts as a journalist, but I asked God how he wanted to work through me in this way.

With lots of prayer I realized that by working closely with young adults, not to mention being one, I had a perspective that others didn’t. I could understand the desires of young people and was able to walk with them for this part of their journey through authentic communion. By working in communications, I was able to bring attention to an important ministry in our Church



Original drawing by Priscilla Mahar

today.

“We’ve seen statistics that show people are leaving the church younger and younger—which is a huge issue in the Church today. It’s up to us to cultivate their faith,” said Psencik.

Through pilgrimages to national events such as March for Life and to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, both in Washington, D.C., the NCYC conference, Steubenville East, Catholic Heart Work Camp, etc., young adults this past year have gotten to see the Church on a much grander scale.

But these opportunities aren’t enough. While a teen may experience a faith high for a few weeks preceding and immediately following the event, it’s often difficult for them to remain in that apparent closeness with Christ when it is not being nurtured at home.

So is it a great blessing that we have so many people in the Diocese of Bridgeport devoted to walking with young people through events like Convivio, High School Apostles, and those offered through Catholic Service

Corps, as well as weekly opportunities at their schools and parishes.

Jessica Mazal, a theology teacher at Notre Dame High School in Fairfield, talks about how her relationship with God, strengthened by opportunities in the diocese, has an impact on the faith of her students.

“In the classroom I see their passion for justice and their love towards others in the way they form questions and discuss current issues,” Mazal stated. “It places those of us responsible for guiding and teaching them in a challenging place: to know the faith inside and out, but also have a genuine love for it and, most importantly, for the Lord. I’ve experienced that when I, myself, have a genuine response and disposition, they become more open to discussion, and eventually to experiences of faith, or prayer.”

In a time where millennials seem to be the demographic that doesn’t care for religion, Mazal debunks that myth and says that her students are searching for answers.

What answers are they searching for? “The truth,” said John

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

## Catholic Service Corps

“For the New Year, why not join the 20 parishes who have worked with HomeFront for over 30 years,” suggests Jessica Nayden, program coordinator of the Catholic Service Corps.

The CSC is an initiative to encourage students to make a commitment to service as a way of life. While HomeFront is parish based and not directly youth-centered, it is an excellent intergenerational way for parents and teens to express their faith together through the work of their hands, while getting to work directly with families in need.

Since 1988, HomeFront, a Stamford-based organization, has partnered with faith communities throughout Fairfield County to revitalize more than 1,800 homes belonging to low-income families. Right now, HomeFront has more than 400 older adults within our community, as well as single-parent households, disabled homeowners and families living paycheck-to-paycheck, whose homes are in desperate need of repair.

In the words of Father Nick Cirillo, pastor of St. Edward the

Confessor Parish in New Fairfield, “HomeFront is an amazing enterprise in the life of St. Edward’s parish, and it gives us a chance to

“HomeFront has decades of experience in helping our neighbors in need,” affirmed Nayden.



JOINED IN SERVICE—teenagers, parents, and volunteers of all ages from St. Maurice Parish in Stamford joined enthusiastically to repair homes through HomeFront. The program is currently inviting parishes to sign up for 2018.

put our talents to use in a concrete way for the service of those in our area in need. Even though it is always means a lot of work, it is a labor of love.”

He encourages other parishes and individuals to give witness to their faith by doing this good work for the glory of God. “It is worth the effort. You and your parish will be blessed by this opportunity for Christian service.”

HomeFront is now inviting parishes to make a lasting difference for more of these families in need, and is extending its deadline for Diocese of Bridgeport parishes to sign up through Friday, February 9.

(For more information, contact HomeFront’s associate executive director, Lou Valenti: 203.658.9642 or LValenti@homefrontprogram.org.)



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# Apostolate to the Dying

## The dying need our prayers

When Fernanda Moreira recalls how she began a world-wide apostolate for the dying in her Cincinnati home, she says it was all God's doing because she never could have spread it across the country from California to Connecticut and to places as far away as the United Kingdom, Nigeria and the Philippines.

God thinks big. Every step of the way, she saw his finger moving her forward, introducing her to people and placing opportunities in her path. It was God at work, she says, because he wanted this done at this time in history when humanity needs it the most.

She tells the story of three sisters-in-law, one who was dying of bone cancer and the other two who prayed at her bedside.

"Just after Thanksgiving in 2003, my sister-in-law Rosalina was admitted to the hospital," she said. "It didn't occur to us she would never return home. I went to visit her with my sister-in-law Lourdes, and we asked if she would like to pray with us. Right away, she said yes. We were so glad because for many years we wanted to pray with her, but she rarely would. From that day, we always prayed together during our visits."

Rosalina died peacefully on

Valentine's Day with the family at her side.

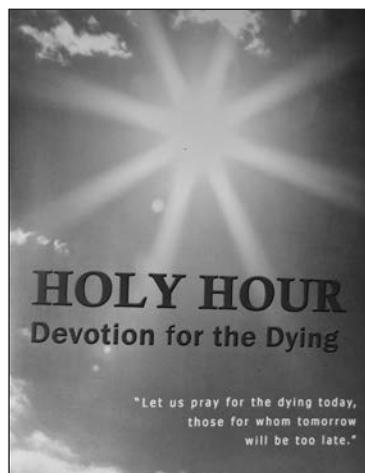
"After her death, I realized how much the dying need our prayers," Fernanda said. "There are many people all over the world who die unprepared for eternal judgment and in great need of spiritual help."

The women formed the Apostolate for the Dying "to pray for souls at the vital moment of death, when eternal salvation is at stake." They later collected their prayers and published a booklet titled, "Holy Hour Devotion for the Dying," which has gone through numerous printings in different languages.

Fernanda is convinced God brought her to people who would spread the devotion, including Marie Amelia Moura, who over the past seven years has led the Holy Hour at St. Joseph Church in Shelton and Our Lady of Fatima Church in Bridgeport, under the direction of Father Jose Alves.

Father Alves said that from 25 to 30 people regularly attend the service and that prayers in front of the Blessed Sacrament are especially powerful.

"So many people have no one to pray for them at the end of their life, and they need our prayers," Marie said. "I believe



they will remember us and pray for us when our time comes." She feels that it is important to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed during the Holy Hour.

She recalls a friend from St. Joseph's who was very sick and went into a coma. "I was praying the Holy Hour for her with her husband at Griffin Hospital in her last few hours, and she squeezed my hand." Marie knew that even though the woman couldn't talk, she was conscious of their prayers.

Another friend from Our Lady of Fatima, who always attended the Holy Hour, died suddenly at precisely the time Marie was praying at St. Joseph's.

"I took it as a sign this pow-



"THANK YOU, JESUS, for giving me this opportunity to spend each Holy Hour with you," says Marie Amelia Moura.

erful prayer can lead you right to heaven," she said. "Through this Holy Hour, we can help save souls who have no one to pray for them. Prayer brings us close to God and brings the graces that can get us into heaven at the end of life. I thank God for the opportunity to help save souls."

Father Mariusz Olbrys, parochial vicar at St. Joseph's, regularly attends the Holy Hour. He said, "All people who are dying need our support. The ones we know and the ones we don't know. The graces that come from our prayers help them to receive peace from God and pass from this life into the next."

"We won't live forever," he adds. "Eventually, we'll need prayers too. We're all connected, even with those who have died. They've finished their pilgrimage, and our prayers help them move on. Death is not the end, but the beginning of new life for them where they no longer have to

suffer."

Father Michael Dogali, pastor of St. Joseph's, pointed to the importance of praying for those who've died. A couple he recently married remembered all their deceased family members at the Prayer of the Faithful.

"Everybody was moved to hear those names at the wedding, because those people were also present," he said. "The living were there, along with aunts and uncles and grandparents who died."

"The Resurrection is not something from Walt Disney," he added. "It's real. There is a heaven, and every sacrifice we make, every prayer we say, benefits ourselves and others. No act of kindness ever goes forgotten."

Diane Scott, director of faith formation at St. Ann's Parish in Bridgeport, has attended the Holy Hour for two years. "A priest told me about the group at St. Joseph's when I was going through a crisis over family members who had walked away from the faith, and I was concerned about their afterlife," she recalls. "After praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament at the Holy Hour, I was filled with a hope I never before experienced."

Doug Ungrady, who has attended the Holy Hour since it began, has prayed for relatives who were lapsed Catholics ... and now they attend Mass.

"Christ can use our prayers to help other people achieve salvation," he said. "At the moment of death the most powerful graces are available through his mercy."

As a prayer in the booklet asks, "Lord Jesus Crucified, have mercy on us and those who will die this day."

*(The Holy Hour for the Dying is held at Our Lady of Fatima in Bridgeport at 12:30 pm the first Thursday and third Thursday of the month in Portuguese, and every Friday at St. Joseph Church at 12:45 pm. For more information about the apostolate, visit [apostolateforthedying.org](http://apostolateforthedying.org).)*

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# High School Sports

## Summers' switch a boon to St. Joe's

By **DON HARRISON**

David Summers' decision to transfer from Fairfield Warde to St. Joseph High School has paid larger—and more immediate—dividends than either he or the Cadets' head football coach, Joe Della Vecchia, could have envisioned.

The 6-foot-3, 200-pound junior quarterback was the catalyst behind St. Joe's remarkable 2017 fall season, marked by a 12-1 record and the school's 13th state championship on the gridiron. En route, Summers established no fewer than four St. Joe's season records (49 touchdown passes, 224 completions, 3,224 passing yards and 65.1 completion percentage), and he tied the school record with six TD passes in a game.

Yup, he was a first-team selection on all three All-State teams: New Haven Register, Connecticut High School Coaches Association (CHSCA) and Walter Camp.

"I knew our team had the ability to do this well. I knew I'd play well in my first season at St. Joe's, but I didn't think it would turn out like this," said the red-headed Summers, a well-spoken 16-year-old who is also a 90-plus student in the classroom.

Della Vecchia concurs, saying, "His game was elevated all year, and yet he got better every single day. He wanted to be an elite

quarterback, we pushed hard and he worked hard at it."

In his debut, Summers set the tone for the season by sparking St. Joe's to a 38-35 triumph over New Canaan, the four-time defending state champion. The fourth of his touchdown passes—a 46-yard completion to All-State wide receiver Jared



ST. JOSEPH JUNIOR QUARTERBACK David Summers was selected to all three All-State football teams after leading the Cadets to their 13th Connecticut championship this past season. Summers set a school record with 49 touchdown passes, including five in the 42-36 victory over Ansonia in the Class S title game. (l) David Summers savors a group hug with parents Steve and Jessica Gordon. (PHOTO BY TINA BEYER)

Mallozzi with just 3.48 to play—was the game-winner.

The following Saturday was bittersweet: Against his former school, Summers lofted five TD passes and Fairfield Warde went down with a thud, 52-13. This prompted the question: Why did he leave Warde, where as a sophomore quarterback he'd thrown for 14 touchdowns as the starter?

"A lot of the kids I played youth football with go to St. Joe's," he responded. "And I wanted to compete for championships."

Darien, which would go on to capture its third straight Class LL state title, provided the lone blemish on the St. Joseph record the next week, a 42-10 setback.

The Cadets regrouped and closed out 2017 with 10 straight victories culminating with the Class S state title game on December 11. On that frigid Monday evening at Cheshire High School, Summers put his resolve and skills to work and sparked St. Joe's to a 42-36 come-from-behind decision over

top-seeded and previously undefeated Ansonia.

The Cadets trailed by 21 points early in the third quarter, but Summers passed for a pair of touchdowns and sophomore running back Jaden Shirden ran for a 58-yard score, and suddenly St. Joe's was in front, 35-28, with 6:58 remaining.

Ansonia has a star of its own, though, in senior back Markell Dobbs, and he bolted for his third touchdown of the night, a 75-yarder, and then ran for

the two-point conversion. The Chargers regained the lead, 36-35.

No problem. On the Cadets' next play from scrimmage, Summers hooked up with his favorite target, Mallozzi, for an electrifying 56-yard touchdown with less than five minutes to play. Remarkably, that was the quarterback's fifth TD pass of the evening.

Luke Kirby supplied the final score of 2017 with his sixth extra point of the game.

In St. Joe's two earlier Class S playoff games, Summers equaled Cory Babineau's St. Joseph record (set the previous year) with six TD passes in a 62-0 rout of O'Brien RVT and followed up with five touchdown aerials in a 49-20 dismantling of Rocky Hill.

How does one sum up this championship season?

"It was a very emotional season," Della Vecchia said. "There were a lot of deaths during the year. Coaches' families. Players' families. Friends. My dad passed away before our opening game. But the kids were tight, very close. All of us hung in there."

This was the fifth state title for Della Vecchia in 20 seasons as St. Joe's head coach, and he also won championships there as a player and assistant coach. As a well-earned bonus, he was presented the 2017 CHSCA Coach of the Year Award in mid-January.

## Kristen Roessler named All-American

DANBURY—Kristen Roessler, a senior at Immaculate High School, was recently selected to the prestigious 2017 Fall High School Girls All-America Team by United Soccer Coaches. The Danbury resident is one of only 60 girls in the country to receive this honor. United Soccer Coaches is the world's largest soccer coaches organization.

"This USC All-America honor as one of the best soccer players in the nation is most deserving," said Tim Dunn, IHS athletic director. "Immaculate High School is very proud of Kristen and her accomplishments athletically,

civically and academically."

Her coach is equally impressed. "I'm just so proud of Kristen and what she has accomplished here at Immaculate—she follows a lot of great goalies that have graduated before her. I look forward to seeing what she accomplishes in the four years after graduation," said Nelson Mingachos, who was named SWC Coach of the Year.

The star goalie is passionate about soccer. "Besides playing soccer in the fall for Immaculate, I play soccer year round for CFC Real, which is coached by Immaculate soccer coaches Brad Jeeves and Nelson Mingachos. We attend showcases all over

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



PRESTIGIOUS HONOR—Kristen Roessler, a senior at Immaculate High School, receives a commendation from the CT General Assembly from State Senator Michael McLachlan. Pictured with her are IHS Soccer Coach Nelson Mingachos, her father Karl, Senator McLachlan, and her mother Carolyn.

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# Obituaries

## Sister Elizabeth Travers, RSM

Sister Elizabeth Travers, RSM, died peacefully on November 2, at St. Mary Home in West Hartford.

Mary Charlotte Travers was born in Berlin, N.H., the youngest of five girls. She entered the Sisters of Mercy in Connecticut on June 24, 1938, and professed her religious vows on January 2, 1941.

For the next three decades, Sister Elizabeth taught primary grade children in multiple Catholic elementary schools throughout the state, becoming an expert first grade teacher. Always eager to learn, she earned a B.S. degree from St. Joseph College (now University of St. Joseph) and received M.A. degrees from Boston College in religious studies and University of Bridgeport in reading, achieving her desire to become a reading specialist. During her years

of teaching elementary school she taught at the former Sacred Heart and St. Charles Borromeo schools in Bridgeport.

Following that, she served as Director of Religious Education at St. Mark Parish in West Hartford and then became director of the School for Young Children at the University of St. Joseph.

A woman of diversified interests, Sister Elizabeth was adventuresome, loved travel, cross country skiing, card games (especially Bridge) and small animals. She particularly enjoyed providing fun and hospitality to colleagues and friends.

A Mass of Resurrection was celebrated for Sister Elizabeth on November 8 at St. Mary's. Burial took place the following day in St. Mary Cemetery. ■

## Sister Marie Buckley, CND

Sister Marie Buckley, CND (Mother St. Agnes Teresa), died peacefully at Andrus Retirement Community in Hastings on Hudson, N. Y., on October 29. She was born in Waterbury on September 22, 1927. In addition to her parents, she is predeceased by eight brothers and sisters, including Sister Anne Buckley, CND.

Sister Marie entered the Congregation of Notre Dame

in 1925 and celebrated seventy years of religious profession on August 20, 2017. She is remembered as a generous companion by all who shared community life with her.

She was highly respected as a dedicated and caring teacher of young children from 1947 until her retirement in 2015. Her ministries included elementary schools in Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey and Illinois.

For the last forty years of teaching, Sister Marie was at St. Cecilia School in Stamford, from September 1975 until June 2012, as second grade teacher. For the next two years, she continued at St. Cecilia's as a tutor.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Sister Marie on November 3 at Villa Notre Dame. Burial followed at Old St. Joseph Cemetery in Waterbury. ■

## Sister Dorothy O'Brien, CND

Sister Dorothy O'Brien, CND (Sister St. Dorothy of Mary), a member of the Congregation of Notre Dame, died peacefully at Lourdes Health Care Center in Wilton on October 13 at the age of 90.

She was born in New York City in a family of six chil-

dren. One of her brothers was Msgr. Joseph O'Brien of the Archdiocese of New York.

Sister Dorothy pronounced her first vows in Montreal, Canada, in August of 1948 and her perpetual vows in 1954. Immediately afterward, Sister was missioned to Japan. She served there for ten years in educational positions in schools administered by the Congregation of Notre Dame.

During her almost 69 years of professed religious life, Sister Dorothy worked as teacher and guidance counselor in CND schools in New York and Connecticut, including Stamford Catholic High School (now

Trinity Catholic) where she taught in 1967-68.

In later years, she served as a social worker and spiritual guide for many. She was a pastoral minister at St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Ridgefield from 1970-83, and was a social worker in Danbury, first at the Head Start program from 1989-90 and then at St. John Paul II Center for Healthcare from 1990-95. She cared for the elderly, those in 12-step programs and others who searched for God in their lives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Sister Dorothy on October 19 at Villa Notre Dame in Wilton. Interment followed in St. Peter Cemetery, Danbury. ■

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### DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT: JANUARY 21—FEBRUARY 17

#### JANUARY

22	Rev. Felix P. Werpechowski.....	1972
	Rev. John Mitchell.....	2006
23	Rev. James J. McCormick.....	1965
27	Msgr. Francis G. Galla.....	1996
28	Msgr. Joseph R. McCarthy.....	1964
30	Msgr. John F. Cavanaugh.....	1990
	Rev. James F. Desmond.....	1963
31	Rev. Addison George Wright, PSS.....	2017

#### FEBRUARY

2	Rev. Joseph W. Kupec.....	1978
	Deacon Bartholomew J. Mauceri.....	2004
3	Msgr. Martin F. Doran.....	1967
	Rev. Robert F. Albert.....	1995
4	Msgr. William F.X. Casey.....	1978
6	Msgr. Martin J. McDermott.....	1986
8	Rev. James F. McGrath.....	1971
10	Rev. William R. Nagle.....	1979
	Rev. John R. Polinski.....	2001
12	Rev. John J. Filip.....	1984
13	Deacon Matthew Ashe.....	2008
	Deacon Rodney L. Varney.....	1988
17	Rev. George M. Karcinski.....	2006

# Nuestra Voz

## El evento pastoral de la década

Por PADRE GUSTAVO FALLA

Meses después de que el Papa Francisco revivió la expresión “Discipulado Misionero” en su carta encíclica La Alegría del Evangelio, una nueva oleada de iniciativas misioneras llegó a la iglesia en el mundo entero. En nuestro país, esta ola está al centro de un notable esfuerzo misionero que poco a poco se está implementando a través de la Oficina de Diversidad Cultural de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos. Este esfuerzo misionero se conoce como el V Encuentro (Quinto Encuentro) y es, sin duda, el evento pastoral de la década en la Iglesia Católica en los Estados Unidos.

El V Encuentro Nacional es un proceso de evangelización, consulta y misión que se inició oficialmente para discernir formas para que la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos ayude mejor a los hispanos católicos a fortalecer su respuesta como discípulos misioneros de toda la Iglesia. Estos hallazgos aumentarán la energía, no sólo para los hispanos católicos, sino para toda la Iglesia en este país.

La Diócesis de Bridgeport ha estado involucrada en el proceso Encuentro desde el Primer Encuentro Nacional, Encuentro 2000, celebrado en Los Ángeles, California, del 6 al 9 de julio de 2000.

Fue una oportunidad para que la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos descubriera las formas en que las comunidades católicas pueden ser una sola Iglesia, aunque provenientes de diversas culturas y etnias. Para este año, ciento sesenta y tres diócesis están participando en el V Encuentro Nacional.

A nivel nacional, el 38 por ciento de los católicos adultos identifican su origen étnico como hispano; en la Diócesis de Bridgeport es el 30 por ciento.

En el país, el cuarenta por ciento de todo el crecimiento de feligreses registrados en las parroquias católicas entre 2005 y 2010 fue de hispanos católicos. En encuestas, la gran mayoría dice que su fe es una parte importante de su vida cotidiana; se sienten orgullosos de ser católicos.

Para comprender mejor de

qué se trata el “V Encuentro”, es esencial revisar la Encíclica del Papa y, particularmente, leer lo que dice sobre el Discipulado misionero. En palabras del Papa Francisco: “En virtud de su bautismo, todos los miembros del Pueblo de Dios se han convertido en discípulos misioneros (Mt



28:19). Todos los bautizados, cualquiera que sea su posición en la Iglesia o su nivel de instrucción en la fe, son agentes de evangelización, y sería insuficiente prever un plan de evangelización para ser llevado a cabo por profesionales, mientras que el resto de los fieles simplemente serían receptores pasivos. La nueva evangelización exige la participación personal de cada uno de los bautizados.

Cada cristiano tiene el desafío, aquí y ahora, de participar activamente en la evangelización; de hecho, cualquiera que haya experimentado realmente el amor salvador de Dios no necesita mucho tiempo o entrenamiento para salir y proclamar ese amor”.

Y la “participación personal” es lo que el V Encuentro enfatiza. Descrito como un proceso, en vez de un programa, está diseñado para conducir a los participantes a un encuentro personal con Jesús a través de la implementación de cinco módulos sencillos pero profundos basados en la Biblia. Con un formato de reunión sencillo, diseñado para grupos pequeños, este proceso tiene el poder de guiar e involucrar a personas de todas las edades, culturas y tradi-



EL V ENCUESTRO NACIONAL se inició para ayudar a los hispanos católicos a fortalecer su respuesta como discípulos misioneros de toda la Iglesia. Estos hallazgos aumentarán la energía, no sólo para los hispanos católicos, sino para toda la Iglesia en este país. (FOR ENGLISH, SEE PAGE 6)

ciones en el redescubrimiento de la presencia y el mensaje de Cristo. Cuando se implementan, estos cinco módulos que se basan en los eventos que tuvieron lugar en el camino a Emaús, tocan la mente y el corazón de tal manera que permite a los participantes la oportunidad de experimentar el amor salvador de Dios, preparándolos para hacer lo que el Papa Francisco llama un desafío cristi-

ano: salir y proclamar el amor de Dios. Como un líder en la Diócesis de Jefferson City lo dijo tan elocuentemente:

“Las personas que fueron alienadas de la parroquia se han acercado. Las personas, que nunca han liderado un grupo, ahora sienten el deseo de compartir sus dones. Las comunidades y líderes con más experiencia se están dando cuenta de que hay

un gran potencial en las personas que nunca han considerado o realmente visto antes. “¡Gloria a Dios!

A nivel nacional se han completado 104 Encuentros diocesanos y, gracias al Obispo Caggiano, los fieles de la Diócesis de Bridgeport se están preparando para asistir a su propio Encuentro diocesano que está programado para el 17 de febrero de 2018 en la Parroquia St. Mary de Stamford. Después de nuestro Encuentro Diocesano, cincuenta delegados asistirán a un Encuentro Regional en Hartford, el 10 de marzo de 2018 y, del 20 al 23 de septiembre de 2018, la conferencia Nacional V Encuentro se llevará a cabo en el Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center, en Grapevine, TX. Se espera que los resultados de esta conferencia tengan un tremendo impacto en la vida de la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos.

(Para más información sobre el V Encuentro, visite [vencuentro.org](http://vencuentro.org).)

(El Padre Gustavo Falla es vicario diocesano para católicos hispanos y párroco de las parroquias de Santa María y San Benito-Nuestra Señora de Montserrat en Stamford.)

### CATHOLIC ACADEMY OF BRIDGEPORT

Something more.



Las cuatro escuelas de la Academia Católica de Bridgeport proporcionan un entorno de aprendizaje centrado en Cristo, académicamente riguroso en el cual la diversidad cultural es bienvenida y celebrada. Nutrimos, fomentamos y retamos a nuestros estudiantes en preparación para una vida exitosa de liderazgo y servicio.

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# Column: Thomas Hicks



## What is really going on here?

### POTPOURRI

BY THOMAS H. HICKS

*Thomas Hicks is a member of St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull.*

“I find myself tied to one corner of this vast universe, without knowing why I am put in this place than another. And why is this short time which is given to live assigned to me at this point rather than in another of all the time which was before me and shall come after me... I am astonished at being here rather than there, now rather than then. Who put me here? By whose order have this place and time been allotted to me?” (Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*)

I first read these words of Pascal when I was in high school and found them interesting. Now I find them fascinating. There’s an affinity with Proverbs 8:23: “You were set apart from eternity

and of old before the earth was made.”

Is it an insoluble riddle as to why one is living just here and now, or are we here and now for a reason, and we are meant to learn what it is? Are our lives more than accidental, do they count as something more than a momentary blip in the universe? Are we “called”?

To me, Pascal’s words seem to imply that each person has his/her own specific mission in life, has certain concrete assignments or demands to fulfill, and in that she/he cannot be replaced. Meaning is unique for each individual.

It’s an interesting question: does God expect something very definite of us in our spot of earth

and time? Are there concrete assignments for us to fulfill, and we cannot be replaced? Is something definite asked of us? Has God some definite work for me to do? Are there ends and purposes in need of me? Is this a possible answer to Pascal’s questions?

I suppose something like this is suggested in the movie “It’s a Wonderful Life,” where a guardian angel shows George Bailey what life would be like for many people without him.

Confucianism places great emphasis upon “knowing the Mandate of Heaven”—a sense of being chosen to fulfill some transcendental command. The “Mandate of Heaven” is something to be respected, even feared. We are to have some sense of mission.

It is possible to miss one’s own meaning and mission, fail one’s “Mandate.”

A number of literary people have challenged this idea of meaning. For example, John Paul Sartre stated that “All existing things are born for no reason, and die by accident... It is meaningless that we are born; it is meaningless that we die” (*Nausea*)

This alleged meaningless is dramatically captured in Beckett’s characters waiting, waiting endlessly for the never appearing Godot.

There’s Camus’ Sisyphus condemned forever to pointless pushing that rock.

The point is raised eloquently in Arthur Miller’s play *The Death of a Salesman*, which raises the question: Is there anything that is really worth spending all one’s energy on? And is there any project or profession that will not, in

the end, betray you?

But there *are* essential questions: Who turned on the lights, and whatever for? What is it all here for? What are we here for? What is this life really all about? What is really going on here? Does it have any ultimate meaning?

In the forum of a city named Timgad, in North Africa, may still be read this inscription: *venari, lavare, ludere, ridere, hoc est vivere*: “to hunt, to bathe, to play, to laugh, this is to live.”

As someone has said: “Does anything matter, except making love and sleeping and eating and being flattered?”

Many people today seem to live unreflectively. They are not even asking the questions. For some reason, they have decided not to deal with such questions. I suppose this is an instance of the shallowness of our society. There is an obsession with diversions. One can be trying to offer answers to people who no longer see the importance of the questions.

For myself, I’m beginning to see a remarkable causality in the chain of unexpected, entangled events of my life, and I wonder, do all the puzzling pieces of my life fit into a purposeful pattern?

Can I come to see my life as a handiwork of God? Unrelated fragments are harmonized and seem to form a unified picture, seem to add up to something in some kind of structure that has

some beauty in it.

Still, there is a kind of peculiar loneliness, an abiding discontent, the sense that something is missing. As I’ve said before, I live with a dull disappointment—there must be more than this.

What is my role in this spot on earth? Am I doing the task God has imposed upon me? I more and more awaken with wonderment at the mere fact that I am, by the mystery of my being. I’m seeing things more and more in terms expressed by the English mystic, Julian of Norwich:

“From him we come, in him we are enfolded, to him we return.” We are made for God. That is the yearning at the center of our being, whether we name it so

or not. I think many of us have felt this in some obscure way. If I find him, I will find myself, my true self.

I haven’t many convictions, but I do have a few. One is that I think each us is put here to help dilute the misery in the world. The main way we do this is with acts of compassion and sacrifice that enrich and encourage others.

I agree with the maxim of Dostoyevsky: “Never have I been able to picture humans without God.” Human life is very much the story of the Passion and Resurrection working themselves out in the lives of people.

But in the end, it probably all comes down to mystery and Providence. ■

**“It is possible to miss one’s own meaning and mission, fail one’s ‘Mandate.’”**

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#### ART OF THE GESU FROM PAGE 22

and the militant Church reborn, and embellish its austere and barren interior, and the imperative to formulate a new imagery exalting the order’s founders, Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier, following their canonization in 1622.

This landmark exhibition will give visitors to the museum an unparalleled window onto the extraordinary works of art found within the walls of the

Gesù, the immensely talented artists who created them, and the powerful and strong-willed personalities whose ambitions, and financial means, made it all possible.

Distinguished scholars serving on the exhibition planning committee include Professor John O’Malley, SJ, of the Department of Theology at Georgetown University, and Philippe de Montebello, director emeritus of

the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is honorary chair of the exhibition committee.

*(The Holy Name—Art of the Gesù: Bernini and his Age will come to Fairfield University Art Museum Bellarmine Hall Galleries from February 1-May 19. Open Tuesday-Saturday, 11 am-4 pm, while the university is in session. For a short promotional clip by Philippe de Montebello, see vimeo.com/228080342.)* ■

# Column: Joe Pisani



## The day after the holiday

### SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

*Joe Pisani has been a writer and editor for 30 years.*

**T**he holiday season can be the hardest time of year ... if you hold grudges, if you're angry with someone or if you have trouble forgiving. Guilty as charged.

For our family, the time from Thanksgiving to Christmas and New Year's has always been the Bermuda Triangle of emotional upheaval, and I've lost count of the holidays that were ruined because relatives and friends couldn't let go of resentments. It wouldn't be a holiday without an argument or two—or 22.

This past year was—to quote the inimitable Yogi Berra—*deja vu* all over again. People refused to talk with one another, certain relatives weren't invited to parties

FAITH JOURNEY  
FROM PAGE 23

Grosso, diocesan social media leader. Grosso urged that we must “cut through the noise of the secular world to share the truth of Jesus Christ. Youth are hungry for meaning, community, and fellowship—all of which they can find in Jesus if we lead them to him.”

The events and outreach of the Diocese of Bridgeport, but most importantly through the community and dedication of those whose love for God has already been set on fire, are the reason why the young adult ministry is becoming more and more successful every year.

Catholic Service Corps coordinator Jessica Nayden pointed out that young adults “have a desire to change the world and make it a better place.” This is especially apparent with the sense of community and presence of Jesus in the relationships that those in the diocese have with one another, and it is through those relationships that God is always working to draw us closer to him.

because of grudges they've had since time immemorial, so long ago no one remembered what provoked them. Long-time resentments can become a family tradition. For example, Sue doesn't want to be around Chuck since he broke up with her friend. And Joanna doesn't talk to Bernice. Hasn't for years because ... because ... hey, who knows why? An inheritance? A betrayal? A rejection?

Scratch the surface and you'll find causes that are inconsequential and monumental. Someone didn't get invited to a party, someone spread a rumor, someone got drunk, someone was obnoxious, someone was too politically opinionated, someone was insulting, someone didn't give a gift, someone cheated. And so on.

I admit there are people I don't want to socialize with because, quite honestly, I don't

like them. My expedient solution has been to avoid them, which is what I did and what got my wife angry with me. (I'm in big trouble if she's reading this.) Reconciliation is easier in theory than in practice. The people I have trouble getting along with will always be difficult to get along with, and they require me to master a principle commonly invoked in 12-Step programs—Live and Let Live. And that's something I struggle to do.

One evening as I was brooding over this sad state of affairs, I watched a movie titled “Black Nativity,” based on a play by Langston Hughes about long-term family resentment between a father and his daughter, who left home after getting pregnant at 15. Over Christmas, the angry teenage grandson went to stay with his grandparents and for the first time met his grandfather, who was a minister ... along with his estranged father, who was a criminal.

Despite the bitterness and pain, the miracle of Christmas brought everybody together in the end. Of course, that kind of reconciliation is easier in Hollywood than in real life. Even though I was moved by the performances, I had to wonder as I watched them hugging one another, “What happens the morning after?”

IMMACULATE'S KRISTEN ROESSLER FROM PAGE 25

the East Coast,” said Roessler. In addition to being named All-American, Roessler was also named All-New England, All-State and First Team All-SWC. She has committed to play soccer at Central Connecticut State University in 2018, where she plans to study finance.

This year the Immaculate girls soccer team had a record of 19-1 and was named Patriot Division champs and SWC champs. This is the fifth time the lady Mustangs have won the SWC title. The team won the first round of the CIAC Class M State Championship tournament, but lost in the second round to Weston 0-1.

Players on this year's United Soccer Coaches High School All-America Teams were formally acknowledged for their accomplishments at the All-America Luncheon on January 20, 2018 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in conjunction with the 2018 United Soccer Coaches Convention.

Immaculate High School is a private, non-profit Catholic college-preparatory institution serving students from 28 communities in Connecticut and New York. Founded in 1962, Immaculate High School allows students to focus on academic excellence, spiritual development, service to others and personal goals. Located in Danbury, Immaculate High School is part of the Diocese of Bridgeport's parochial school system.

(For more information, go to [www.immaculatehs.org](http://www.immaculatehs.org).)

Does the teenager's father turn from his life of crime? Does the boy learn to love his grandfather? Does the daughter live in harmony with her parents after so many years of estrangement?

Can we change that much?

**“The people I have trouble getting along with will always be difficult to get along with.”**

After we make up, should we avoid one another to prevent a repeat performance of the original hurt? What happens, I wonder, after a couple gets back together, committed to making their relationship work; or after a teenage substance abuser returns home, vowing to start a new life; or after a husband who cheated is given a second chance even though his wife lies awake, wondering if there will be a repeat performance.

I suspect that when you forgive someone, you have to be

prepared to get hurt again. And you may eventually find yourself asking, “Why the heck did I ever give him (or her) a second chance?” Maybe it was a third or fourth chance. The path to reconciliation often runs along an emotional precipice, and your friends may ask, “Don't you ever learn?” Those words of Jesus about forgiving seventy times seven are pretty hard to swallow when you've been repeatedly hurt.

True forgiveness is impossible without divine assistance, and genuine forgiveness always requires grace. We have to ask God for the strength, the tolerance, the patience and the love. Grace helps us endure the hurt, grace helps us forgive. Grace also gives us the fortitude that's necessary if we get hurt again. Grace helps us overcome the pain and the anger by offering them to God. Grace helps us to love as Christ loves.

The first place to start is praying for the person who has wronged us and asking God for the strength we'll need to do what has to be done. It takes a willing heart, but when it comes to forgiveness, God is always there to do the heavy lifting.

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# Bits and Pieces

**BIBLE STUDY:** Mary: A Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother, an 8-week study, will begin at Christ the King Parish, Trumbull, on Fri., **Jan. 26**, from 9-10:45 am. For more info or to register, go to [ctkparish@aol.com](mailto:ctkparish@aol.com) or contact Liz in the parish office: 203.268.8695.

**BIBLE STUDY:** The Spirituality of Paul will be held at St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Riverside, with eight sessions held Mon. evenings 7:30-9 pm, **Jan. 29-March 19, 2018** or Tues. mornings, **Jan. 30-March 20,**

10-11:30 am. Cost: \$30. For more info, go to [www.stcath.org](http://www.stcath.org) or call: 203.637.3661.

**DIVORCED AND SEPARATED** Catholics are invited to join "Hearts Renewed," a support group for divorced or separated men and women. Meetings are held in Fairfield on the first and third Fri. of every month (**Feb. 2; Feb. 16**) at 7:30. For more info and for directions, call Bette: 203.338.0503 or Peggy: 203.834.1287.

**TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS** is celebrated at St.

Marguerite Bourgeoys Parish, Brookfield, the first Sun. of each month (**Feb. 4**) at 4 pm. For more info, call the parish: 203.775.5117.

**CATHOLIC YOUNG ADULTS** of Greater Danbury will meet Tues., **Feb. 6**, at 6:45 pm for a 7 pm Holy Hour at Sacred Heart Church, Danbury, followed by a social. For more info, check their Facebook page or email [catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com](mailto:catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com).

**JOIN IN PRAYING** the Sorrowful Mysteries of the

Rosary for Persecuted Christians from your home/car/office the first Tues. of every month (**Feb. 6**) at 7 pm. How? Before 7 pm, call 877.216.5269 and type in the pin number 96869.

**POPE FRANCIS AND THE USA:** Theology, Politics and Diplomacy will be presented at Sacred Heart University as part of the Jorge Bergoglio Lectures Series on Wed., **Feb. 7**, in the University Commons. Massimo Faggioli, professor of theology and religious studies at Villanova University, will be the speaker. For more info, contact Tracy Deer-Mirek: 203.371.7751 or [deer-mirekt@sacredheart.edu](mailto:deer-mirekt@sacredheart.edu).

**GOSPEL OF LIFE SOCIETY** meets at St. Mary Parish, Norwalk, the second Sat. of each month (**Feb. 10**) at 10 am following the 9 am Respect Life Mass. For more info, contact John Juhasz: 203.762.3661 or [juhaszjw@optonline.net](mailto:juhaszjw@optonline.net).

**MOMs+DADs** prayer/support group for those with Down syndrome, their family and friends meets the third Thurs. of every month (**Feb. 15**), at 7:30 pm at St. Mary Parish, Norwalk. For more info, contact [strapostolate@optimum.net](mailto:strapostolate@optimum.net).

**THEOLOGY ON TAP** sponsored by the Catholic Young Adults of Greater Danbury will be held at Irish Cultural Center, 6 Lake Ave., Danbury, at 7 pm on Thurs., **Feb. 15**. For more info, check their Facebook page or email [catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com](mailto:catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com).

**"COME AND SEE"** if you are being called to a vocation in the Secular Franciscan Order. The Secular Franciscan Holy Spirit Fraternity invites everyone to St. Anthony of Padua Church, Fairfield, on Sat., **March 17,**

at 9:30 am to celebrate Mass with Fr. Gene Szantyr. Social and meeting follow. For more info, call Pat Heile, OFS: 203.255.8801 or [pheile5713@aol.com](mailto:pheile5713@aol.com).

**SIGHT AND SOUND THEATER** in Lancaster, Penn., will present "Jesus," the musical stage adventure about the most famous person ever to walk the earth, on Tues.-Wed., **March 20-21, 2018**. Chartered bus leaves Christ the King Parish, Trumbull, at 7 am on March 20. The trip is 2 days/1 night and includes round trip motor coach, overnight stay, tickets, breakfast and dinner. Cost: \$305. For more info and for reservations, contact Fr. Marcel: 203.434.7208 or [marcel-saintjean@gmail.com](mailto:marcel-saintjean@gmail.com).

**ADULT RETREAT:** Disciples 4 Life at St. Mary Parish, Ridgefield, will take place Fri., **March 2-Sun., March 4**, at the Seton-Neumann Center, Danbury. Cost: 150/person. Talks on spirituality, reconciliation, the Mass and Eucharistic Adoration. Reservations limited; sign up soon. For more info, contact Marilyn Kain: [kainm@wcsu.edu](mailto:kainm@wcsu.edu) or 203.994.7080.

**SPIRITUAL JOURNEY** to Jordan, the Holy Land and Dubai with Fr. Marcel Saint Jean: Sun., **Sept. 23-Sat., Oct. 6**. Price: \$3,999 includes airline tickets, all taxes, hotels, breakfast and dinner daily, sightseeing, and transportation to JFK. For more info and for reservations, contact Fr. Marcel at Christ the King Parish, Trumbull: 203.268.8695, or [marcelsaintjean@gmail.com](mailto:marcelsaintjean@gmail.com).

**ENCOURAGE** is an apostolate for friends and family of loved ones with same sex attractions or gender ID confusion. Confidential meetings are held

## SERVING OUR OLDER ADULTS

**January 27, 2018**

**Our Lady of Fatima**  
229 Danbury Road  
Wilton CT 06897

Optional morning Mass 8 am

Refreshments 8:30 am

Leadership Summit 9 am - 12:30 pm



Connecticut is the seventh oldest state in the country. As the population of older adults continues to increase, we must have the important conversation about how our parishes can meet the needs of our seniors and tap into the great resources and wisdom that comes with age and experience.

If you work with older adults or know that your parish community could do more to meet the needs of seniors, please join us for this important day of planning and conversation.

The day will include understanding our current reality, reporting on the diocesan survey now underway, hearing success stories from parishes and local organizations, and sharing resources available to our older adults.

Register online at [formationreimagined.org](http://formationreimagined.org) or by calling the Institute office at 203-416-1670.



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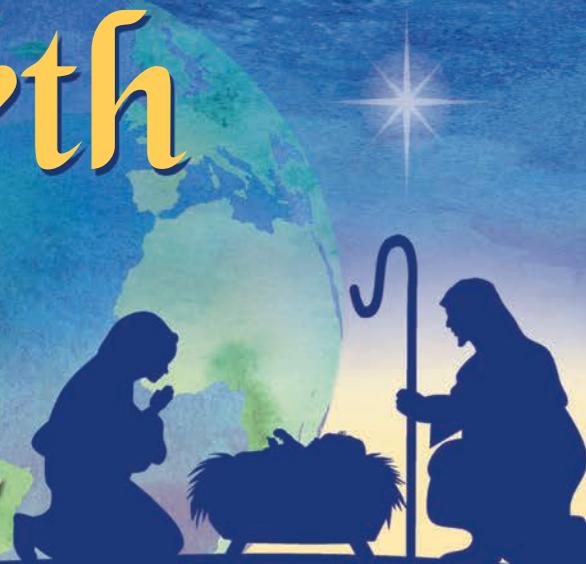
# Peace on Earth

## Crèches of the World

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**Feb. 19, 2018**

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# Local News

## Knights of Columbus Star Awards

The Knights of Columbus Council #16347 of St. Pius X Parish in Fairfield has been presented with the prestigious Star Council Award. This is the highest recognition earned when a Knights of Columbus council qualifies for the Father McGivney, Columbian, and Founders' Awards within a year period. During the fraternal year starting July 1 of 2016, Council #16347 qualified for all three awards through its outstanding achievements in membership gain, insurance participation, and service program activities.



The St. Pius X Council had qualified for the Columbian Award by supporting Church, community and council programs and activities such as vocations, basketball free throw competition, Habitat for Humanity, Food for Families, Coats for Kids and the Sister of Life. The council, having inducted more than the targeted new membership, received the Father McGivney Award. They also increased its insurance participation by more than 2.5 percent, which enabled it to qualify for the Founders' Award. By these accomplishments, the St. Pius X Knights achieved Star Council recognition, and exemplified the values of the Knights of Columbus in fulfilling its motto, "In Service To All."

Dr. Ralph M. Burke, Grand Knight said, "The support of the Brother Knights who volunteered their efforts, the support of the parish priests and staff, and the generosity of parishioners through the donation of goods, along with their most charitable financial contributions, allow all to relish and celebrate this recognition. It is a true team effort and practice of Catholic Social Action. All are stars in contributing to this achievement."

==== BITS AND PIECES FROM PAGE 30 =====

monthly. For more info email [EncourageNorwalk@gmail.com](mailto:EncourageNorwalk@gmail.com).

**COURAGE** apostolate provides pastoral care and support for men and women who experience same-sex attractions and want to live chaste lives. Confidential meetings are held weekly. For more info call 203.803.1564 or email [Courage@diobpt.org](mailto:Courage@diobpt.org).

**PROJECT RACHEL:** Are you or someone you know carrying the pain and sorrow of losing a child to abortion? Call our

confidential phone line to find out about our upcoming Days of Prayer and Healing: 203.895.3554 or 203.416.1619, or email [projctrachel@diobpt.org](mailto:projctrachel@diobpt.org). God's mercy, healing and forgiveness are waiting for you!

**MASS CARDS** are available from the diocesan Mission Office for all intentions. The donations support missionaries throughout the world. If you are interested in purchasing a Mass card, call Elaine Bissenden in the Mission Office: 203.416.1447.

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*Arise  
Together in Christ*

You're invited to participate in an Arise Together in Christ Lenten program, "Change Our Hearts," at St. Joseph Parish in Danbury. Arise, from RENEW International, is a Gospel-based process of spiritual renewal and evangelization enabling people to deepen their faith, grow closer to Christ, grow in community and reach out in service to others. Sign up is available now; sessions will begin the week of February 11 at a day or night convenient to group members. Participants will meet in small groups, led by a trained facilitator, for 90 minutes once a week for 6 weeks. Registration is open to all who are 18 years or older. We hope you will join us in this Lenten journey of conversion. For more information, email us at [STJosephdanburyarise@gmail.com](mailto:STJosephdanburyarise@gmail.com) or call Sherry Morris: 203.770.5356.

*TWENTY-FIFTH*  
**WHITE MASS**  
for Healthcare Professionals and All Who Serve the Sick

Sunday, March 18, 2018  
8:30 a.m.  
Saint Aloysius Church, New Canaan  
*followed by*  
Brunch  
at Woodway Country Club, Darien, Connecticut

where Dr. Dutkowsky will speak on  
**"Healing Beyond Healthcare"**

Celebrant and Homilist  
**Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano**  
Bishop of Bridgeport

The Father Ruffin Compassionate Care Awards  
will be presented

Speaker  
**Joseph Dutkowsky, MD, KM**  
Associate Clinical Professor at  
Columbia University College of Physicians  
Past President of American Academy  
for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine  
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