



FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

MAY 2018 | VOLUME 35, NUMBER 5 | VOCATIONS ISSUE

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Wedding Jubilees

Marriage is 'covenant' of sacrifice and joy

TRUMBULL—"In many ways, what we are celebrating, and what you have lived, the world doesn't understand," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano to nearly 200 couples who attended the Wedding Jubilee Mass on April 29 in St. Theresa Church in Trumbull.

"The world sees marriage as a contract that hopefully works out, but if it doesn't, there are always escape clauses. Your lives mirror God's covenant with his people," the bishop said. "A covenant is a life lived forever together in sacrifice and in joy, in total self gift."

More than 1,000 people filled St. Theresa's for the joyful afternoon, which concluded with the Spring Concert performed by the Diocesan Youth Choir under the direction of Mary Bozzuti Higgins.

The longest married couples recognized during the Wedding Jubilee Mass were Ruth and Lawrence Schmidt of St. Bridget of Ireland Parish, 72 years; Margaret and Henry Simon of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish,



70 years; Florence and Joseph Romano of St. Matthew Parish, 68 years; and Joan and Jay Topham of St. Rose of Lima Parish, 68 years.

"The secret to your success has nothing to do with you and everything to do with Jesus," the bishop said. "Many times we get distracted by the branches and forget the vine. Today, I ask you to reflect on the fact that Christ has been the glue keeping it all

together."

During the Mass, the bishop invited the couples celebrating anniversaries ranging from 20 to 70 years to renew their wedding vows.

"You were strengthened to keep mutual and lasting faith with each other and to carry out the duties of marriage. And so, in the presence of the Church, I ask you to join your right hands and renew your marriage consent before God and this Church," the bishop said.

"Lord, may they both praise you when they are happy and turn to you in their sorrows," he said in concluding the renewal of vows.

"The Wedding Jubilee Mass celebrated 8,119 combined years of marriage," said Patrick Donovan, executive director of the diocesan Leadership Institute and Faith Formation office, which sponsored the event.

(For more information on Formation Reimagined and the many programs of the Leadership Institute, visit: www.formationreimagined.org.)

Wedding Jubilarians

Lawrence & Ruth Schmidt, 72 years
Henry & Margaret Simon, 70 years
Joseph & Florence Romano, 68 years
Jay E. & Joan Topham, 68 years



Albert & Margaret Forno, 66 years
Wladyslaw & Wiktoria Mazur, 65 years
John & Agnes Benison, 62 years
Patsy & Patricia Pagliarulo, 62 years
Joseph & Joan Ancona, 60 years
Luis & Marta Cano, 60 years
Fred & Margaret Coseglia, 60 years
William & Ann Patricia DeHart, 60 years
Joseph & Frances DiMenna, 60 years
Sebastian & Maria Filippone, 60 years
Anthony & Marie Mattiolo, 60 years
George & Barbara McGuigan, 60 years
Vincent & Eleanor Messino, 60 years
Kenneth & Elaine Onofrio, 60 years
Bernhard & Katharina Post, 60 years
Arthur & Mary Jo Pranger, 60 years
William & Bridget Frances Quinlan, 60 years
Joseph & Jacqueline Rainone, 60 years
Joseph & Gilda Tartaglione, 60 years
Frank & Joan Zietowski, 60 years

Giacinto & Josephine Sacheli, 58 years
Carmen & Giovanna Lupoli, 57 years
Richard & Elizabeth Murphy, 57 years
Ivan & Frances Capella, 56 years
Leo & Rita Colbert, 55 years
Roy & Mary Garofalo, 55 years
David & Blanche Haid, 55 years
Michael & Theresa Liberta, 55 years
Dr. Eugene & Ann McNamara, 55 years
Vincent Paul & Mary O'Donnell, 55 years
Gene & Nancy Sabados, 55 years
Thomas & Barbara Bruderman, 54 years
Walter & Beatrice Drozeck, 52 years
William & Suzanne Henaghan, 52 years
Dr. Robert & Sharon Fischer, 51 years
Tulio & Isabel Lopez, 51 years
Rocco & Maria Veltri, 51 years
Frank & Victoria Ahern, 50 years
David & Theresa Archer, 50 years

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

Pentecost Vigil set

BRIDGEPORT—Hundreds of faithful are expected to fill St. Augustine Cathedral Saturday, May 19, 7 pm for the Vigil of Pentecost Mass celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. All are welcome to attend.

The evening will begin with Evening Vespers at Sunset followed by a procession into the Cathedral for Mass, which will be concelebrated by Fr. Peter Towsley, Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Danbury and Episcopal Delegate to Ecclesial Movements.

A bonfire will be lit during the Vespers Service and prayers will be said in seven languages reflecting the diversity of Bridgeport area parishioners and the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Universal Church. The prayers of the Faithful will be read in Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Haitian, Vietnamese and English.

The feast celebrates the completion of the work of redemption, the fullness of grace for the Church and its children, and the gift of faith for all nations. ■

ON THE COVER

Members of the *Fraternas (Mariam Community of Reconciliation)* gathered to attend the Candidacy Rite for diocesan seminarian Colin Lomnitzer at St. Pius X Church in Fairfield. (PHOTOS BY AMY MORTENSEN)

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Latest News

James Bates to be ordained to the priesthood

On June 2, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano will ordain Deacon James K. Bates as a priest for the Diocese of Bridgeport. The Ordination Mass will be celebrated at 11 am in St. Joseph Church, Danbury, his home parish.

Father Samuel Scott, St. Joseph's pastor, notes that three recent vocations to the priesthood have from St. Joseph Parish: Father Harry Prieto, who was ordained last year; the soon to be ordained Father Bates, and seminarian David Roman. "I am grateful to the parishioners of St. Joseph's for the prayers and support they have offered so generously to the three men in our midst who have answered the call to priestly ministry," Father Scott said. "The parishioners have created a culture which encouraged these men to open their hearts to the Lord and respond generously to the call to be of service in his Kingdom."

James Kenneth Bates, 56, the son of Westbrook and the

late Daryll Bates, was born in California but grew up in Brookfield with his two younger sisters, Jennifer and Jill, attending Huckleberry Hill Elementary School and Brookfield High School and graduating from Western Connecticut State University (WestCONN).

His sister Jill Citron is deceased; his sister Jennifer Marazzo lives with her family in New Jersey. Jennifer and his niece Ashley Citron will be gift bearers at his ordination.

A convert to Catholicism, he holds an MS and MBA from Albertus Magnus College in New Haven and was studying for an MA in theology at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell before entering into priestly formation at Pope Saint John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Mass.

He worked as a Systems Engineer for Executone Information Systems, Inc., in Milford and Pitney Bows, Inc., in



JAMES K. BATES

Danbury before discerning a call to the priesthood.

"Father Bates knows what it means to be a servant leader as a priest of God," said Father Scott. "He is a shepherd of souls who has the capacity to listen and truly hear the needs of the people entrusted to his care. He is

a joyful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord with a priestly heart and generous spirit for the mission of the Church in Fairfield County. Father Bates' priestly ministry will be a distinct asset to the Diocese of Bridgeport."

As a transitional deacon, Father Bates served a summer assignment at St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield.

"Deacon Jim Bates left a lasting impression on our parish family through his kindness, good humor and excellent preaching," said Msgr. Laurence Bronkiewicz, St. Mary's pastor. "I am sure that whatever parish to which Jim will be assigned as a newly ordained priest will appreciate his deep faith and strong commitment to the Lord and his Church."

During this past year, he also served as a deacon in the Archdiocese of Boston at the parishes of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Clare in Braintree, MA.

"There's a natural longing in the human heart that seeks to

know God's will in our life," he says in reflection. "Looking back, I can see now that what began as an inarticulate longing became a search for truth, and it was in that search that I came to hear the call of God. In hindsight, I can see the hand of the Holy Spirit at work in so many varied ways and through so many different people in my life. The journey that has led me towards the priesthood is not one I made on my own; it is the work of God."

Father Bates will celebrate his first Mass on Sunday, June 3, at 12 noon in St. Joseph Church. Father Samuel Scott, St. Joseph's pastor, and Father David Franklin, parochial vicar, will be among the concelebrants. Father Bates will deliver the homily.

(The beautiful ordination ceremonies are open to all. Father Bates' ordination will be held in St. Joseph Church, 8 Robinson Ave., Danbury, on Sunday, June 3, at 12 noon. For more information, call the parish: 203.748.8177.) ■

Three men will be ordained transitional deacons

BRIDGEPORT—On Saturday, May 19, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano will ordain three men as transitional deacons for the Diocese of Bridgeport. The Ordination Mass will be celebrated at 11 am in St. Augustine Cathedral. Traditionally, ordination as a transitional deacon is the last step before ordination to the priesthood.

"The Church has been ordaining deacons since its earliest days," explained Father John Connaughton, director of vocations for the diocese. "The Acts of the Apostles gives the account of the first deacons, who were men chosen for their good character and ordained to provide assistance to the Apostles and their successors, the bishops, by serving the basic needs of the community—especially the poor and the most vulnerable."

The three men to be ordained come from different backgrounds, all of which will enrich the life of faith in this diocese. "The three men who will be ordained to the transitional diaconate this year



PETER JOSEPH ADAMSKI

all have the hearts of servants," said Father Connaughton. "As deacons they will also be able to proclaim the Gospel, preach, and assist the priest at the altar during Mass, as well as baptize. Next year, please God, they will be ordained priests. But priests always retain their identity as deacons and continue to bear the responsibility of service to the bishop and to Jesus' beloved poor. A good priest must first be a good deacon, always having a

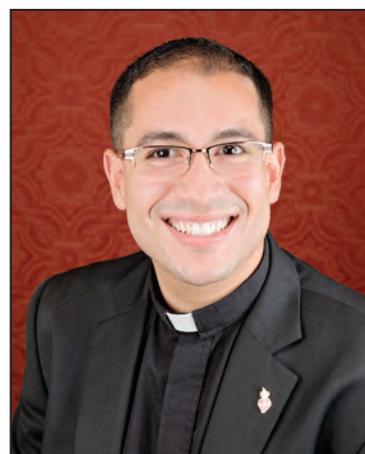


CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH FORD

servant's heart. "I am confident that Peter, David and Chris will live out their diaconate well, with the help of God's grace and the prayerful support of the people of the diocese," said Father Connaughton.

Peter Adamski

Peter Joseph Adamski, 64, one of four sons of the late Peter and Melda Adamski, grew up in Jersey City, N.J., and now considers Holy Spirit in Stamford as his home parish. He and wife,



DAVID ROMAN

Kathy, were married over 40 years before she died in 2014. They have one son, John, who will be a lector and gift bearer at the Ordination Mass.

He holds his bachelor's degree from Rutgers University in New Jersey, where he graduated in 1976, and earned an MBA from Rutgers the following year along with his C.P.A. license. He has been a CFO with Johnson & Johnson Co., worked for Bausch & Lomb eye health products

in Rochester, N.Y., and was the CEO of a successful foam manufacturing company in New Jersey. Peter had thoughts of becoming a priest as a teenager, and discussed the possibility of a priestly vocation with Kathy shortly before she passed.

He will complete his seminary studies at Pope St. John XXIII Seminary in Weston, Mass., in 2019.

Deacon Adamski will assist at his first Mass and give the homily at Holy Spirit on Sunday, May 20, at 9:30 am. Msgr. Kevin Royal, Holy Spirit's pastor, will be the principal celebrant.

"Besides the sacraments," said Deacon Adamski. "I think about being able to minister to couples about marriage, whether they're contemplating marriage or having troubles within their marriage, and being able to minister to the sick. I have a rich experience across all of those fronts that I can draw on, to help in my ministry. I really feel God is calling me by name to his holy priesthood. I

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Annual Catholic Appeal

Build a community of love

By PAT HENNESSY

"In some way or another, the Annual Catholic Appeal has a big impact on all the members of the parish," says Joel Aquino, a member of St. Benedict-Our Lady of Montserrat Parish in Stamford.

"It's like us," his wife Alexandra says in agreement.

"Our kids have been in Catholic schools since pre-K3. Our youth group helps at the food pantry, which goes to people in need. Our parish has a new priest, Father Abelardo, only seven months ordained. He does a lot with the youth, and invites the parents to join him. We all benefit from that."

Joel and Alexandra met when they were both in the youth group at Our Lady of Montserrat. In their continued support of parish activities they are following the example set by their parents. "We came to this country from Guatemala on a Thursday," says Joel. "On Sunday, the family was in church. There was never a



PEOPLE DON'T ALWAYS KNOW WHY they're being asked to support the Annual Catholic Appeal, say Alexandra and Joel Aquino, members of St. Benedict-Our Lady of Montserrat Parish in Stamford, shown here with their three children. Once they know the programs the appeal supports, the Aquinos hope people will want to help in even more ways.

ELENA AND STEVE SCHLEGEL, CHAIR COUPLE

We are honored to serve as Chair Couple for the 2018 Annual Catholic Appeal, *Joy in Christ, Our Gift to Share*. With our strong faith and compassion for those in need and for the future of the Church in Fairfield County, we ask you to join us and more than 22,600 donors who are answering God's call to share the Gospel and help the poor. Your gift assists with housing, nutritious meals and counseling, faith formation, training for seminarians and deacons, and care for our retired priests, inner-city Catholic education and scholarships and other programs.



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Carol and Conrad Calandra, *Vice Chair Couple*

Here is how you help make a difference when you make a gift to the Annual Catholic Appeal:

- ✦ Nourish the hungry by providing 1.3 million meals to those in need through four major nutrition programs
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- ✦ Educate and train 29 men for ordination to priesthood in our Diocese
- ✦ Educate and train 10 men for ordination to the Permanent Diaconate program
- ✦ Ensure that children and young adults have the opportunity to participate in religious education programs
- ✦ Care for 64 senior priests in their dignified retirement
- ✦ Respond to spiritual, educational and social needs of people with disabilities through the St. Catherine Center for Special Needs



To learn more please visit www.2018ACAbidgeport.com

break or hesitation. When I was in youth group, my father and I were both lectors at Mass."

"The parish has always been our second home," says Alexandra. "In some way or another we've always been active in the parish." The couple has been facilitators in pre-Cana sessions, and Alexandra is currently on the parish council. She is also part of the V Encuentro Nacional, engaging Hispanic Catholics, and by their example the whole Church, to reach out to those who have fallen away and tell them of the saving love of Jesus and the Catholic faith.

As they carry on the example of parish involvement set by their parents, they are encouraging their children to continue that tradition. Their two daughters have been altar servers at the parish, and their son may follow in his turn.

"A parish is a family of families," says Father Gustavo Falla, pastor of St. Benedict-Our Lady of Montserrat and St. Mary parishes. In the same way, the diocese is a family of parishes, working together. "When we join together in the Annual Catholic Appeal, we strengthen the community, helping others, reaching out to the needy, providing for elderly priests and forming seminarians to become future priests."

"The appeal lets us help on a larger level," adds Joel. "It goes to strengthen our schools and religious education programs and youth activities. It goes out to people in need, to feed those who are hungry."

Because they realize the importance of the community working together, the couple agreed to be featured on the Annual Catholic Appeal Spanish-language video. "We're really shy, actually," says Joel. But they

realized that too many people did not know about the many ways the appeal helps them and those around them. "It's our responsibility to speak out."

"People hear about the appeal, but they don't always know why they're being asked to support it financially," says Alexandra. She hopes that, once they know the programs the appeal supports, they will want to help in even more ways.

"The soup kitchen and food pantry at New Covenant Center in Stamford help people in need," she says. "We want to encourage people not just to be sure there is food, but actually be there to serve the food—to become part of the way we help our community."

Most important of all, Joel and Alexandra both agree, the appeal helps form new priests for the future of the Church. "We have had wonderful pastors," says Joel. "The reason this parish has grown so much is because of them. We've had great, marvelous priests. Financial aid to seminarians will bring more priests. They are the key to the future."

The appeal assists in the education of seminarians entering St. John Fisher Seminary, in the continuing formation of active priests and in care for retired priests at the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of the Clergy retired priests' residence.

"The Church is a community of love," says Alexandra. "We are trying to build a better community. This is the way we thank God for everything we have."

(To donate to the Annual Catholic Appeal, contact Pam Rittman: prittman@diobpt.org or 203.416.1470. You may make your gift online at: www.2018ACAbidgeport.com.)

(Para leer este artículo en español, vea la página 27.)

Vocations/Great Gift of the Priesthood

Helping young men discern their calling

By **JOE PISANI**

It was graduation day at the University of Connecticut School of Law, and the air was filled with celebration. But John Connaughton didn't share his classmates' excitement.

"Everyone around me was celebrating, and I felt kind of sad because my heart wasn't in it," he recalled.

By every worldly measure, he was destined for success. He had his law degree, he was working in the state judicial system, and he had a girlfriend who shared his faith. And yet he wasn't satisfied. He wanted something more.

Today, Father John Connaughton, the vocation director for the Diocese of Bridgeport, realizes what that 'Something' was. It's the same Something,



FATHER PAUL CHECK

actually Someone, that other young men are seeking, even though they may not realize it. It's the fulfillment of all desire—Christ, and a life committed to him.

As vocation director, he helps other men discern whether Christ



FATHER JOHN CONNAUGHTON

is calling them to the priesthood. There are 26 seminarians in the diocese at St. John Fisher Seminary in Stamford and in major seminaries like St. Joseph's in Yonkers, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Mass., and Redemptoris Mater

Seminary in Stamford.

Father Paul Check is rector of St. John Fisher, where there are 11 seminarians discerning their call to the priesthood. They are able to pursue their undergraduate degrees at Sacred Heart University or Fairfield University while living in community and discerning their vocations. They can have from one to four years of formation and study centered on philosophy, depending upon their level of education.

Ninety-two men who resided at St. John Fisher have been ordained to the priesthood, and the seminary is undergoing a 30-month renovation project to improve and expand its facilities.

Before Father Check was ordained in 1997, he served as a lieutenant in the Marine Corps for nine years after graduating

from Rice University with a degree in history. When he left the Corps, he worked two years in the air freight industry, but was unfulfilled in his work. He wanted something more.

The pastor at his parish, St. Mary in Norwalk, was very direct in suggesting, "I think you should consider whether you have a vocation to the priesthood."

That discussion took place Memorial Day weekend, and by Labor Day he was a student at St. John Fisher, then in Trumbull and under the direction of Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni, whom he described as "an important influence in my priestly life and a great help to me all my years in the seminary."

This was followed by study in Rome and ordination by Bishop Edward M. Egan. He went on to serve as chaplain at Notre Dame High School in Fairfield, parochial vicar at St. John the Evangelist in Stamford and Our Lady of Fatima in Wilton. For 12 years he traveled to Calcutta to teach a two-week course in moral theology to Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity.

"Once the pastor made the invitation, things clarified themselves in my mind, but were not yet settled in my heart," Father Check said. "I thought, 'This is the clear path for me, but I am not sure I want it yet.'" The purpose of St. John Fisher is to help men discern.

"Men don't come here having settled the question, they come here to settle the question," he said. "It takes humility, courage and integrity. A man striving for those virtues, striving for the heart of Christ, is exactly the kind of man we invite to come to St. John Fisher."

Father Connaughton, who is a graduate of St. Theresa School and St. Joseph High School, both in Trumbull, said faith was always part of his life because of the guidance of his parents and the influence of his uncle, who was a priest in the Archdiocese of New York.

"The idea of the priesthood would come into my mind as a boy, but I resisted it," he said.

He went to the University of Dallas and got a bachelor's degree in history. He returned to

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Offering prayers for priests

By **DEBBIE ISAACSON, OFS**

"The priest has a mammoth job which involves a lot of self-sacrifice and even suffering. So, as he is our human brother, he needs our love, support and, most importantly, our prayer. We need to support him while he is helping us on our journey to God," explained Georgia Kula, a Secular Franciscan and a member of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity in Danbury. The Fraternity began having a monthly Holy Hour for priests this past summer.

A number of Secular Franciscans meet every month in the Adoration Chapel at Sacred Heart to intercede for our priests: those living and deceased, those who baptized us, absolved us, gave us Communion. They pray for priests who are in active ministry, those who may be having difficulties, as well as for priests who have left the priesthood. The holy hour includes the Rosary and intercessions, including prayers for any special needs.

This apostolate developed in response to the fact that there are priests who are leaving ministry.

Another fraternity member points out, "We realize our own call as Catholic Christians as we pray and open our lives to God. We pray for our Church and for its leadership. This is a way to realize our own call and connection to the Church at large. This is a tool for developing a deeper commitment, a tool for our sanctification."

There have been saints who have devoted themselves to prayer for priests, like St. Therese of Lisieux and St. Faustina Kowalska. We have good examples to follow.

Everyone is welcome to pray with Sacred Heart Fraternity at their Holy Hour, held on the fourth Saturday of every month at 9 am at Sacred Heart Parish, Cottage and Stone Streets, Danbury. Please remember to pray for our priests every day.

Mary, Mother of Jesus, throw your mantle of purity over our priests.

Protect them, guide them, and keep them in your heart.

Be a Mother to them, especially in times of discouragement and loneliness.

Love them and keep them belonging completely to Jesus.

Like Jesus, they, too, are your sons,



So keep their hearts pure and virginal.

Keep their minds filled with Jesus, And put Jesus always on their lips, So that he is the one they offer to sinners and to all they meet.

Mary, Mother of Jesus, be their Mother,

Loving them and bring them joy. Take special care of sick and dying priests, and the ones most tempted.

Remember how they spent their youth and old age,

Their entire lives serving and giving all to Jesus.

Mary, bless them and keep a special place for them in your heart.

Give them a piece of your heart, so beautiful and pure and immaculate, So full of love and humility, so that they, too, can grow in the likeness of Christ. Dear Mary, make them humble like you, and holy like Jesus. Amen.

St. Theresa of Calcutta

For anyone who is interested praying for our priests, Foundation of Prayer for Priests (www.foundationforpriests.org) and Maria Regina Cleri (www.prayingforourpriests.org) are two resources for more information. Kathleen Beckman's book, *Praying for Priests*, has Rosary meditations and discusses why prayer for priests is important. On Facebook, the Serra Club of the Diocese of Bridgeport posts daily the name of a priest, deacon, deacon candidate and seminarian to pray for.

(For more information on the Secular Franciscan Fraternity in the Danbury area and the monthly prayer for priests at Sacred Heart, contact Debbie Isaacson, OFS: dli42@comcast.net or 475.206.9436. The next Holy Hour to pray for priests will be Saturday, May 26, at 9 am.)

Vocations/Permanent Diaconate

‘Everything we do is about connecting people’

By BRIAN D. WALLICE

The diaconate is the fastest growing ministry in the United States with the number of ordained deacons up more than 41 percent in the last 14 years, said Deacon Greg Kandra at the Annual Convocation for Deacons of the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Speaking to more than 100 deacons and their wives who gathered for the event on April 14 in Fairfield, Deacon Kandra said that there are more than 40,000 ordained deacons around the world, and that the diaconate has grown while other vocations continue to see decreased numbers.

“I love being a deacon,” said the former award-winning CBS News producer, who was ordained in the Diocese of Brooklyn in 2007.

He said that his ministry has changed his life as he has accompanied others in their

faith journeys.

“We are a phenomenon and one of the great success stories of Vatican II,” he said of the growing understanding and acceptance of the role of deacons.

His keynote address was part of a daylong celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Pope Paul VI restoration of the ministry of diaconate in the American Catholic Church. The day concluded with Mass celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, who discussed recent changes to the Diaconate Formation Program in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Deacon Kandra said that the diaconate “has its own character and grace” and that deacons work in many settings including parishes, schools and hospitals.

“It’s not what we do, but what we are. We are bridge builders called to connect the people of God to the God we love,” he said.

He said the diaconate is



ACCOMPANYING OTHERS ON THEIR FAITH JOURNEY—Deacon Greg Kandra, a nationally known writer and speaker, was featured at the recent Annual Convocation for Deacons of the Diocese of Bridgeport. He said that the Order of Deacons is the fastest growing vocation in the Catholic Church around the world.

drawn from the Greek word “daikon,” which means go-be-

tween or emissary.

“We are go-betweens between

the priest and the people, the sanctuary and the street,” he said, noting that most deacons are married men and fathers who work in a wide variety of careers including “lawyers, truck drivers and engineers.”

Deacon Kandra said that while deacons preach, officiate at weddings and wakes and offer Benediction, they are not simply “functionaries” of the Church.

“People don’t see us as functionaries. They see us as holy, patient and merciful men who work with them, and in every sense bring people to Christ. The diaconate isn’t just a ministry—it’s a way of living,” he said.

“We stand on the shoulders of giants,” he said, noting that the role of the deacon in the Church dates back to the first martyr, Stephen.

Deacon Kandra was introduced for the first of two of his keynote talks by Deacon Anthony Cassaneto, former diocesan director of deacons and a deacon at St. Lawrence Parish in Shelton, who noted that Deacon Kandra “has to cross many bridges” to leave him home in Forest Hills Queens, and that he has served as a bridge builder by using his skills in communications and writing to reach out to others.

Deacon Greg Kandra is the creator of “The Deacon’s Bench.” The blog has garnered over 20 million readers from around the world since its inception in 2007.

Additionally, he serves as the multimedia editor for Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), a pontifical association founded by Pope Pius XI in 1926. He oversees the agency’s blog “One-to-One” and is one of the editors of its award-winning magazine, ONE.

A Maryland native, Deacon Kandra graduated from the University of Maryland with a B.A. in English in 1982. He was ordained a deacon for the Diocese of Brooklyn in 2007. He and his wife live in Forest Hills, New York, where he serves at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs parish.

(For more information on the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Bridgeport, contact Deacon Timothy Bolton, coordinator of diaconate vocations: dnbolton@diobpt.org.)

Colin Lomnitzer receives candidacy

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

Colin Lomnitzer, a member of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Trumbull and a seminarian at St. John Fisher Seminary in Stamford, received his Candidacy from Bishop Frank J. Caggiano on April 22 during the 12 noon Mass at St. Pius X Church in Fairfield.

At the Candidacy ceremony, seminarians become official candidates for preparation for the sacrament of Holy Orders. The service is a confirmation by the diocese that a seminarian is prepared to begin formal theological studies for the priesthood.

In his homily, Bishop Caggiano emphasized the importance of humility in the discernment process. After the Rite of Candidacy has been conferred, the candidate can formally continue his formation in theology. He will later receive the Ministry of Reader and the Ministry of Acolyte as he moves toward ordination to the priesthood.

“Discerning a vocation



CANDIDACY CEREMONY—Colin Lomnitzer of Trumbull received his candidacy for the priesthood from Bishop Frank Caggiano during Mass recently at St. Pius X Church in Fairfield. He will enter Major Seminary this Fall.

for the priesthood is not something you can do alone,” said Lomnitzer in a recent interview with the Serra Club, which helps to promote and support vocations in the diocese.

As a freshman at Fairfield Prep, he began wondering if he had a vocation to the priesthood. The question was stirred, in part, by an older brother, whom he observed searching for a similar answer. The search led to them

attending a vocations fair at Sacred Heart University and went as far as Colin “nearly” completing an application to the seminary when he was a high school senior.

After studying at Catholic University of America, he was accepted into the formation program at St. John Fisher Seminary at the beginning of the 2016-17 academic year. He will officially begin his studies at St. Joseph

Seminary, Dunwoodie, this fall.

There are 26 seminarians in the diocese at St. John Fisher Seminary in Stamford and in major seminaries like St. Joseph’s in Yonkers, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Mass., and Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Stamford.

Father Paul Check is rector of St. John Fisher, where there are 11 seminarians discerning their call to the priesthood. The minor seminary program prepares college-aged men and young adults to enter a major seminary. They are able to pursue their undergraduate degrees at Sacred Heart University or Fairfield University while living in community and discerning their vocations.

Ninety-two men who resided at St. John Fisher have been ordained to the priesthood, and the seminary is undergoing a 30-month renovation project to improve and expand its facilities.

(For more information on vocations and St. John Fisher Seminary in Stamford, contact: www.bridgeportpriest.org.)

Vocations/Celebrations

Msgr. Powers honored at Rector's Dinner

By JOE PISANI

More than 300 people came out on April 29 to honor a priest Bishop Frank J. Caggiano described as “a man of authentic humility” and to celebrate the future of the priesthood in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Msgr. Thomas Powers, vicar general of the Diocese of Bridgeport and honoree, received a standing ovation at the St. John Fisher Seminary First Annual Rector's Dinner, which paid tribute to the men studying for the priesthood.

Father Paul Check, sixth rector of the seminary, was emcee of the dinner at Trinity Catholic High School, whose theme was “Forming Fishers of Men.”

“I have never been happier since I returned to Fisher in January of last year,” he said. “I can share hope for the future of our diocese tonight from my knowledge of the seminarians. Grace is at work in these men for the praise and glory of God and the salvation of souls.”

Father John Connaughton, vocations director, introduced the seminarians and said, “It gives me great hope about the future of the Church in Bridgeport. I am always edified by the goodness of the men I meet who express an interest in the possibility of being priests.”

Father Connaughton then introduced Msgr. Powers and said he “holds the distinction of being my mother's favorite priest.”

“Msgr. Powers always had a certain insight for recognizing goodness,” he said. “He recognized goodness in people and he desired to imitate them in striving for virtue.” He added that Msgr. Powers, himself, “is so worthy of imitation.”

Msgr. Powers, who has been a priest almost 21 years, talked about his experiences at St. John Fisher.

“In a special way and unique way, priests are called to follow Jesus' example by dying to self and offering their entire lives as a sacrifice for the sake of others,” he said. “I know that is why God created me...but had it not been for St. John Fisher Seminary, I am not certain I would have figured that out on my own.”

When he entered in 1992, he was leaning toward the belief he was called to be a father and a husband but felt he owed it to God to seriously consider the possibility that he might be called to the priesthood. His family was surprised by his decision to enter the seminary.

At St. John Fisher, his mind and heart were opened to “the truth, the beauty and the goodness of our Catholic faith.” He was able to probe the depths of the Catholic intellectual tradition and learn about the necessity of prayer, spiritual direction, daily Mass and regular Confession.

He said, “I count my seminary year at St. John Fisher as one of the most profound, formative and impactful years of my life.” In total, he has spent eight years there—as seminarian, spiritual director and now, resident.

“God still calls men to the priesthood,” he said, “And I can tell you he is calling very fine men—these same men you have met this evening.”

Msgr. Powers, who was raised in Newtown, attended St. Rose of Lima School and Immaculate High School in Danbury and graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a degree in economics. After graduation, he worked as a financial consultant in New York.

In 1992, he entered St. John Fisher and a year later went to the Pontifical North American College, where he earned a bachelor's degree in sacred theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University and a licentiate from the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family. He was ordained on May 24, 1997.

After serving as parochial vicar at St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull and as the spiritual director of St. John Fisher and chaplain of Trinity Catholic High School, he was assigned as an official in the Congregation for Bishops in Vatican City from 2005-15. In 2015, Bishop Caggiano called him back to serve as vicar general, and to reside at St. John Fisher to help in the formation of seminarians.

Bishop Caggiano, who also lives at the seminary, thanked the audience for their commitment to

the Church and the seminarians. He praised Msgr. Powers as “an extraordinary priest” and thanked him for his work as vicar general, “which he performs joyfully and generously and with great personal sacrifice.”

He acknowledged two former rectors at the dinner, Father Robert Kinnally and Msgr. Kevin Royal, and asked for prayers for Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni, the first rector, who could not attend for medical reasons. He also praised Father Check as a “man of great faith, a great priest and a great father to our seminarians.”

“We have 29 men who are willing to say ‘yes’ to the Lord, and they are our hope,” the bishop said. “They are part of this great spiritual renewal we are beginning to see in our midst to one day join their brothers in the priesthood, who are continuing to



AN EXTRAORDINARY PRIEST—Hundreds turned out at Trinity Catholic High School in Stamford to Msgr. Thomas Powers, vicar general of the Diocese of Bridgeport, for the First Annual Rector's Dinner to support St. John Fisher Seminary.

say ‘yes’ and serve so generously in so many different ways.”

Bishop Caggiano asked for prayers and financial support to continue the work of the seminary so it could develop men to be “happy, holy and healthy priests called to serve Christ the High Priest.”

St. John Fisher Seminary is an initiative of the Diocese of Bridgeport to prepare college-aged men and young adults for major seminary and ordination. Seminarians pursue their under-

graduate degrees at Sacred Heart University or Fairfield University while living in community and discerning their vocations.

Since the house opened in 1989 in Trumbull, 92 alumni have been ordained and almost 70 serve in the diocese. The seminary, which moved to the current campus in Stamford in 1995, is undergoing a 30-month renovation to improve and expand its facilities.

(For more information, visit StJohnFisherSeminary.org.) ■

Secular Franciscans called...

When Paul Kravitz was a student at St. Ambrose School in Bridgeport, he became fascinated with St. Francis—the stigmata, his love for the poor, his reverence for nature and his joyful simplicity. So fascinated, he decided to attend Kolbe High School and study under the Franciscans, where he began a lifelong journey, trying to walk in the perfect footsteps of Jesus by following the footsteps of Il Poverello, the “Little Poor Man” of Assisi.

“Our mission is to bring the Gospel to the world and the world to the Gospel,” said Kravitz, who since age 18 has been a member of the Secular Franciscans, whose mission is the same as it was 800 years ago when Francis founded the order.

Dr. Amy Nepomuceno's life changed when her father died in 1979. Like Francis, she had a conversion to a deeper faith. “When you are a physician, you're often too busy to think about these things,” she said. “And then the Lord jars you. I realized there is more to life than making a living and a career. I

realized I had been neglecting my spiritual life.” Her search led her to a Franciscan friary on Staten Island and she began the process to become a Third Order Franciscan. Today, she directs the formation of new candidates for the Holy Spirit Fraternity, which meets monthly at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Fairfield.

In 2000, Annabelle Sarno, a retired teacher from Easton, went to Italy with her husband and had a religious experience. Kneeling at the tomb of Francis of Assisi, her life changed forever. “I was overwhelmed by an inner voice that said to me, ‘You have to be a Franciscan.’ It was so strong. St. Francis was talking to me.”

She listened. She returned home, and she went to a meeting of the Fairfield fraternity, where she met encouraging people striving to practice their faith. She was professed in 2002 and today serves as the fraternity's spiritual assistant.

The Third Order is the largest in the Franciscan family, with 13,000 members in the United States in 587 fraternities, 14 of which are in Connecticut

and three in the Diocese of Bridgeport. Established in 1994, the Holy Spirit Fraternity has 26 professed members, three of whom joined in December, and four in formation—a process that requires from two to three years of prayer and study. There are also fraternities in Darien and Danbury with about 50 members throughout the diocese.

Fran Karpiej of Trumbull, vice minister of the fraternity, first became acquainted with the order in the 1970s through her neighbors. She had worked in several diocesan ministries and as coordinator for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal during the 1980s.

“Back in high school, I felt a calling to enter the convent, but I lost confidence and at the time thought I wasn't good enough or smart enough, although I knew I would serve God,” she said. She eventually married and had two children, but says, “St. Francis always had his hand on my heart.”

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

Vocations/Fraternas

A bittersweet goodbye

By PRISCILLA MAHAR

It's in the times when we have to say goodbye we can experience hidden joy that being connected to Christ provides us. Even if we are half a world away, our relationship with the Father brings us as close as we need to be to one another.

This May, many gathered in friendship to celebrate the perpetual vows of Mapi Cerdana, coordinator of Convivio and High School Apostles (HSA) and member of the Marian Community of Reconciliation, or the Fraternas. However, this celebration will be bittersweet as the Fraternas prepare to move on to the next step Christ has called them to.

"If it's sad to leave, that means it was very good to be here," says Luciane Urban, the Fraternas' superior in Trumbull. "We loved and were loved."

Since it was announced that the Fraternas' Connecticut community will be closing this year, those who had the privilege to be involved with their ministry and their friendship have had time to reflect on the immense impact that they have had on our community here in Fairfield County.

There are many of us who can start a story off with the line "I wasn't really involved with my faith but then I went to Convivio," or reminisce on different Fraternas who have served in

Connecticut over the past thirteen years. We are the witnesses that truly pay tribute to the women who have dedicated their lives in the most selfless ways to lead others to Christ.

Gabriel Bitencourt, a student at Sacred Heart University and former HAS, references the variety of their ministries here in Connecticut stating "they are truly dedicated to their philanthropies. They focus on holding events to raise money for those directly affected by those issues their philanthropies are geared towards in the Bridgeport community," said Bitencourt.

The ministry of the Fraternas, particularly that directed at the



FAREWELL FRATERNAS—At a farewell reception for the Marian Community of Reconciliation (Fraternas) held recently at the Catholic Center, Msgr. Thomas Powers told the religious women, "You've modeled Mary. Thank you for your faithful service." Bishop Caggiano praised the Fraternas, who are moving on to other assignments, for their "humility and their personal witness."

youth of our diocese, has had a tremendous impact on everyone involved, even after they have moved on from high school youth ministry.

Jessica Mazal, a theology teacher at Notre Dame High School in Fairfield and former HSA shares how the Fraternas mission isn't just simply to coordinate programs, but to fully commit themselves to the relationships with those they meet.

"In my own experience, the Fraternas have been our big sisters; they have been like parents, and they have been our friends. Over the years they have played so many roles for me. My fondest memories of high school were of experiencing their community house as my second home after school and on weekends. At 26 years old, their friendship is still something that constantly helps my relationship with Jesus grow," stated Mazal.

Their ministry has only grown throughout their time here, as many former HSAs continue to serve alongside the Fraternas. After being influenced by their ministry, young adults and families alike recognize the importance of guiding the younger generation to Christ. We all remember how difficult high school can be socially, let alone being a practicing Catholic in high school.

Ana O'Connor, a high school junior and current HAS, references how the Fraternas "have this amazing impact on people that makes others want to practice their faith. This is so visible in not just adults but the teenagers that the Fraternas meet," O'Connor said. "Their joy and their relationship with God makes others strive to be more loving and faith-filled like them."

Even over a decade after their start here in Connecticut,

the Fraternas continue to equip young people to be radical with their faith; to go out and represent what it really means to be a disciple.

Anyone who knows the Fraternas knows that it's not easy to say no to them. But then again, who would want to when they offer such a joyful witness? Whether it's volunteering at Convivio or sitting up listening to a teenager pour their heart out, many of those in our diocese have been inspired to serve God in different ways because of the witness that the Fraternas have given.

Seminarian Chris Mannion spoke about what it was like serving with them. "The Fraternas have formed and continue to form many young people to approach their Catholic faith with the mind and heart of Christ, and to grow in their love for Our Lord in the Eucharist. Their joyful witness, fidelity to Christ and his Church, and commitment to and love for the youth of our diocese serve as an inspiration and will continue to bear fruit," said Mannion.

The Fraternas are responsible for forming many of our young Catholics. This past March, Sacred Heart hosted the annual Convivio Congress, this year's theme being "Made for More."

Throughout the planning, those on the youth board took into account that this would be the last Convivio that the Fraternas would be a part of, and used the theme to speak to the concept of saying goodbye.

Being made for more, we are made to have relationships that are rooted in Christ that can stand against even the farthest distances. By being in communion with him, we are able to be in full and authentic communion with each other. ■

DISERN THEIR CALLING FROM PAGE 5

Connecticut and took a job at a paper company in Stamford, where he attended daily Mass at the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist. When the company moved to South Carolina, he went to Spain and worked at a camp outside of Madrid.

A year later, he returned and took a position in the state judicial system. He applied to law school, graduated and was admitted to the bar. However, he had left the question of the priesthood unresolved, so he began to strive for a deeper relationship with Christ by going to regular Eucharistic Adoration.

"There was one moment when I was in Adoration and started thinking about my options as an attorney, husband and father ... or priest," he recalled. "Suddenly, I felt a certain joy and attraction to the priesthood. I encountered the call and the Lord's offer and recognized it as a good thing—as something I wanted to do."

He entered St. John Fisher and was there for a year before leaving to study at the North American College in Rome. In 2013, he was ordained, and unlike his graduation from law school, his ordination was a day for celebration.

"When people tell me that my vocation story is interesting, I feel compelled to say I take no credit for that because it's the story of my stubbornness and my lack of trust and faith

in God's love for me," Father Connaughton said. "Despite my resistance, God was patient. I'm so thankful that in the end I was able to respond to the gift he was offering me. But it came with a lot of heartache—for me and for others."

Today, when he advises men, he encourages them to concentrate on deepening their relationship with Jesus, who will lead them where they are meant to go.

When asked why vocations have decreased in recent decades, Father Check says, "There are a number of causes, but I would agree with Cardinal Newman—he said this over 100 years ago, but I think it applies today—that ours is the age of unbelief. And whenever faith or the supernatural sense is lacking, from where will come the impulse for a young man to make the counter-cultural statement, 'I want to be a priest?'"

Our age, he says, is characterized by a loss of human dignity, a lessening of faith, a preoccupation with technology, material success, and the effects of the sexual revolution, all of which are harmful to the sacred. Nevertheless, Christ finds hearts that seek to follow Him.

Father Connaughton says, "There is no real 'crisis of vocations.' What we are dealing with is a crisis of faith. There is a fear men have that it's not worth it giving their lives to Christ—that their lives would be much happier

pursuing worldly things."

He emphasizes the importance of parishes and parents in cultivating vocations.

"We have to take a hard look at ourselves and remember that parishes are the places where vocations come from," he said. "We have to ask ourselves 'Are we praying for vocations? Are young people being encouraged to enter the religious life?'"

Parents must be committed to attendance at Mass, regular Confession, family prayer and honest, sympathetic discussions if a child expresses interest in the priesthood or religious life.

"I tell people that 'God loves your children more than you do,'" he said. "When we see a vocation, that is a sign of God's love for them and it should be encouraged. The world desperately needs good, holy, healthy and happy young men to answer the call to be good, holy, healthy and happy priests."

Father Connaughton still recalls the tremendous power of example given by his uncle, who baptized him and, years later, vested him for his ordination. When he developed pancreatic cancer, Father Connaughton would visit him every Tuesday.

"My uncle had become my brother priest," he recalled. "In the end, I anointed him and gave Viaticum to the man who baptized me. What a privilege that was. It reminds me of what a great gift the priesthood is." ■

Vocations/Retired Priests

Father Brady celebrating Mass as 100 approaches

By **JOE PISANI**

One hundred years ago, Dorothy Brady took her two-month-old son Philip to downtown Rochester for a parade celebrating Armistice Day—the end of the War to End All Wars. She had great hopes for her newborn baby because she'd once been told she would be the mother of a priest.

The centenary of the First World War will be commemorated November 11 this year—the same year Father Philip Brady will celebrate his 100th birthday and 75th year as a priest. His mother's prayers were answered.

Father Brady served for many years in the Diocese of Bridgeport until retiring in 1995 from St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish in Shelton, where he was pastor for 27 years. Today he is a resident of Brookdale Orchard Glen senior community in Orchard Park, N.Y., outside of Buffalo.

As his 100th birthday approaches on September 16, he still celebrates daily Mass with others in the "Father Brady Chapel," which the community built for him.

"They are very nice to me here," he said in a recent interview. "They treat me like a king."

His nieces and nephews visit him often and he leads an active life. Last year, he played Mother Abbess in the production of "Sound of Music" and sang "Climb Every Mountain." He regularly takes part in performances of Broadway show tunes from musicals like South Pacific, Les Miserables and Fiddler on the Roof.

Looking back on his life, he said, "I've been very happy in my 75 years as a priest. I never considered being anything else."

The middle child of five, with two older brothers and two younger sisters, Father Brady entered St. Mark's Elementary School in Buffalo in 1924.

"I can still remember Father Shea coming into our third-grade classroom," he said. "He asked, 'How many boys want to become a priest?' I raised my hand immediately and from then on, that was my vocation. No other profession attracted me. I was determined to become a priest."

Of course, he had help from his mother, Dorothy, whose prayers and encouragement led

him forward in the pursuit of his calling. As a young woman at St. Cecilia Church in Harlem, she had visited the convent and told Mother Superior that she wanted to become a nun.

"The nun told her, 'No, you're not going into the convent. You're going to become the mother of a priest,'" Father Brady recalled. So every day at Mass, Dorothy prayed that one of her sons would enter the priesthood. And her youngest did.

After eighth grade, Father was accepted at the Little Seminary of St. Joseph and the Little Flower, but his family had to move to New York City because his father needed to find work during the Depression.

They lived in the Bronx, and he attended Cathedral College, a preparatory seminary across the street from St. Patrick's Cathedral. However, they returned to Buffalo a year later, and he resumed his studies at the Little Seminary. He later entered the Columban Fathers order because he wanted to be a missionary priest and take the Gospel message to foreign countries. On December 18, 1943, he was ordained with 13 other men at St. Joseph Cathedral in Buffalo.

"I wanted to go to China, but China was closed and they were kicking priests out," he recalled. "The war was on and they couldn't give us assignments in the missions so we were loaned to different dioceses."

His first assignment was at St. Joachim Church in Buffalo, until he became vocations director at a seminary the Columban Fathers opened in Milton, Massachusetts. For 17 years, he toured the country, looking for young men who had a calling to the priesthood.

When his younger sister, who was a nurse in Buffalo, suffered a breakdown, he volunteered to care for her because he was teaching nearby at the Columban Fathers' Silver Creek Seminary.

"I was the only one available who could help her," he recalled.

With her treatment came financial responsibilities, but he had no money because missionary priests did not receive a salary, so he asked to be assigned to the Diocese of Buffalo. Since there were no openings, his superior suggested that he apply to the newly formed



75 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD!—Father Philip Brady, a retired priest of the Diocese of Bridgeport, continues to serve and celebrate Mass in upstate New York. Fondly remembered by many in the diocese, he will celebrate his 100th birthday on September 16.

Diocese of Bridgeport.

The response was immediate. "Send him down and I'll put him to work," Bishop Lawrence Shehan told the superior, and in 1960 Father Brady arrived at St. Mary Parish in Greenwich, where he taught religion at the parish high school. He was later transferred to St. Paul Parish in Glenville. Then, in 1968 during the fourth week of Lent, he was named pastor at St. Margaret Mary's in Shelton.

In the 23 years since retiring, he has assisted at parishes in Woodsville, New Hampshire; Yucca Valley, California; and Wells River, Vermont. In 2010, he returned to Buffalo and moved into a senior living community with his brother-in-law.

Throughout the years, he has been friend and spiritual advisor to countless people, who have been endeared to him because of his compassion, humor, reverence and love of the Eucharist.

One is Pamela Rittman, director of the Annual Catholic Appeal, who met Father Brady over the phone 10 years ago when he called to make a donation and she discovered he was from the town where she grew up.

Shortly afterward, he sent her some of his homemade fudge, which was known as "Father Brady's Holy Fudge" in parts of Vermont and New Hampshire and sold at roadside stands and country stores.

"We immediately hit it off as friends and talked about local restaurants and the cold Western New York weather," Rittman said.

Seventy-five years as a priest and 100 years of life have taught him many lessons.

"The priesthood can be difficult," he said. "You see a lot of problems, but you're doing Christ's work, which is the most important thing of all. Today, the Church gets bad press, and the sex abuse scandal has made it hard, but I always had my vocation and I never wanted anything else."

When asked what his secret is for a long life, he admits to being perplexed: "My father died at 60, my mother at 54, and yet here I am ... approaching 100." ■

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EDITORIAL

Is this all?

What makes a man or a woman make a decision to become a priest or religious in this day and age?

At one time this option was honored and admired. Not so now. But men enter St. John Fisher Seminary and women choose religious orders, propelled by something far more insistent than the temporary and often degrading culture around them.

Why? "The prompting of the Holy Spirit is still powerful, no matter the culture or the material wealth around us," says Sister Nancy Strillacci, delegate for religious for the Diocese of Bridgeport. She notes that many young adults put off making life-changing decisions until a later age. The call of the Spirit can grow while they explore the possibilities of business, marriage, travel—freedom to go and do wherever they want.

In that freedom, they may begin to wonder: Is this the best way to use my personality, talent and interest? Is this all there is?

A growing sense of mission, a persistent awareness of a different call, a personal relationship with God—these all go into the mix. At some point, each one realizes that they can be of service to Jesus in a way that, with their unique gifts, only they can do.

So they give their all.

In the "Vocations" focus of this issue we celebrate the men and women who have answered the call to live sacrificially and to seek holiness in their lives. Through their witness, they tell us there is something more.

Where our destiny lies

On his Facebook page Bishop Frank J. Caggiano recently delivered this beautiful reflection on Ascension Thursday, the joyful hope of Catholics and the need to put aside things that do not matter while raising our hearts toward heaven.

"Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Ascension, recalling the glorious moment when the Risen Lord returned to heaven by taking His seat at the Father's right hand in eternal glory. This means that the glorified humanity of the Risen Lord also shares in the life of God forever!

In his reflection upon this great mystery, Father Gabriel writes on page 518 of Divine Intimacy, "The central idea in the Ascension Thursday liturgy is the raising of our hearts toward heaven, so that we may begin to dwell in spirit where Jesus has gone before us. 'Christ's Ascension', says Pope Leo, 'is our own ascension, our body has the hope of one day being where its glorified Head has preceded it.' ...The Ascension is, then, a feast of joyful hope, a sweet foretaste of heaven. By going before us, Jesus our Head has given us the right to follow Him there someday."

How often do we keep our eyes focused on things that do not matter, pertain to earthly concerns or are contrary to our faith? Why do we not raise our eyes to heaven and remember where our destiny lies? For just as the Apostles were told by the angel at the Ascension to move on, and begin preaching and teaching the gift of salvation in Christ, today we are challenged to do the same thing.

It is time to stop waiting, making excuses or keeping our eyes fixed on things that do not matter and remember where our destiny will take us in Christ."

The Face of the Church

The life of the diocese came together in a wonderful and magical day recently when married couples celebrated their unions at the Jubilee Mass at St. Theresa Church in Trumbull and were treated to a concert by the Diocesan Youth Choir immediately following Mass. It must have been a particularly satisfying moment for Bishop Caggiano, who celebrated the Mass and was on hand to enjoy the Spring Concert. He was the moving force behind the formation of the Youth Choir and has also worked for a strong inter-generational approach to building communities of faith where all may encounter Christ. There is no better symbol of the renewal of the diocese than the youth lifting their voices in song and married couples renewing their vows. "This is the face of the Church being reborn in front of our very eyes," said a joyful Bishop Caggiano after the performance. Congratulations to all the couples who celebrated anniversaries and to the 80-member choir for the gift of their spirit and song.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Trees for St. John Cemetery, Norwalk

Along with city officials and members of the Norwalk s Tree Advisory Committee, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano and Msgr. Walter Orłowski, pastor of St. Matthew Parish, joined in the tree planting ceremony recently at St. John Cemetery on Richards Avenue. The partnership between the city and the diocese has led to the planting of sugar maples, tulip trees, and red oaks that will

be allowed to mature to their full size just inside the gates of the cemetery and form a beautiful street canopy consistent with the city's goals.

Noting that cemeteries are places of reflection and consolation, Bishop Caggiano thanked the city and all those who worked to plant trees for the next generation. "St. Thomas said that we feel the presence of God through

beauty," Bishop Caggiano said at the dedication. "May the trees also bring hope to people who visit here."

Mary-Pat Cottrell, a member of St. Matthew Parish and the Tree Committee, initiated the project and worked with Frank Spodnick, director of Catholic Cemeteries. The city planted the trees and the diocese prepared the site and agreed to their maintenance.



CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

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

PASTOR

FATHER ARTHUR C. MOLLENHAUER, from Pastor, Saint Roch Parish, Greenwich to Pastor, Saint James Parish,

Stratford. Effective date is June 14.

RETIREMENT

FATHER THOMAS F. LYNCH, from Pastor, Saint James Parish, Stratford to retirement. Effective

date is June 14. Father Lynch will continue to serve as Dean of Mystical Rose.

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

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Editorial



Speaking about the Vocation of Motherhood

A WOMAN'S VOICE

BY DEBRA TOMASELLI

Debra Tomaselli writes from Altamonte Springs, Florida. She can be reached at dtomaselli@cfl.rr.com

When our parish's Mothers' Group asked me to be a guest speaker, I jumped at the chance. I love to share my faith. And I love being a mother. I was thrilled for the opportunity. But at the same time, I was scared.

I'm a perfectionist. For weeks I scrawled notes while waiting in carpool lines, cooking dinner or watching television. Days before the talk, however, I still hadn't perfected my presentation.

Worse yet, distractions abounded. Deadlines loomed. Our roof sprung a leak. The car broke down.

Finally, the night before my speech, I made a simple plan. My goal was to illustrate the importance of faith in a young child's life.

I pulled a picture of the Blessed Mother from our teenage daughter's bedroom. We had given it to her for her eighth birthday, along with an Easy Bake oven, a pink 'Skip-It', and a plush teddy bear. Her thank

you note, handwritten in chunky second-grade print, read, "Dear Mom and Dad; Thank you for my birthday presents. I liked the Mary picture best." I made copies of it for handouts, hoping to illustrate how kids appreciate holiness.

I arrived early for the meeting. As we gathered, I prayed for these holy women of faith. With three nearly grown daughters, I understood the magnitude of their humble work. I felt honored to be in their presence. We formed a circle and prayed. Then, sitting beside them, I leaned forward and spoke.

I recalled the joys of chasing shadows with my toddler in the

late afternoon sun. I recollected the power of three Hail Mary's and the peace they delivered as my brother lay dying twenty days after our youngest was born.

I remembered transforming a boring day into lifetime memories when my two preschoolers and I strolled to the grocery store and bought an éclair to share on the way home. I recalled the nagging inner voice

"Your gift is important. It may not be much; it may be flawed. God will take the five loaves and two fish and multiply it."

that convinced me to become a Brownie leader when I didn't really want to, and the incredible support the commitment provided at a time I needed it most.

I forgot about the Mary picture. I never distributed the

handouts. I barely glanced at my outline. I engaged with the moms. At the conclusion, everyone graciously thanked me.

Later, however, I struggled. What if I bored them? How could I have abandoned my plan? Why did I forget the handouts? I chastised myself for not being more professional, informative, or organized. Then another realization surfaced.

God doesn't want our perfection, he wants our faithfulness.

With that, I found peace. I fulfilled the invitation to speak. My mission was complete.

You have a task, too. Don't be afraid to offer what you have. Your gift is important. It may not be much; it may be flawed. God will take the five loaves and two fish and multiply it. You may be a stuttering Moses or an aged Sarah, but He will work wonders with a willing heart.

After all, it's not all about us. It's all about him. ■



Those Darling Buds Are Here Again

A DAD'S VIEW

BY MATTHEW HENNESSEY

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

The thing about spring is you forget how great it's going to be. Life can be a drag. Winters can overstay. But spring is about hope, and hope is the thing that pokes its way out of a robin's egg.

We take family walks. By the pond in the cemetery we happen upon a pair of turtles that are, um, trying to start their own family. I turn it into a teaching moment, but biology isn't my best subject. The best I can do is sing.

"It's a fact, it's natural, everything is satisfactual."

My kids have age-appropriate understandings of how baby turtles get made. They also know that nature isn't only trees,

streams, and four-legged things. People live here. We are the world, as the old song goes, not a thing apart.

This might not seem like prologue to a discussion of contraception, but it is. It has to be. The birds and the bees don't do what humans do. They don't interrupt the cycle. They don't rewrite natural law. They don't dream up ways to "terminate" their offspring.

Only we do that. Strange birds we are.

A few years back the media gleefully noted the 50th anniversary of the birth-control pill. This year is the 50th anniversary of the Catholic Church's response.

Talk about a hot summer. From Paris to Chicago to Los Angeles to Saigon the world was on fire in 1968. In parts of the culture the embers still glow.

Against the backdrop of sexual revolution the Church made the truly rebellious choice to affirm its traditional teaching on the nature and purpose of sex. It wasn't popular in 1968, and it isn't popular today. The culture wants what cannot be—consequence-free conjugation. It doesn't exist.

Ask the birds. Ask the bees. Ask the turtles. Ask the breeze.

Non-Catholics have the impression that every Sunday papists get a brimstone sermon on so-called social issues: the evils of promiscuity, divorce, abortion, contraception, and embryonic stem cells. You and I both know that most homilies are not that.

Next month the Basilica of St. John in Stamford will host a conference on *Humanae Vitae*. It'll be a rare opportunity to hear smart people explain what the encyclical actually says—and means.

The legacy of 1968 is our oversexed culture. All of it sends

the same message: sexual exploration is the route to self-realization; restraint is the route to self-harm. Children are portrayed as a burden rather than a gift. Faithfulness is equated with a lack of imagination.

Go all the way, then go fur-

D.C. Look at Hollywood. Look what's become of us.

I don't see how anyone can argue that 50 years of permanent sexual revolution has left the country better off. Why deny the obvious?

It goes without saying that I'm

"Against the backdrop of sexual revolution the Church made the truly rebellious choice to affirm its traditional teaching on the nature and purpose of sex. It wasn't popular in 1968, and it isn't popular today."

ther. Tonight's gonna be a good, good night.

What gets left out is how great marriage is, how happy children will make you. It's not easy, of course, to live right and do right, but no honest person would say that it is. The right thing and the hardest thing are often the same thing.

The wreckage is everywhere. Violent and perverted scandals in the news. Look at Washington,

a prude. I'm a dinosaur. I know people like me get called worse names than that. But I'm doing everything I can to teach my kids that they are loved by God and they don't need to go along or get along to get to heaven.

I'll keep doing it until I breathe my last. Then they can plow me under and let the worms have me. Maybe a baby robin will eat me for breakfast one day.

Won't that be satisfactual. ■

St. Andrew Parish

'The Day the Sun Danced': Fatima musical

By EMILY CLARK

Barbara Oleynick had a vision—one forming within her mind and heart for the last 20 years: to bring the story of the miracle of Fatima to all those who wish to hear it. As a producer, director, writer and composer, Oleynick dreamed of a multi-media virtual production to share the story of the Blessed Mother's appearances to three young children in Portugal in 1917.

This summer, in St. Andrew Parish in Bridgeport, that vision becomes a reality.

"This musical production is a retelling of an historical event that made worldwide news," says Oleynick of the play that opens on May 27. "We are transforming St. Andrew's into a mesmerizing performance space to recreate the day the sun danced at Fatima to engage all the senses of our audience."

In October 1917, in the small Portuguese village, 70,000 witnesses watched as the sun rotated, became large and then small again, and danced—an occurrence prophesized to the children

by the Virgin Mary throughout her visits to them over the course of six months. At this time of turmoil during the Great War, she came with a promise from God that the world would be at peace and that souls would go to heaven if her requests were acknowledged and obeyed.

Ever since Oleynick wrote "The Miracle of Fatima" musical as her thesis project for the Writing Musical Theatre program at New York University in 1999, this accomplished performer has felt it was her purpose to spread Mary's message of hope.

Drawing inspiration from her son John, who struggled with depression and passed away in 2016, she is now realizing the culmination of years of work—just as the world marks the 100th anniversary of this miraculous event.

"It's so fitting that it's happening now," says Father Gene Szantyr, pastor of St. Andrew Parish. "We are bringing back attention to our Blessed Mother. And through technology, we can make the church look like a theater."

Although technology, ani-



YOUNG ACTORS and an energetic cast give vibrant musical life to the Miracle of Fatima in this production by Barbara Oleynick, which airs at St. Andrew Church in Bridgeport.

mated illustrations, and digitized music add special effects to this production, the heart of it all lies in the actors—primarily middle school aged children in the roles of Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta who bore witness to the presence of Mary. This emphasizes another of Oleynick's goals: to bring young people into the church.

"This has been transforma-

tional for the whole cast," she says. "I asked myself, 'Why are the youth not coming to church? What do we need to do differently?' It's our responsibility."

And in turn, the responsibility to which these young people have committed is yielding great results. Practicing lines at home and rehearsing full days on weekends has enabled the talented and enthusiastic cast to create a realistic Fatima experience.

Directing two children who portray Francisco and Jacinta one Saturday morning on the altar-turned-stage at St. Andrew, Oleynick calls out, "This scene is so emotional! So what I want from you is agony!"

"Imagine," she then says to the teen playing Lucia, "what do the children think is going to happen?"

As this trio continues to rehearse the scene, several others sit in pews recording the actions to assist them in learning Oleynick's blocking techniques. From there, the three onstage break into song, with Oleynick snapping her fingers to the rhythm like a human metronome.

"Now that was harmony!" she praises. "That was lovely!"

Father Gene's pride in these children's accomplishments and in his parish's role in the production is evident as he visits the church during rehearsals to see the progress and view the set-up. "The kids are so bright!" he says. "They have no fear. They want to

learn the history of the event and of terms like 'Holy Ghost' that aren't used today."

Though many of the actors in this production have appeared on stage in the past, it is the reality of this historical event that makes "The Miracle of Fatima" so special for them.

Sabatino Cruz, an 11-year-old who plays Francisco, enjoys learning about life in 1917. "I like interpreting a character from a period that I didn't grow up in," he says.

"What's really interesting is that usually plays are fictional," adds Zachary Cecere, 12, who also plays Francisco. "But all of this really did happen."

The historical aspect of Fatima is something that attracted 14-year-old Summer Charbonneau, who says that her character Lucia is the one who explains the story to the audience. "I wanted to research more about her and understand the emotions that she had," Charbonneau says. "I hope this teaches a lot of people about what happened at Fatima."

With themes of compassion and mercy, "The Miracle of Fatima" has something to teach everyone, Oleynick believes. Though she credits the Blessed Mother with inspiring her, others feel that Oleynick and her message are an inspiration to them.

Sue Baldwin, director of Faith Formation and Young Adult/Youth Ministry at St. Andrew's, says, "I think Mary sent Barbara to us as her messenger. We pray for the success of this production every day."

Though the musical will be produced locally, the technological aspects allow Oleynick to replicate it across the country.

"We can take it anywhere," she said, acknowledging the virtual accessibility of this multi-media experience. "If we can produce two hours of hope and comfort in today's world, and at the end, have the audience see Our Lady appear, then I know we have realized our purpose."

("The Miracle of Fatima" will be performed on weekend days from May 27-October 14 in St. Andrew Church in Bridgeport. Visit www.fatima100yrs.net for tickets and more information.)

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May 2018

Mother's Day 2018

Bishops' Moms gave help and spiritual guidance

By CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Just in time for Mother's Day, a handful of bishops shared memories of their moms on a podcast by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The bishops, interviewed on the "Made for Love" podcast, which is part of the USCCB's Marriage Unique for a Reason website, spoke about what they admired about their mothers or how their mothers challenged or supported them over the years. The podcast is available here: soundcloud.com/usccbclips/made-for-love-ep-12-bishops-have-moms-too.

Two bishops spoke about how hard it was for their mothers to see them leave home. Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wisconsin, left at age 13 for the seminary and even though his mom wasn't ready for him to leave, she told him: "If this is what God wants for you, you have my support."

Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois, said he didn't want to leave the comfort of

home to go to kindergarten when he was young, but then the tables were turned not too many years later when his mom didn't want him to leave for boarding school.

The bishops, interviewed by Sara Perla, a USCCB program specialist, spoke about the practical and spiritual ways their moms helped them.

Auxiliary Bishop George J. Rassas of Chicago said his mom drilled him in Latin so he could be an altar server.

Bishop Michael J. Sis of San Angelo, Texas, remembered the time he had been hit in mouth by a bat in a neighborhood baseball game and his mother picked him up and carried him to the dentist office a few blocks away. It was something he describes as "a wonderful illustration of her care for me as a mother—that she would drop everything and care for me."

The bishops didn't sentimentalize motherhood either. Bishop Gregory J. Mansour of the Maronite Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn, New York, who was one of six children, said his moth-

er told him when he was older about a time she took all the children to church and was crying in prayer saying: "God, I can't do this ... I need your help."

The bishop said that as a kid he experienced so much love that never imagined his mom was struggling and had no idea what she was going through.

When he was ordained in Lebanon he said he expressed—in what he

describes as the "poorest Arabic possible"—gratitude to his mother and encouragement to all mothers emphasizing that every challenge was worth it.

When his mom went back to school and graduated in eight years for a two-year degree—because she was still busy at home—he and his proud siblings cheered, "Go mom! Go mom!"

And that cheering goes both ways. When Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of Bridgeport, Connecticut, told his mother he was going to be a priest he said she was "so happy she couldn't

"I never doubted for a moment that she loved me."



GUIDANCE OF LOVE—(l-r) Gennarina Caggiano provided a mother's unconditional love, along with strong, challenging guidance and a lived example of faith, to her son Frank, granddaughter Pasqualina and daughter Antonia.

speak," as if she were 10 St. Monica's—the mother of St. Augustine—"rolled up in one."

He has high words of praise for his mother too, saying she was saint-like for telling him the truth, holding him accountable, challenging him, not just cuddling him and never turning her back on him.

"My mother is the best living example of any person that I have ever met in my life for whom I never doubted for a moment that she loved me," he said.

He said when he got into a fight with an older bully—as he describes an encounter when he was about 11 or 12 in his Brooklyn neighborhood—his mom found out about it within minutes and wanted to know what happened and if he was OK.

Years later, when he was accepted at a different Catholic high school from his friends—with no tuition—he wasn't initially happy there and wasn't doing well academically. His mom sat him down and told him he had to

give the school his best shot and only if he didn't like it after that could he attend another school.

He stayed and he loved it, he says in the podcast, but it wasn't the only tough conversation he would have with his mother because as he put it: "I did some stupid things growing up and she was as angry as they come, but she never stopped loving me."

One proof of her love and pride is that her favorite video, that she would watch every other day, was of his ordination.

The bishop's mom, Gennarina, died in 2011, but she gave the bishop food for thought on the relationship that would be uniquely shared by Mary and Jesus. He said that after she said: "Do what he tells you" about Jesus, Mary said nothing else that was recorded.

Bishop Caggiano said you can imagine how many people came up to her to ask if they could talk to Jesus. "Of course, go!" she would say.

==== JOURNEY IN JOY
FROM PAGE 7

She had friends in the fraternity and decided to join. She was professed in 2010.

"Becoming a Secular Franciscan isn't joining a society or becoming a member of a group," she said. "It's a vocation to be lived throughout your life. God calls you to this. It's a commitment you make to God and the community, just like any priest or nun who joins a community for life."

She currently works as a retreat director and incorporates Franciscan spirituality into her work—a spirituality of joy, peace, service, evangelism and respect for the earth. The focus of her spiritual life is living the Gospel.

Prayer, the Eucharist, service, evangelization, the Gospel. There's a simplicity to Franciscan spirituality. After a lifetime as a Secular Franciscan, Paul Kravitz says, "I can't be perfect like Jesus, but through St. Francis I saw a way to get closer and a little more in the perfect footsteps."

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Catholic Charities

Social Night of Service

STAMFORD—Who knew that volunteering in a soup kitchen could be social and fun? If you stopped by a Social Night of Service at New Covenant Center in Stamford, you would see that it certainly can be.

What exactly is Social Night of Service? It started as an initiative to engage young adults to volunteer at New Covenant Center (NCC), a soup kitchen and food pantry run by Catholic Charities of Fairfield County. The team at NCC started brainstorming around how to drum up interest among a younger demographic.

"We asked ourselves, what do young people like to do in their free time?" explained Ellen McGinness, director of marketing for Catholic Charities. "We figured that most of all, they like to socialize and meet others in

their age group. So the challenge became, what kind of service opportunity could we create with a social element? From those initial concepts, Social Night of Service was born."

But like any start-up event, the organizers worried about how to rally volunteers to show up. Enter Father Andy Vill, parochial vicar of the Basilica of St. John the Baptist in Stamford. Since Father Vill has a devoted following of young adults (he is only 29 years old himself), the team approached him for help. He was more than happy to jump in. "God created us for communion and friendship. All of us have that desire for friendship and Social Night of Service allows the friendship to be based on the greater purpose of service to those in need. Being able to serve alongside peers resonates, especially with young

people," he said.

Just ask some of the young adults from St. John's who have participated. "It's a fun night of giving back and you see the results of your work immediately. While you may not be solving world hunger in one night, you at least know you are solving it tomorrow for well over 100 people," explained Kathryn Rambo, a regular volunteer. "One of the other biggest blessings is meeting other young adults who want to give back. I now consider many of the other volunteers my close friends."

During a Social Night of Service event, volunteers arrive on a weekday night to prepare and cook 150+ meals that are served the next day to the hungry guests of NCC. Pop music is played over the loudspeakers, beverages and snacks are served,



THE SOCIAL AND FUN SIDE OF VOLUNTEERING—Young adults who have participated in the new "Social Night of Service" program of Catholic Charities have helped to prepare and serve 150 meals at New Covenant Center in Stamford.

and when the ovens are turned off for the evening, the participants enjoy the meal they just prepared together.

Since it was such a hit with the young adults, the NCC team decided to reach out to local corporations, alumni associations and religious groups to see if they would be interested in having SNS nights of their own. That outreach initiative has taken off and attracted multiple new groups like MKTG, an advertising agency in Westport, and the Georgetown University

Alumni Club of Fairfield County. "We are thrilled that this service opportunity is attracting people of different ages and demographics," said John Gutman the executive director of New Covenant Center, "because it exposes them to the important work we do here and motivates them to get involved with our mission to feed the hungry."

(To set up a Social Night of Service with your company, friends, religious group or alumni association, contact Ellen McGinness: emcginness@ccfc-ct.org or 203.416.1441.) ■

TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE FROM PAGE 3

know that what God wants of me, and any of us, is what will help me to help others, make me happiest and lead me to heaven."

Christopher Ford

Christopher Joseph Ford, 28, was born in Bridgeport on October 2, 1989. The only boy in a family with three sisters, he grew up in Naugatuck, attending St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School and Naugatuck High School. His parents, Terence and Teresa Ford, live in Naugatuck and are members of St. Francis.

He graduated from Southern CT State University in New Haven in 2011. While attending Southern, he worked for candidates for the U.S. Senate and CT governorship. Upon graduation, he worked for Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA, while obtaining a masters degree in education from Kent State University in Ohio.

He entered St. John Fisher Seminary in 2015. Deacon Ford will earn his M.Div./S.T.B. degree from St. Joseph Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y. in 2019.

Deacon Ford will assist at his first Mass at Holy Family Parish in Fairfield on May 20

at 11 am. Father Norm Guilbert, Holy Family's pastor, will be the main celebrant. Deacon Ford will give the homily.

"One of the most difficult things in life is to follow the will of God, even when we have clarity on what it is," he says. "I felt the call to serve God as a priest for most of my life, but spent most of that time focused on what I wanted, rather than what God wanted for me—and what would ultimately bring me my greatest fulfillment and happiness. These past five years of formation have been a great blessing, learning to truly receive the never-ending mercy of God. I approach my ordination as a deacon with an ever-deepening awareness of the providence of God in my life, a consoling faith in the reality of his presence and mercy, and a growing desire to reflect the love he has continually shown me to those he calls me to serve in his name."

David Roman

David Roman, Jr., 33, the first of three sons of David and Yvonne Roman, was born in Waterbury on April 18, 1985. He grew up in that city, he and his family attended St. Patrick Parish.

He graduated from Western Connecticut State College in

Danbury with a B.A. in history in 2008 and earned a master's degree in education from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield.

He taught at St. Joseph School in Danbury, and served as youth minister at St. Joseph Parish and Notre Dame of Easton Parish prior to entering St. John Fisher Seminary in Stamford. He will complete his theological studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., next year.

Deacon Roman will assist at his first Mass in St. Joseph Church on May 20 at 12 noon. Father Samuel Scott, pastor, will be the celebrant.

"What's drawn me to the priesthood has always been the call to love," says Deacon Roman. "I entered seminary with a desire to lovingly serve the Lord, and my brothers and sisters in Christ, with my whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. During my time in formation, that capacity to love has grown exponentially. And in my priestly ministry I hope to be a living witness of the Greatest Commandment so that others might encounter the same mercy, joy, and consolation of the Resurrected Jesus that I've encountered." ■

Leadership Teams



A SPECIAL PRESENTATION by the National Religious Retirement Office was held May 10 at the Archdiocesan Center in Bloomfield with all leadership teams of Religious Communities in the State of Connecticut invited. Sixteen orders participated. The NRRO coordinates a national retirement fund, for which a December collection is taken, and distributes it to eligible Religious Communities whose retirement is not fully funded. NRRO Executive Director Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM and Assistant Directors Brother Henry Sammon, FMS and Brother Robert Metzger, SM gave talks on financial assistance, services and online resources available from their office. Pictured are Sister Nancy Strillacci, ASCJ, Delegate of Religious of the Diocese of Bridgeport, Sister Stephanie Still, NRRO executive director and Sister Mariette Moan, ASCJ, vicar for religious of the Archdiocese of Hartford. ■

Diocesan Youth Choir

Young people dazzle in Annual Spring Concert

By JOHN GROSSO

The Diocesan Youth Choir performed a beautiful Spring Concert: "Lift Every Voice" on April 29 in front of a full St. Theresa Church.

From the first notes of "He is Exalted," to the ending chords of "The Lord Bless You and Keep You" the crowd of nearly 1,000 people sat transfixed, captivated by the stirring and at oftentimes emotional performance of the 80-member choir.

"This is the face of the Church being reborn in front of our very eyes," exclaimed Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, as he extolled the choir. The concert then concluded with thunderous applause and a standing ovation from the audience.

Many of those in the audience were celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries at the

Wedding Jubilee Mass celebrated by Bishop Caggiano before the concert. The concert was open free of charge to the public.

"This was our way of saying 'Thank You' for the support of parents, sponsors and all those who have attended our performance. It was also our gift to those celebrating major wedding anniversaries. It was a joy to sing for these married couples, who have blessed us with the example of their fidelity and witness to each other," said choir director Mary Bozzuti Higgins.

The 50-minute performance featured breathtaking arrangements of: "We Are Called" by David Haas, "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" by Lloyd Larson and "Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) by Chris Tomlin.

There was not a dry eye in the house after the choir's rendition



Higgins said, "God has graced our choir with joyful and faithful young men and women and working with them each day during rehearsals fills me with hope!"

The choir features students in grades 7 through 12 and is open to all young people of all faiths.

(Auditions

for the 2018-2019 season will take place during the week of June 10. For more information, go to c4sings.com.)

of Amazing Grace.

The choir also performed a returning favorite: "When You Believe" composed by Steven

Schwartz for the Prince of Egypt movie.

"I am so very blessed to work with these young people,"



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Transforming the paradigm of Catholic education

What will education look like in our Catholic schools five years from now? We firmly believe that every child has been given special unique gifts and talents from God and that it is our responsibility as Catholic school leaders and teachers to educate in a way that recognizes and respects those gifts and allows students the opportunity to learn in classroom environments that are faith-filled, innovative, and inclusive.

Creating educational opportunities that are personalized to match student gifts, talents and needs is not only a necessity to ensure academic success, it is the best way that we can fulfill our mission as Catholic schools.

Implementing a personalized learning approach requires more than a mere tinkering around the edges, it requires a paradigm shift—a bold change in the way that we look at instruction, assessment and the classroom environment.

The following initiatives represent some of the first steps being taken to move this vision forward:



“We are re-imagining what the Catholic school classroom can look like and we are excited for what the future holds for our schools and our students!”

*Dr. Steven Cheeseman
Superintendent of Schools, Diocese of Bridgeport*

www.DiooceseOfBridgeportCatholicSchools.com

Great minds *don't* think alike!

Personalized Learning Program

Our Personalized Learning Program will create a seamless Kindergarten to 8th grade blended learning experience that effectively marries the traditional excellence of Catholic schools with the wealth of technological resources available to challenge, inspire and motivate students.

Personalized Learning Program will:

- Enhance student achievement
- Allow individual students a level of control over what and how they learn by using adaptive and responsive learning tools to customize individual learning paths based on student ability, need and learning modality
- Engage students in meaningful educational experiences that are individualized and that lead to collaborative creation with peers as they apply knowledge to solve problems and improve our world

STARTING IN 6 OF OUR SCHOOLS
FALL 2018

Multiage Classroom Model

The Multiage Classroom Model, which will begin at St. Joseph Catholic Academy in Brookfield, will take personalized learning to the next level as we create a model that re-imagines how Catholic education is delivered.

In the Multiage Model:

- Students are placed into “classes” comprised of students with at least a three year span in chronological age rather than by grade
- Students work in small fluid groups based on skill level, ability and/or learning modality
- Students remain in the same classroom with the same teacher(s) for at least two school years, but move between groups depending on the content or skill being addressed and the areas of strength for the student
- Teachers act as guides in the discovery and exploration of knowledge and create learning activities that meet the needs of diverse individuals
- Student learning paths are personalized and students will be measured against diocesan standards to ensure learning
- Electronic portfolios provide a forum for students to demonstrate evidence of mastery
- Students gain greater confidence, leadership, and independence

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC ACADEMY, BROOKFIELD
FALL 2018

Early Learning Program

The Christopher Ripp Early Childhood program will create a “wrap around” component to already existing programs and will provide three and four-year old children, and their families, opportunities to receive crucial enrichment and academic support in a safe and faith-filled environment.

This program will seek to:

- Support students three days a week, after school, providing them with the opportunity to further explore topics of interest or demonstrated need
- Assist parents as the primary educators of their children by providing them with tools to help nurture social, physical, emotional and academic growth in a learning community that is faith-filled and family centered
- Offer workshops to support learning at home, while providing a meal for the family, and homework help for the older siblings

ST. PETER SCHOOL, DANBURY
FALL 2018

Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy will provide opportunities for current and aspiring administrators to hone their leadership skills and to develop those management skills needed to lead innovative, vibrant, and successful schools. To effect transformation on such a large scale, our diocesan system needs faith-filled and effective leaders.

This program will:

- Identify, develop and mentor our new administrators so that our schools are led by transformational leaders who prepare all children for success
- Provide new administrators with coaching and mentorship to help them become reflective leaders capable of leading effective and faith-filled learning communities
- Ensure that many opportunities and resources will be available to our educators and leaders through our partnerships with universities such as Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University, St. John's

NOMINATIONS BEING ACCEPTED
SUMMER 2018

High School Pathways

The High School Pathways Initiative will offer many new and exciting possibilities for our students.

This program will offer:

- Opportunities for certifications in some of the fastest growing career fields such as computer science and healthcare. Students will be able to take courses as part of a program that would grant them college credit and a certification from the partner university. Not only will students graduate and immediately be employable, but they will have the foundation for more advanced degrees in the field
- A learning center for high school students with special educational needs. By creating a personalized learning plan for students with an educational need, we can utilize traditional and blended learning to provide a customized, adaptive and responsive educational program for students
- Creation of distance learning classrooms so that our high schools can collaborate and offer additional courses across the diocese. This will allow our high schools to offer advanced classes to 8th graders

PROGRAM INITIATIVES BEGINNING
FALL 2018

Foundations in Education Gala

An evening of celebration and generosity

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

"We're here to celebrate Catholic education and the young people who have been entrusted to our care," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano to a gathering of almost 300 at the Annual Spring Gala of Foundations in Education on April 19 at Woodway Country Club in Darien. The gala raised over \$750,000 for the programs supported by Foundations.

"Your support for Catholic schools helps young people to develop their gifts and talents, and be formed in faith and values—not just for success, but for greatness in this life and the life to come," said the bishop, who is serving as acting chair.

The bishop set the upbeat tone of the evening early in the program when he announced a \$1 million gift to Foundations in Education from Barbara and Peter Ripp of Greenwich, who received a standing ovation from the gathering.

"Peter and Barbara are people of great faith with a strong commitment to Catholic education," the bishop said.

Their gift will be used to create the Christopher Ripp Early



FOUNDATIONS ANNUAL SPRING GALA—Nearly 300 friends of Catholic education turned out at Woodway Country Club in Darien recently for the gala to benefit Foundations in Education. The event raised more than \$750,000 to support innovations, professional development and student scholarships in diocesan schools.

Learning Center.

"It will serve the youngest and most vulnerable children in our midst, through an early intervention program that will be piloted at St. Peter School in Danbury in September," the bishop said. (See page 17 for a full article on the Ripp donation.)

In brief remarks to the gathering, Peter Ripp said he "was humbled" by the opportunity to

work with the diocese to serve pre-school children.

"I love to plan," Barbara Ripp added, "and I look forward to see what happens as we plant the seeds with this new program."

Honorees during the evening included Roger Fox, chair of Catholic Academy of Stamford; Jo-Anne Jakab, retired president of Kolbe Cathedral High School; and Daniel J. McCarthy, CEO of

Frontier Communications.

Jakab, who was introduced by Kolbe Cathedral Principal Henry Rondon, retired in June 2017, after 43 years as a teacher and administrator at Kolbe Cathedral. He noted that she was the first woman to be appointed principal of a secondary diocesan school.

Jakab said the need to provide professional development for faculty and increasing financial aid and scholarships for students are challenges to all Catholic schools.

"The formation of Foundations in Education fills a tremendous void, as the majority of foundations and corporations exclude organizations with religious affiliation—the very thing that contributes to the success of our schools," said Jakab in accepting the Lifetime Achievement award.

FIE Development Committee Chair Tom McInerney presented the Corporate Commitment Award to Dan McCarthy, president and CEO of Frontier Communications Corp, who is a member of the FIE Board of Trustees and parishioner of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown.

Noting that McCarthy is very busy facing the demands of running a large national corporation, McInerney said, "Yet he makes time for this important new project for our children."

In his remarks, McCarthy said that Catholic education has been central to his life for 50 years. "I was formed by the Sisters of Mercy and Xaverian Brothers in Brooklyn, and my wife, Annie, was taught by the Dominican Sisters."

McCarthy said, "Society is marred by deepening divisions between the rich and poor, by rampant materialism and injustice and other extremes that affect human dignity. I look at our state and our nation and see a desperate need for transformed and informed students who will make a difference," he said.

Roger Fox was recognized for his long-term volunteer leadership and support for Catholic education in Stamford. He is co-chair of the Trinity Catholic High School CHS Governing Council, and twice served as the chairman of the TCHS Advisory Board in addition to serving on

St. Cecilia's Finance Board.

"No one has done more for Catholic schools in Stamford than Roger," said noted Stamford educator Tony Pavia, who introduced him.

Fox, who is senior vice president of wealth management for Merrill Lynch in Stamford, choked up when he said that three of his five grandchildren are in Catholic Academy of Stamford and that a fourth will be registering in September.

"I want them to have the same benefit of a Catholic education that their parents had and that I had," Fox said. "Bishop Caggiano always says, 'Look around at the world we live in—we need Catholic education now more than ever.' And he's right."

The Bishop's Scholarship Fund student speaker honors went to 10-year-old Julia Basseto, a fifth grader at Assumption School in Fairfield.

"I am here to say how grateful and fortunate I am to receive tuition assistance from Foundations in Education, which supports many dreamers and believers just like me. I am looking forward to donating and giving back to Foundations someday to assist other students," she said.

Proceeds from the evening support the Bishop's Scholarship Fund, ongoing professional education for Catholic school teachers, and grants for innovations and leadership in Catholic schools throughout the diocese.

Through the Bishop's Scholarship Fund and its special initiative, Leaders of Tomorrow, Foundations in Education strives to make transformational Catholic education more affordable for families, regardless of their financial circumstances.

During this past year, the Bishop's Scholarship Fund awarded more than \$2,582,000 in tuition assistance to 1,302 students at diocesan elementary schools throughout Fairfield County.

In its first year, the Innovation and Leadership Grants Program awarded \$105,000 to fund 19 innovative, cutting-edge projects in schools throughout Fairfield County.

(For more information, call Holly Doherty-Lemoine: 203.416.1400 or visit www.foundationsineducation.org.)



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Peter and Barbara Ripp

Greenwich couple's gift to create early learning program

By JOE PISANI

Peter and Barbara Ripp of Greenwich, lifelong supporters of Catholic education, have given a \$1 million gift to Foundations in Education to create an early learning program for three- and four-year-old children in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Their donation will establish the Christopher Ripp Early Learning Program in memory of their son.

"Peter and Barbara are people of great faith with a strong commitment to Catholic education," Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said. "Their gift will serve the youngest and most vulnerable children in our midst, through an early intervention program that will be piloted at St. Peter School in Danbury in September. It is

my deeply held belief that this program will have a huge impact on the lives of the children and parents who enroll. It is a major piece of the transformation of our schools."

Dr. Steven Cheeseman, superintendent of schools, said the gift will create a "wrap around" component to existing programs in parochial school pre-K3 and pre-K4 classes and provide three- and four-year-olds with academic enrichment and remediation assistance.

The goals of the program are to assist parents as primary educators of their children by giving them tools to help nurture social, physical, emotional and academic growth in a faith-filled and family-centered learning community and to provide tuition assistance to children who want to attend

the state readiness program or who wish to be enrolled in the parochial school pre-K3 and pre-K4 programs.

Peter Ripp, the chief operating officer for NIC Holding Corp., a petroleum services and trading company, said he was impressed by Bishop Caggiano's willingness to work with them to implement their vision for a preschool program that fosters strong parental involvement.

"Foundations has such an amazing vision, and they were willing to help us realize our hopes," Peter said. "Barbara and I contribute our services and resources as we are able, because we believe that a life lived well is one that contributes as best it can to the good of others."

The Rippes also believe in the importance of teaching children



THE CHRISTOPHER RIPP EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM—Peter and Barbara Ripp of Greenwich have made a \$1 million gift to Foundations in Education to help the diocese launch the new early learning center in memory of their son. It will serve young people in Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 classes.

their faith and wanted a program that provides a combination of "academics and faith building—and some fun."

Barbara Ripp, who has spent much of her professional life teaching in underserved communities in early childhood education and later in child advocacy, emphasized the need for parental involvement. "We wanted a program that would engage parents and provide opportunities, so that once or twice a month they can come and be educated."

The Christopher Ripp Early Learning Program will add on

to the preschool at St. Peter's in Danbury. A "wrap around" component means there will be after-school opportunities for children until caregivers arrive to pick them up. They hope to have a light meal and additional time for community meetings with the parents and children, so that adults can receive guidance in their children's education and a greater understanding of the faith.

"What excites me is that this will plant seeds with very young children," Barbara said. "Much of

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 25



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Proceeds from the gala benefit Foundations in Education's Bishop's Scholarship Fund and Innovation and Leadership Grants, ultimately benefitting thousands of students in Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic schools.

To learn more about Foundations in Education, please contact Holly Doherty-Lemoine at:
holly@foundationsineducation.org.

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Retired Priests

Msgr. Malanowski assists clinic in Haiti

By PAT HENNESSY

The people of Jérémie, Haiti, will soon have the support of a new medical clinic, thanks in no small part to the assistance and generosity of Msgr. Thaddeus Malanowski. A resident of the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of the Clergy retired priests' residence in Stamford, Msgr. Malanowski, 96, has been on the board of the Haitian Health Foundation for more than 30 years.

"Haiti is the poorest country in this hemisphere, and the third poorest country in the entire world," says Msgr. Malanowski. The rural city of Jérémie in the southwestern area of Haiti is one of the poorest areas of this suffering country.

"They have nothing. If a man finds a job, he gets \$3 a day. It's heartbreaking," he says.

Msgr. Malanowski arrived at his knowledge of Haiti by a circuitous route. When he followed a call to the priesthood and was ordained in 1947, all Connecticut was one diocese: the Archdiocese of Hartford. He joined the CT National Guard as a chaplain in 1949. One year later, the Korean War began and the National Guard was called to active duty. In the blink of an eye the young



MSGR. THADDEUS MALANOWSKI with painting of St. Joseph which will be installed in the St. Joseph Health Clinic he helps to support in Haiti.

priest was in the U.S. Army.

The position of army chaplain was fulfilling, and with the permission of his bishop he stayed with the troops. Stationed in numerous locations in many countries, he served a total of 28 years and two months. In his last assignment, he worked for four years in the Pentagon as a Brigadier General, in charge of Catholic military chaplains worldwide.

By the time he retired from the military in 1978, Connecticut had three dioceses. Based on his last posting before being called up, he was assigned to the Diocese of Norwich in Eastern Connecticut.

He was pastor of St. Andrew

Parish in Colchester when he met Dr. Jeremiah J. Lowney.

Dr. Lowney, an orthodontist, experienced life-threatening cancer surgery in 1981—his second bout with cancer. He was living with a one-year life expectancy at the time of his first visit to Haiti, where he hoped to be of help to the people there.

He was indeed—at a hospice in a slum operated by Mother Teresa's Sisters. He found spiritual fulfillment in Haiti, and returned every three months. Msgr. Malanowski was among those who joined his visits to Haiti.

Mother Teresa herself encouraged the Haitian Health Foundation to bring their group to Jérémie, an exceptionally poor area in this impoverished country. In 1988, a local doctor gave the Haitian Health Foundation seven acres to build a substantial clinic. The Klinik Pep Bondye-a, (Clinic for the Children of God) has been offering medical, dental and eye care, with an emphasis on child survival and maternal health, to the people of Jérémie ever since.

Msgr. Malanowski was active in fundraising for the clinic, and generously donated his military pension toward its support. Even after he retired to St. Petersburg, Fla., for health reasons, he continued to visit the clinic several times a year. "I have my own room at the clinic, and Dr. Lowney has one, too," he says.

The clinic depends completely on the Haitian Health Foundation. Doctors and nurses volunteer their time, and the foundation offers Adopt-a-Village or Feed-a-Child programs. Each year, they send three or more containers of medicines, sheets and blankets, non-perishable

food, clothes for children and babies and small toys.

The original clinic provides health, education and community development services to more than 100 impoverished mountain villages in and around Jérémie—improving the health and well-being of almost 250,000 residents within a 50 mile radius.

That led to the opening of the new clinic in an outlying town. "At first they wanted to dedicate it to me," says Msgr. Malanowski. He said no. "Dr. Julien, who gave us the land for

the first clinic, gave it to us in honor of St. Joseph. So this will be the St. Joseph clinic."

A friend of Msgr. Malanowski, Msgr. Roger Watts, has painted an image of St. Joseph to hang in the new clinic. Although Msgr. Malanowski will be unable to travel to Haiti because of his health, Dr. Lowney will bring the painting there in time for the dedication this summer.

(For more information on the Haitian Health Foundation, go to www.haitianhealthfoundation.org or call 860.886.4357.)

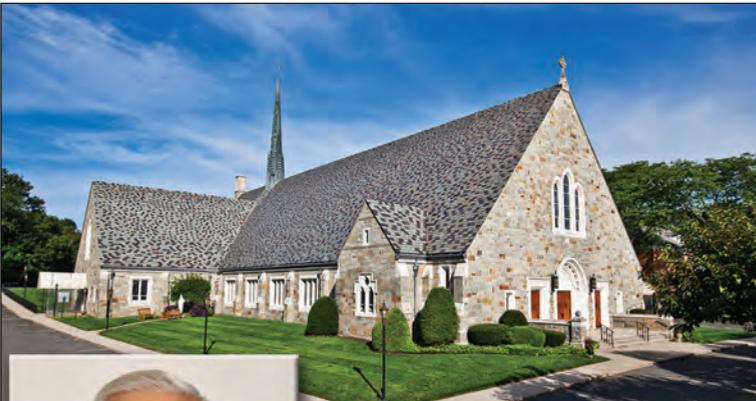
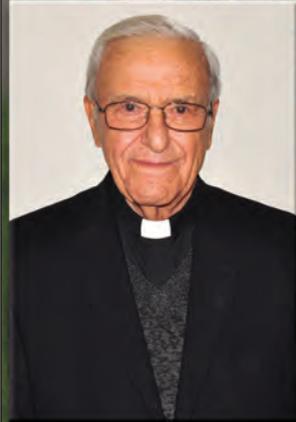
Night of Mozart



SHELTON—Hundreds of parishioners and friends filled St. Joseph Church in Shelton for "A Night with Mozart," the St. Joseph Spring Concert held in honor of St. Joseph the Worker.

Father Michael Dogali, St. Joseph's pastor, said it was a night of joy and celebration with proceeds directed toward ongoing maintenance of the church organ and the parish's music program.

Violinist Darwin Shen of Stamford highlighted the program, which featured Mozart's "Eine kleine Nachtmusik" (Serenade No. 13) and his Quintet in A major for Clarinet and Strings.

Msgr. DeProfio!
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Ladies Luncheon

Donors celebrate Catholic Academy of Bridgeport

By EMILY CLARK

The Eighth Annual Ladies Luncheon to benefit the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport was held at Woodway Country Club in Darien on April 18. More than 240 women and men were in attendance, along with a dozen students representing the four campuses of the academy: St. Ann, St. Andrew, St. Raphael and St. Augustine.

The event raised over \$175,000, which will go toward the \$2 million in financial assistance the academy awards to students in need each year. Because of the generosity of Lauren Henson, Susan Jensen, Anne-Marie Queally, Marylou Queally Salvati and Susan Steitz, who joined together to underwrite the event, all contributions were completely tax-deductible.

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano opened the event by thanking the donors for their presence and generosity and then leading the attendees in a prayer to bless the meal.

For many, a highlight of the luncheon was meeting guest

speaker Cokie Roberts, an award-winning journalist and author. With her trademark ease and humor, she entertained guests with stories of American women saints, specifically St. Frances Cabrini, who founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, and devoted her life to caring for poor children in schools and hospitals. Guests were delighted to receive a complimentary copy of Roberts' recent book *Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation*, donated by the author.

Honored at the luncheon was Greenwich resident Roberta Chiappelloni, who has faithfully supported Catholic education and the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport for years.

"As this year's honoree, I was humbled to be amongst a full house of beautiful faith-filled generous attendees at the CAB Luncheon," said Chiappelloni, who with her husband, Roberto, owns Manfredi Jewels of Greenwich and New Canaan. "The academics, the social skills, the value system, the self-respect and the hope

that the academy brings to these beautiful children might just be their only channel toward open doors of possibilities for their future."

These attributes highlighted by Chiappelloni emerged in the testimony of the luncheon's youngest presenter: Brianna Hopkins, a graduate of St. Andrew Academy who is now a senior at Kolbe Cathedral High School. Hopkins commented about the special bonds she created with classmates and faculty at St. Andrew and the personal relationships fostered during her years there.

"Being at St. Andrew gave me a strong foundation for my life," said Hopkins, who will study at the University of Bridgeport in the fall. "The Catholic Academy instilled in me the value of helping others and being open to all people. Because of the academy, I am more confident in myself. The Catholic education system has prepared me so well."

Introducing Hopkins was her principal at Kolbe Cathedral, Henry Rondon. "It was my pleasure to introduce Brianna," he said. "We are here at the lun-



JOURNALIST COKIE ROBERTS was the featured speaker at the Ladies Luncheon at Woodway Country Club in Darien.

cheon to put a face to a name. It's important for the donors to see the students."

To encourage the donation of additional funds, the Planning Committee held several auctions and raffles. The silent auction, occurring as guests mingled before lunch, included such items as a day of fishing for four people in a pursuit boat on Long Island Sound, a handmade Madonna and Child figurine created in the traditional manner of Byzantine art, and gift cards for a day of shopping in New Canaan.

After lunch, guests had the opportunity to bid for items of higher value in a live auction

format. Popular offerings were a night out in New York City; a tour of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., with Cokie Roberts; and a diamond bracelet donated by Manfredi Jewels.

"Financially supporting Catholic Academy of Bridgeport is putting love into action, giving hope where there is little, together unleashing the wonderful potential of these children," said Chiappelloni.

(The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport looks forward to its next major fundraiser: the Annual Golf Classic at the Country Club of Fairfield on Thursday, May 17. For more information, call 203.362.2990.)

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50th Anniversary *Humanae Vitae*

Making Room for God's Love

By **FATHER ANDY VILL**

A 2016 poll of 4,500 “practicing” Catholic adults by the Pew Research Center stated that just eight percent of respondents believed contraception is morally wrong, while a whopping 89 percent said it was either morally acceptable or not a moral issue at all.

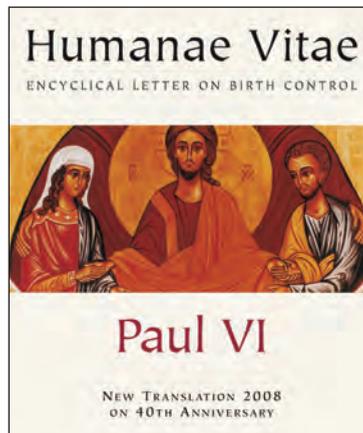
Shocking? Absolutely. Misguided? Totally. Surprising? Sadly, no.

Fifty years have passed since Blessed Pope Paul VI issued his landmark encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae* on July 25, 1968 (the Feast of Saints Anne and Joachim). Many people think they know what the document says about birth control (“The Pill”) and regulating child birth. But how many have actually read *Humanae Vitae*? Most rely on secondary sources or hearsay about the surprisingly brief 16-page text, and subsequently ignore its teachings. In fact, when *Humanae Vitae* was promulgated in 1968, it was immediately met with dissent, especially by American theologians at The Catholic University of America (CUA) in Washington, DC.

On this golden anniversary, we have a unique opportunity to reexamine the wisdom of Blessed Paul VI (who is to be canonized this fall) and open our hearts to the truth of the faith which Mother Church desires for us to know.

In *Humanae Vitae*, the Holy Father rejected “The Pill” as a legitimate means of regulating child birth (most explicitly in paragraph 14) and offered a series of warnings about the consequences of artificial methods of birth control and their negative effects on society if they were to be embraced (as we have sadly discovered). He also spoke about God’s design for married love and the gift of life, reminding us of the improving science behind methods of Natural Family Planning (NFP) which allow for a couple to track fertility through natural markers and practice periodic abstinence in order to avoid pregnancy.

Blessed Pope Paul VI was not the first pontiff to sound the alarm. In 1930, Pope Pius XI wrote *Casti Connubii* (On Christian Marriage) and in 1951, he gave an address to midwives in which he reminded them of the immorality of contraception and abortion. In 1958, Pope Pius XII addressed hematologists and touched on the topic of the immorality of steroidal/hormonal contraception. In 1960, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the sale of the oral contraceptive pill. Three years later, Pope Saint John XXIII established a Pontifical Commission on Birth Control. The future Pope Saint John Paul II (Bishop Karol Wojtyla) offered a vigorous condemnation of contraception that would inspire the



future encyclical letter.

During Easter week, I traveled with two women from our diocese to Washington, D.C., to attend a conference at CUA entitled, “*Humanae Vitae*: Embracing God’s Vision for Marriage, Love, and Life.” In his opening remarks, CUA President John Garvey noted the irony that his university which was the focus of dissent in 1968 now hosted a symposium in support of the document.

In his opening address, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, OFM Cap., of Philadelphia reminded us of the fundamental truths in *Humanae Vitae*. “Paul VI argues that marriage is not just a social convention we’ve inherited, but the design of God himself,” he said. “Christian couples are called to welcome the sacrifices that God’s design requires so they

can enter into the joy it offers. This means that while husbands and wives may take advantage of periods of natural infertility to regulate the birth of their children, they can’t actively intervene to stamp out the fertility that’s natural to sexual love.”

The conference, sponsored by the USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, also featured talks by experts including Mary Eberstadt, Janet Smith and Richard Fehring. Topics covered included the theological and legal realities surrounding the institution of marriage, the now ubiquitous access to artificial birth control, and the resulting uncoupling of sex, marriage and babies. Helen Alvaré, professor of law at George Mason University, addressed the shift in U.S. public policy from one which promotes the physical and economic health and wellness of women and children to one which holds “sex without consequence” as its highest value.

“Half a century after *Humanae Vitae*, the Church in the United States is at a very difficult but also very promising moment,” Archbishop Chaput concluded. “Difficult, because the language of Catholic moral wisdom is alien to many young people, who often leave the Church without



FATHER ANDY VILL

ever really encountering her. Promising, because the most awake of those same young people want something better and more enduring than the emptiness and noise they now have. Our mission now, as always, is not to surrender to the world as it is, but to feed and ennoble the deepest yearnings of the world—and thereby to lead it to Jesus Christ, and his true freedom and joy.”

As a priest who works daily with people who are preparing for marriage, and with those who are striving to live their marriage well, I am inspired by the renewed interest in *Humanae Vitae*, and want to help spread the good news. How about you?

(Father Andy Vill is the parochial vicar at the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist in Stamford and earned his licentiate of sacred theology from the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family.) ■

Humanae Vitae symposium set

By **JOE PISANI**

Fifty years ago, Pope Paul VI issued his seventh and last encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* (Of Human Life), which upheld the Church’s teaching against artificial birth control, reaffirmed the sanctity of life and marital love, and emphasized the importance of responsible parenthood. The encyclical incited an immediate controversy among theologians, the laity and the clergy.

Fifty years later, there’s a growing appreciation for *Humanae Vitae* and the lessons it offers, and what Pope Francis has called Blessed Paul VI’s courage, prophetic vision and defense of moral discipline.

Father Andrew Vill of the Basilica of St. John the

Evangelist in Stamford has organized a symposium titled “Making Room for God’s Love: *Humanae Vitae* at 50,” which will be held at the Basilica on June 23 from 9 am to 4 pm to mark the anniversary of the encyclical, which was released July 25, 1968.

The symposium will feature talks by George Weigel, columnist and author of best-selling biographies of St. John Paul II and Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center; Mary Eberstadt, essayist, Senior Research Fellow at the Faith & Reason Institute and author of several books about religious freedom and faith, including *Adam and Eve After the Pill: Paradoxes of the Sexual Revolution*; and Mary Hallan FioRito, an attorney who special-

izes in human life issues and is the Cardinal Francis George Visiting Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

There will also be a panel of medical experts who will discuss the health implications of artificial birth control and the option of natural family planning. The day will conclude with a Vigil Mass celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

Father Vill, who recently attended a symposium on *Humanae Vitae* at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., believes Blessed Paul VI was prophetic and that an examination of the encyclical in light of modern cultural upheaval shows he was correct in his predictions

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 23



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Mass for the Unborn

Outdoor Mass celebrates the sanctity of life

By LIBBY CLYONS

TRUMBULL—With suddenly beautiful spring and a light breeze lifting the newly opened leaves, people from throughout the diocese gathered at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Trumbull for the Mass for the Unborn and rededication of the Memorial to the Unborn.

The Mass was hosted the Knights of Columbus Pope Saint John XXIII Council 5987 from St. Jude Parish in Monroe. Father Zbigniew Zielinski of St. Jude's, celebrated the Mass.

"We hold this Mass each May, since this is the month of Mary, with intentions of special devotions. Ours is the rededication of our stone and remembrance of the souls of the babies that were not brought to the full joy of life," said Paul Sideleau, officer of the Knights of Columbus Local 5987 Council and chair of the event.

"As Catholics, we celebrate May as the month of Mary, with special devotions organized on each day throughout the month," he said. The morning liturgy and dedication event brought together members from many different local parishes in order to pray for and commemorate the souls of the unborn.

Many on hand felt that the beautiful spring weather truly reflected a celebration of the sanctity of life. The Mass was dedicated in a special way through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who is the Patroness of the Unborn and the Pro-Life Movement.

"As the Mother of God, we entrust to Our Lady the protection of all human life. Mary freely accepted God's role for her to carry the Son of God Incarnate in her womb and be his mother. Since Mary is the Mother of Christ, she is also considered mother of his believers, therefore Mother of the Church," said Sideleau.

Deacon Brad Smythe of St. Joseph Parish in Shelton prayerfully gave an intention for all unborn children, including those lost through miscarriages or stillbirths.

In his homily, Father Zielinski talked about the significance of the sacredness of all human life,



A MASS OF REDEDICATION AND REMEMBRANCE—Men and women gathered at Gates of Heaven Cemetery recently for the outdoor Mass for the Unborn and rededication of the Memorial to the Unborn.

how we must give thanks for the gift of human life at all stages, and how this inspires us to better appreciate the people God has placed in our lives.

"It is clear throughout the Gospel that Jesus Christ loved children," said Father Zielinski. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).

Father Zielinski said that each one of us, born or unborn, is a beloved child of God and nothing can separate us from Christ's love and redemption. Father said, "It is with confidence that we trust in Jesus...who has prepared a place for these children lost in abortion."

The celebrant also voiced the importance of standing up for the sanctity of life, saying, "It is important for us to come to the understanding of the struggle we have to stand up for the right for life."

We are also called to support the availability of resources that can help mothers who are struggling with the decision. It is important that we pray that they may come to know the love and peace of Christ, Father Zielinski said.

At the end of the service, each person in attendance was given a rose to place at the memorial site. It was a solemn moment of prayer for all gathered. In this month of May, let us entrust our intentions to Mary and in a special way remember the souls of the unborn. ■

SYMPOSIUM FROM PAGE 22

of what would happen with the widespread use of artificial birth control.

In the half-century since the encyclical was issued, Father Vill says, our culture has been plagued by the disintegration of the family, broken homes, cohabitation, casual sex, public policies that oppose the sanctity of life and the exploitation of women.

"Pope Paul VI said this is what would happen if the Church's teaching was ignored," Father Vill said. "It doesn't stop at contraception; it proceeds to abortion, which would come later with Roe versus Wade." And globally there is an abuse of power in countries like China, which have one-child policies, forced sterilization and abortion.

The controversy over the encyclical intensified further because Paul VI accepted the minority view of a commission studying the issue of artificial contraception, which included a contribution from then Archbishop Karol Wojtyla, later Pope John Paul II, who had written about the theology of the body and love.

The public and the media often lack a full understanding of the implications of the document because they take a narrow view, said Father Vill, who holds a licentiate in sacred theology in the studies of marriage and family from the Pontifical John Paul II Institute in Rome.

Participants for the symposium were selected after Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni suggested reaching out to author George Weigel, who recommended other possible guests.

A panel of medical experts will discuss natural family planning and natural procreative technology to monitor women's health, he said. Among the topics will be the adverse effects that hormonal birth control has on a woman's body and the positive aspects of natural family planning, which should not to be confused with the outdated rhythm method that was ineffective and lacked a scientific foundation.

Assisting Father Vill in the symposium are parishioners Angela Marchetti, a Creighton natural family planning practitioner who works with couples, and Gretchen Hahn, who is helping to organize the event.

Father Vill encouraged both people who are familiar and those unfamiliar with the encyclical to attend the day-long symposium and engage the speakers so they can learn more about the Church's teaching.

(For more info, visit stjohnsstamford.com; call 203.324.1553, ext 21; email stjc@optonline.net; or email Father Vill at frVill@diobpt.org.) ■



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Sacred Heart University

Bill Mitchell to receive SHU Discovery Award

By **JOE PISANI**

FAIRFIELD—Bill Mitchell still remembers the night he took his three sons to an Islanders' game at Nassau Coliseum. He remembers bringing them to the suite. He remembers the hostess handing him his first double Scotch. But that's all he remembers.

The next morning he woke with no recollection of the night. He jumped out of bed and raced down the hall, going from room to room to make sure his sons were OK. Then he checked the garage to see if the car was there. Did the Islanders win or lose? How did he get home? Who put him to bed?

It was just another day in the life of an alcoholic. Just another terrifying day.

Over 25 years, his drinking had progressed from two cocktails in the evening to daily maintenance drinking and regular blackouts. He needed to drink to get through the day. He needed to get drunk ... and it had disastrous results.

"I was slowly losing my wife and my children," he recalled.

His life and his relationships with his family, friends and business associates were unraveling, but it wasn't until an intervention by his family members and a fellow in Alcoholics Anonymous, that he started on the road to recovery at age 47.

On June 22, Sacred Heart University will honor Bill Mitchell at the 29th annual Discovery Gala—two days after his 28th anniversary in recovery. A member of the Board of Trustees since 2002 and vice chairman of Mitchell Family Stores, Mitchell will receive Sacred Heart's Discovery Award.

Dr. John J. Petillo, president of the university, described Mitchell as a "true friend of Sacred Heart and a tireless advocate for recovery-related causes."

"Bill is the personification of who we are as a university community," Petillo said. "He is a passionate, caring, pay-it-forward type of guy. And that is the kind of culture we want to grow here."

He said that Mitchell had made a substantial gift to the school for the creation of a col-



BILL MITCHELL OF WESTPORT

legiate recovery program. "It was 100 percent his idea, and he didn't have to sell me on it because this is one thing I am very passionate about," Petillo said. "Other universities are dealing with this, and we intend to make it a priority."

Proceeds from the gala will support housing and programs for students facing addiction and provide help for them in recovery. The school will either build or buy a place to turn into a sober house.

"We have an obligation to be there for them," Petillo said. "And unless we're willing to say this is an important issue, people will not know they can get help."

"I'm honored to be selected for Sacred Heart's Discovery Award but, more importantly, I am thrilled to be part of a fundraiser that will support students in recovery," Mitchell said. "There are more than 250,000 college students in this country who at some time have received treatment for alcohol or drug abuse. Providing these services on college campuses must be a priority."

An estimated 37 percent of college students binge drink and almost 1 million are alcohol or drug dependent. Each year, some 1,825 die from alcohol-related injuries, including car accidents.

During his sobriety, Bill Mitchell has helped countless individuals in their recovery and has been a friend and mentor to several Sacred Heart students striving to live clean and sober. His own path to sobriety is a horrifying and inspiring story that he readily shares in the hope it will encourage another person suffering from substance abuse to seek help.

He described himself as "a

successful functioning alcoholic," who always kept a bottle of wine under the seat of his car.

"I would stop off for a few drinks when I left work at 5," he recalled. "Then, I started leaving at 4:30 and pretty soon at 3. I'd buy a few nips and a bottle of wine to drink on the way home."

Or he'd drive down to the beach and sit in his car and drink.

His wife kept telling him, "You're drinking too much, you have a problem." But Bill would reply, "I don't have a drinking problem—you've got the problem." Alcoholism, he says, is known as the disease of denial.

As his drinking progressed, he suffered from blackouts and daily hangovers. He perspired so much that he would have to change his shirt at work. He routinely lied to cover up his drinking, but worst of all, he became verbally abusive to his family members.

"I would look in the mirror and pray, 'God, please help me stop.' But I couldn't stop," he said. "The disease had taken over my life."

His wife, Sue, realized the only hope was to arrange an intervention, and when Bill walked into the room unknowingly, everyone was there, including a clergyman in AA who would help him in his sobriety.

As they went around the room, everyone told a personal story about how Bill's drinking affected their lives—and each person ended by asking, "Will you get help?" He broke down in tears. He knew they were right. His life had become unmanageable, and he agreed to enter a program of recovery.

A day at a time, his life changed.

"I got the respect and love of

my family back," he says. "I got myself back, and I became the person I always wanted to be."

Every year on his anniversary, he text-messages them all with the simple expression of gratitude: "Thank you for June 20, 1990."

Today, Bill says he's a member of one of the most exclusive clubs in the world—there are no dues or fees, but you pay with your life to get into the 12-step program.

A lifelong resident of Westport, he has served on the boards of St. Vincent's Medical Center, the Jewish Home for the Elderly and the Inner-City Foundation for Charity and Education. He and his wife, Sue, of 47 years have three sons, Scott, Chris and Tyler.

Sobriety gave him a new lease on life. Bill says: "Today when I'm asked how I want to be remembered, I respond, 'People don't really care what Bill Mitchell knows—they want to know I care.'"

Jim Nantz, a sports commentator for CBS and good friend of Mitchell, will serve as master of ceremonies at the gala, which will be held at SHU's West Campus, the former GE corporate headquarters. There will be a performance by the Midtown Men, the four original cast members of the "The Jersey Boys."

(For more information, contact William Reidy, vice president for university advancement, at 203.396.8086 or reidyw@sacredheart.edu.



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Sports: Baseball

Trinity looks to Quinn

By **DON HARRISON**

Trinity Catholic's baseball heritage embraces five CIAC state titles and no fewer than nine appearances in state championship games. Impressive.

In fact, current Athletic Director Bob Robustelli played third base on the school's 1970 squad that lost to undefeated Naugatuck, 4-3, in the Class L championship game. Naugatuck, a powerhouse, would go on to extend its three-year winning streak to 64 games—one shy of the national record—before sustaining its next loss.

Robustelli is confident that new coach Ryan Quinn

can restore some luster to the Crusaders' baseball program, but he knows it will take time. Disregard the 1-15 start and focus on the development of the team's younger players.

"It takes three to four years to build a program," Robustelli said. "Ryan took over a team that had success in the past, but had fallen on hard times the past few seasons. He's got a bunch of underclassmen who are pretty good, just not ready. When you've got 14-year-old kids pitching against 18-year-old kids, it's hard to win."

As both player and coach, Quinn has a strong baseball pedigree. He played the game well at

Lyman Memorial High in Lebanon, Conn., at Southern New Hampshire College and then professionally with the Worcester Tornadoes of the CANAM League.

His thoughts about Trinity Catholic's recent baseball past (1-19 last season, 2-18 in 2016) and less-than-auspicious start this spring?

"Trinity Catholic is a Class S school, yet every (FCIAC) team



ZACH HURD HAS BEEN Trinity Catholic's most consistent pitcher thus far.



CENTERFIELDER JOHN PETRIZZI provides leadership and fine all-round skills.

we play is a Double L or Class L school," said Quinn, alluding to opponents' significant advantage in enrollment. "Still, we've been in many games. We lost to Wilbur Cross, 5-4, in extra innings. Ridgefield beat us, 8-6. At Darien, it was 4-3 in the sixth and we lost 7-3."

On the first weekend in May, the Crusaders played well but bowed to New Canaan, 4-1.

Quinn, who was married last summer and teaches social studies at Cloonan Middle School in Stamford, is appreciative of the play and leadership provided by the team's tri-captains, seniors John Petrizzi and Zach Hurd and junior Nico Morse. Each has distinguished himself.

Petrizzi, who was an FCIAC All-Western Conference selection in football, plays center field and is the team leader in batting (.289), on-base percentage (.407) and triples (3). He plans to continue his football career at Bentley College next fall.

Hurd is the Crusaders' most reliable starting pitcher, striking out 21 opposing hitters in

22.1 innings and logging a 4.70 earned run average. He received the victory in the team's lone win to date, a 13-0 decision over Barrington (R.I.) High. He also plays third base and is hitting .271.

Morse, the squad's shortstop, is a more productive hitter than his .233 average indicates; he tops the squad with 10 RBIs and four doubles. "I'm looking to Nico for his consistency in leadership," Quinn said. "I think he'll play in college."

The coach also speaks highly of catcher Cole Imbrogno and first baseman Anthony Possidento: "Cole has a .372 on-base percentage. Anthony had bad migraines and missed some early games, but he's our No. 3 hitter now."

The future? "I'm looking for the guys getting better on an every day basis," Quinn said. "I moved to Stamford five years ago, and I can spend a lot of time at the school, really getting to know the kids and their families. I see us getting better and better." ■

GREENWICH COUPLE'S FOUNDATION GIFT FROM PAGE 19

their brain development occurs by five years old, and it is so important to educate them from an early age in their faith. It will also make raising children easier for parents and help them go into elementary school better prepared."

There is a quote in the Book of Proverbs that she believes captures their hopes: "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it (Proverbs 22:6)."

"Our future as a country rests with ALL children—these children in Danbury can be among our young leaders," Barbara said. "Given the opportunity, all children are capable of great things."

The Rippes, who also provided funding for preschool programs at the Father English Community Center in Patterson, N.J., are products of Catholic education. Peter, who has a degree in economics from Iona College, where he is a trustee, received an MBA from Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Barbara has worked with single mothers at Malta House in Norwalk and was a board member for seven years. She received her bachelor's degree in sociology and elementary education from Marymount Manhattan College and her

master's in education for special needs children from Kean University.

"I was always interested in children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds," she said. Her first job was in 1968 at St. Bridget Catholic School on 7th Street in Manhattan. "In those days, the classes had 40 children, but the school was a lifesaver for those children. It was run by the Sisters of Charity, who were wonderful teachers. The parents really cared about getting their children to school."

When her sons, Steve and Christopher, were young, the family moved to New Jersey, where she later started teaching special needs children and began working at the Association for Children in New Jersey, an advocacy program.

Their son Christopher, who died at 26 after an illness, shared Barbara's concern for the underserved. A graduate of Colby College in Maine with a degree in English, he became a social worker, serving people on the streets in San Francisco.

"Christopher always had a smile on his face," Barbara said. "Everybody wanted to be his friend when he was in school, and for a year after he died, we got letters from people telling us about the things he had done. He was just a very loving and kind person, very bright, athletic and charismatic. He always gave

money to people if they needed it, and he never had a bad word to say about anybody. He enjoyed life, and lived a lot of it in his 26 years."

Their younger son Steve graduated from Dartmouth, where he studied religion and government. He later went to Johns Hopkins for a master's in international studies and to the MIT Sloan School of Management for an MBA. He currently works in finance. He and his wife, Ana, have three children.

"We believe this is going to be a wonderful program. We are really excited and feel very privileged to be able to do this," Barbara said. "We are grateful to Bishop Frank and all the wonderful people who are doing God's work."

Foundations in Education is a non-profit initiative created to assist the Diocese of Bridgeport's ongoing mission to support Catholic education. Its primary purpose is to raise money to support Catholic education through student scholarships, innovation and leadership grants for the professional development of teachers and other education-based initiatives.

(For more information, contact Executive Director Holly Doherty-Lemoine: holly@foundationsineducation.org or visit foundationsineducation.org.) ■

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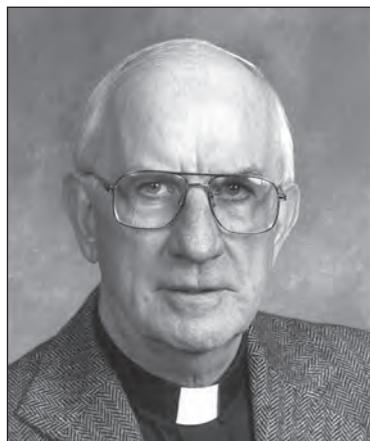
Obituaries

Msgr. John Hossan, 90

Msgr. John Bernard Hossan died on May 6 at the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of the Clergy Residence in Stamford. The retired pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Redding Ridge was 90 years old.

Born in Danbury on August 21, 1927, he graduated from St. Joseph School in Danbury in 1941 and Danbury High School in 1945. He studied at the University of Notre Dame from 1945-47 before entering St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield, where he graduated in 1949. He completed his priestly formation at St. John Seminary in Brighton, Mass., and was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Hartford on September 15, 1953, by Bishop Henry J. O'Brien at St. Joseph Church in Danbury. Msgr. Hossan was incardinated into the newly-established Diocese of Bridgeport on December 24, 1953.

In the Diocese of Bridgeport, Msgr. Hossan served as parochial vicar at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown and St. James Parish in Stratford. Many years of his priesthood were spent in education. He taught at Notre Dame Catholic High School from 1957-59. Following that, he taught at



MSGR. JOHN BERNARD HOSSAN

Stamford Catholic High School (now Trinity Catholic) from 1959-62, while residing at St. Mary Parish in Stamford.

He served as the first principal of Immaculate High School in Danbury from 1962-1973, and continued to enjoy school events throughout the years. "He was with us to celebrate his 90th birthday with students," said Mary Maloney, Immaculate's president. "His passion and love for the school was always evident."

In 1974, Msgr. Hossan was appointed as the first administrator of "The House of Prayer for Priests" and as director of the

permanent diaconate program.

For one extremely busy year, from 1979-80, Msgr. Hossan served as temporary administrator of four parishes at once: St. Thomas the Apostle in Norwalk, Sacred Heart in Georgetown, St. Patrick in Redding Ridge and St. Luke in Westport. After a year as parochial vicar at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown he became co-pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Brookfield. He was named pastor of St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Parish in Brookfield from 1982-90. His last posting was at St. Patrick Parish in Redding Ridge, where he served from 1990-2002.

Msgr. Hossan was named a Prelate of Honor to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, in 1996.

A wake for Msgr. Hossan was held on May 10 at Cornell Funeral Home in Danbury. His body was received into Joseph Church, Danbury, on May 11 for visitation followed by a Mass of Christian Burial. Bishop Frank J. Caggiano was the celebrant; Father Joseph Donnelly, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Southbury, was the homilist. Interment followed at St. Peter Cemetery, Danbury.

Deacon Melita

Deacon Joseph M. Melita died Sunday, May 13, at the Jewish Home for the Elderly in Fairfield. He was 96 years old.

Born in Bridgeport on April 22, 1923, Deacon Melita graduated from Warren Harding High School in 1941 and served as Technical Sergeant in the Air Corps from 1943-1945. He fought in the Battle of Normandy and flew 55 sorties in dangerous combat that took the lives of many of his fellow soldiers.



He married Bernice Zaleski Melita in St. Michael's Church in Bridgeport on September 24, 1946, and the Melitas raised six children.

Deacon Melita joined the first class of the Permanent Diaconate Program in 1975, and was ordained a deacon for the Diocese of Bridgeport on February 25, 1978. He provided diaconal ministry at St. Raphael Parish in Bridgeport from 1988-2011 and then served at St. Margaret Shrine, also in Bridgeport.

Beginning in 1988, Deacon Melita served for many years as the Director of Catholic Scouting in the Secretariat for Christian Education of the Diocese of Bridgeport. He received the Bronze Pelican award, given to adults who give of their time to counsel, to lead, and to train young people to enrich the spiritual development of the Catholic Youth in the program of the Boy Scouts of America. In honor of his life-long contributions to Catholic Scouting, Deacon Melita was honored with the prestigious James E. West Fellow Award in 2004.

After his formal retirement from diaconal ministry in 2015, Deacon Melita continued to provide diaconal service at the

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DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT: MAY 20—JUNE 23

MAY

23	Rev. Thomas M. Garrick	1955
	Deacon Hans Jakob Gram	2010
24	Rev. Mark Grimes	2008
25	Rev. Joseph A. Ganley	1957
26	Msgr. William Loughlin	2014
27	Rev. Joseph F. Sohovich	1957
28	Rev. John P. Mc Nerney	1969
29	Msgr. John J. Barney	1973
	Rev. Harry Holbrook	2005
30	Rev. Adelard A. Jalbert	1960
31	Rev. Dennis A. Szocs, O.F.M.	1985

JUNE

1	Rev. Msgr. Jean C. Tetreault	2003
2	Rev. Thomas M. Ford	1992
3	Rev. Michael F. Blanchard	1982
	Rev. Richard J. Grady	1993
	Deacon Kenneth Stroud	2016
5	Msgr. John Hayes	1964
6	Rev. Thomas J. Hanley	1954
	Msgr. Edward J. Howley	2012
7	Rev. James J. Dennis	2003
8	Msgr. Bernard S. Scanlon	2004
9	Msgr. James G. Lengen	1999
	Rev. James J. O'Malley	1996
13	Deacon Anthony LaBua	1988
14	Msgr. William F. Kearney	1974
15	Msgr. John H. Landry	1967
19	Rev. Robert S. McBride	1982
	Msgr. Frank Wissel	2014
20	Msgr. John J. Bumstead	1996
21	Rev. Albert D. Talbot	1962
22	Rev. Xavier Renda	2009

Nuestra Voz

Construir una comunidad de amor

“De una u otra manera, la Campaña Anual Católica es de un gran impacto entre todos los miembros de la parroquia”, dice Joel Aquino, miembro de la parroquia de San Benito-Nuestra Señora de Montserrat en Stamford.

“Es como nosotros”, dice su esposa Alexandra. “Nuestros hijos han estado en escuelas católicas desde pre-K3 y nuestro grupo de jóvenes ayuda en la despensa de alimentos, que va a la gente en necesidad. Tenemos un nuevo sacerdote en la parroquia, el Padre Abelardo, sólo siete meses de ordenado. Hace mucho con los jóvenes e invita a los padres a unirse a él. Todos nos beneficiamos de eso”.

Joel y Alexandra se conocieron cuando ambos estaban en el grupo de jóvenes de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat. En su apoyo continuo a las actividades de la parroquia, están siguiendo el ejemplo establecido por sus padres. “Vinimos a este país

DEACON MELITA
FROM PAGE 26

Shrine, where he touched many lives through his faithful witness. He was given special recognition by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano at the First Annual Clergy Retirement Celebration Mass at St. Matthew Church in 2017.

A wake was held for Deacon Melita at St. Margaret Shrine the afternoon and evening of May 17. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano the following morning. Deacon Don Foust, administrator of the Shrine, was the homilist. Interment followed at Long Hill Cemetery in Trumbull. ■

desde Guatemala, un jueves”, dice Joel; “el domingo, la familia estaba en la iglesia. Nunca hubo un descanso o vacilación. Cuando estaba en el grupo de jóvenes, mi padre y yo éramos lectores en la Misa”.

“La parroquia siempre ha sido nuestra segunda casa”, dice Alexandra. “De alguna manera u otra siempre hemos estado activos en la parroquia”. La pareja ha sido facilitadora en las sesiones de Pre-Cana, y Alexandra se encuentra actualmente en el Concejo Parroquial. Ella también es parte del V Encuentro de Pastoral Hispana, un fenomenal proceso de actividad pastoral que está involucrando a los católicos hispanos en Estados Unidos y, por su ejemplo, a toda la iglesia, para llegar a aquellos que, en palabras del Papa Francisco, están en la periferia. El propósito es el de llegar a ellos y hablarles del amor salvífico de Jesús.

Siguiendo el ejemplo de sus padres, están animando a sus hijos a continuar esa tradición. Sus dos hijas han sido servidoras del altar en la parroquia, y su hijo podrá ser el siguiente.

“Una parroquia es una familia de familias”, dice el Padre Gustavo Falla, párroco de las parroquias de Santa María y San Benito-Nuestra Señora de Montserrat. De la misma manera, la diócesis es una familia de parroquias, trabajando unidas. “Cuando nos unimos en la Campaña Anual Católica, fortalecemos a la comunidad, ayudando a otros, alcanzando a los más necesitados, proporcionando lo necesario a los sacerdotes ancianos y formando seminaristas para que se conviertan en



“IN SOME WAY OR ANOTHER, the Annual Catholic Appeal has a big impact on all the members of the parish,” say Alexandra and Joel Aquino, members of St. Benedict-Our Lady of Montserrat Parish in Stamford. The Aquino’s testimony in English is available on page 4 of this issue.

futuros sacerdotes”.

“La Campaña nos permite ayudar a un nivel más grande”, añade Joel. “Va a fortalecer nuestras escuelas y programas de educación religiosa y actividades juveniles. Llega a la gente en necesidad, para alimentar a los que tienen hambre”.

Debido a que comprenden el valor de una comunidad que trabaja unida, la pareja aceptó aparecer en el video de la Campaña Anual Católica, en español. “Somos muy tímidos, en realidad”, dice Joel. Pero se dieron cuenta de que demasiadas personas no sabían de las muchas maneras en que la Campaña les ayuda a ellos y a quienes los rodean. “Es nuestra responsabilidad hablar.”

“La gente escucha acerca de la Campaña pero no siempre sabe por qué se le pide apoyar económicamente”, dice Alexandra. Ella espera que, una vez que conozcan los programas que la Campaña

la gente no sólo para asegurarse de que haya comida, sino para estar allí para servir la comida, para ser parte de la manera en que ayudamos a nuestra comunidad”.

Lo más importante de todo, Joel y Alexandra están de acuerdo, es que la Campaña ayuda a formar nuevos sacerdotes para el futuro de la iglesia. “Hemos tenido párrocos maravillosos”, dice Joel. “La razón por la que esta parroquia ha crecido tanto es por ellos. Hemos tenido grandes y maravillosos sacerdotes. La ayuda financiera para los seminaristas traerá más sacerdotes. Son la clave del futuro.”

La Campaña asiste en la educación de los seminaristas que entran en el seminario de San Juan Fisher, en la formación continua de sacerdotes activos y en el cuidado de los sacerdotes jubilados que viven en la Residencia Reina del Clero, dedicada a Catherine Dennis Keefe.

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

apoya, todos querrán ayudar en más maneras aún.

“El comedor comunitario y la despensa de alimentos en el New Covenant Center en Stamford ayuda a las personas en necesidad”, dice. “Queremos animar a

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Column: Thomas Hicks



Going deeper

POTPOURRI

BY THOMAS H. HICKS

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

“What is truth?” (Pontius Pilate, John 18:38)

Truth is a serious matter. Truth is the pathway to happiness and freedom. The Book of Sirach tells us that all our human misery comes from mistaking where our true satisfaction lies (cf. Sirach 15:16-17), and there are Jesus’ words “you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

Some famous thinkers were pessimistic about the human relationship with truth. For example, Soren Kierkegaard wrote: “It is far from being the case that people in general regard relationship with the truth as the highest goal.” And Jean-Jacques Rousseau stated that, with most people, conviction would always coincide with convenience.

So, as Pilate asked, what is

truth? Thomas Aquinas answered that truth is the correct correspondence between perception and reality. But what is reality? What is the ultimate nature of reality? Is this world all there is to reality? It’s like quoting St. Irenaeus who said “the glory of God is human beings fully alive.” But what is it to be “fully alive”? In fact, what is being human all about?

I get more and more interested in “ultimate” questions such as: What are we supposed to do with our time on earth? To whom and why are we ultimately responsible? I think the most profound and complicated question is: “Who are you, God, and what am I?” As someone put it: Who are we under these stars, with the wind on our faces?

Pope John Paul II, speaking of God, said this: “What is that unutterable mystery which embraces our lives and from

which we take our origin and toward which we tend?” (*Veritatis Splendor*, 30) The Second Vatican Council stated: “For man will always yearn to know what the meaning of his life is, of his activity, of his death” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 41). Does it all make sense, does it have any ultimate meaning? William Faulkner wrote somewhere about “the frantic steeplechase toward nothing.”

Back to Pilate. Existentialists, such as Freud, argue that we must each create our own meaning, and no one can claim that his or her system of meaning is the meaning of life; there is no such thing. There is no God outside ourselves to whom we owe obedience. For many, truth is judged as simply matters of opinion. It may be true for you but not for me. What right do you have to impose your values upon me? We seem to be living in a time when more and more people are saying these things. Salvation is now defined as self-fulfillment.

One of the facts about truth is that truth is not necessarily with the majority. Majorities are no test of truth.

I suppose every adult has a vision of what reality means. A person may find it difficult to articulate his or her vision, but everyone has an interpretation of human existence. People have

their different absolutes by which they make sense of reality. And it seems that most people believe that the way they perceive the world is the only way it can be perceived.

However, there are those who reach a point when they feel that their life seems to have no real order or purpose or meaning. They feel they are on a dull treadmill. As I heard one man put it “I work so that I can afford things like food and rent and clothes, so I can live so that I can work. It doesn’t seem at all fruitful; it makes no sense.” There are people who feel they live “an uncalled life,” one not referred to a purpose larger than one’s self.

Carl Jung said that the neurosis of middle age is meaningless. “A neurosis must be understood, ultimately, as a suffering of a soul which has not discovered its meaning. About a third of my cases are not suffering from any clinically definable neurosis but from the aimlessness of their lives.” Neogenic Neurosis involves a loss of the feeling that life is meaningful.

Carl Jung’s favorite story went something like this: The water of life bubbled up in a well and flowed without effort or limit. People came to drink of the water and were nourished by it.

Gradually they began to fence the well, charge admission, claim ownership of the property around it, make elaborate laws as to who could come to the well, put locks on the gates. Soon the well was the property of the powerful and the elite. The water was angry; it stopped flowing and began to bubble up in another place. People searched and found the new well. Soon the same fate overtook that well. The spring took itself to yet another place—and this has been going on throughout recorded history. The moral of the story: basic truth can be missed and subverted into an egocentric thing.

But the wonder of the story is that the water is always flowing somewhere and is available to any person who has the courage to search it out. It flows in some odd places. It has often ceased to flow in the accustomed sites and turned up in some surprising locations. But, thank God, the water is still there. As always, it is free, and it is fresh. It is often where one least expects it. This is the meaning of the biblical phrase “Can anything good come out of ‘Nazareth?’”

For me, one of the best observations about truth comes from Edith Stein who said: “Do not accept anything as truth if it lacks love.”

To be continued...

Wedding Jubilarians *continued from page 2*

Joseph & Louise Aulenti, 50 years
Robert & Lynette Baroni, 50 years
Teofilo & Maria Lourdes Blanco, 50 years
Harold & Donna Britto, 50 years
Fern&o & Elisabete Carvalho, 50 years
Mario & Rosa Chiari, 50 years
Louis & Judith Colangelo, 50 years
Edward & Esterina Consolati, 50 years
Giuseppe & Ida De Masi, 50 years
Albert & Mary Lou Edwards, 50 years
Tadeusz & Teresa Formus, 50 years
Francis & Ameenie Gallinelli, 50 years
Anthony & Donna Gallo, 50 years
Colin & MaryEllen Gentle, 50 years
Paul & Irene Gifford, 50 years
Robert L. & Sharon M. Graze, 50 years
Stephen & Marie Haywood, 50 years
Richard & Anne Marie Iozzo, 50 years
Roff-Achim & Elizabeth Kaul, 50 years
Joseph & Patricia Krekoska, 50 years
Richard & Barbara Kusowski, 50 years
Michael & Mary Alice Leone, 50 years
Robert & Sharon Loh, 50 years
Thomas & Maria Maffucci, 50 years
Michael & Katherine Marella, 50 years
Andrew & Gloria Mastrone, 50 years
James & Mary Ann Matthews, 50 years
Robert & Pauline Michek, 50 years

Patrick & Mary Mooney, 50 years
Mario & Annette Nacinovich, 50 years
Donald & Kathleen Ramia, 50 years
James & Frances Roach, 50 years
Robert & Marie Sadowski, 50 years
Michael & Marcia Sandner, 50 years
Juan & Ana Santiago, 50 years
David & Susan Scannell, 50 years
Ronald & Carole Smith, 50 years
Francis & Eileen Sullivan, 50 years
Rod & Sue Tomey, 50 years
Jozef & Danuta Witkowski, 50 years
Thomas & Darlene Yankowski, 50 years
Robert & Carol Zukowski, 50 years
Angel & Sarah Anaclerio, 45 years
Bill & Carol Christiaanse, 45 years
Victor & Patricia Eng, 45 years
Ranier & Connie Falkenstein, 45 years
Dominick & Rosemary Galletti, 45 years
Rev. Dn. Louis & Mary-jo Howe, 45 years
Philip & Marion Kallinikos, 45 years
Joseph & Barbara Kovac III, 45 years
Attila & Andrea Levai, 45 years
Mark & Carolyn Mitchell, 45 years
Dr. Thomas & Evelyn Nipper, 45 years
Javier & Maria Posada, 45 years
Thomas & Paula Schmitt, 45 years
Ralph & Christine Sloan, 45 years

Peter & Lucille Vecchiarelli, 45 years
W. Scott & Mary-Barrett Anders, 40 years
Stephen Jr. & Christine Bombero, 40 years
Hans & Mary Lou Bosse, 40 years
David & Barbara Brown, 40 years
Goncalo & Francisca Campos, 40 years
Donald & Sherry Christopher, 40 years
Joseph & Clarissa Cincotta, 40 years
Darrell & Linda Dunn, 40 years
Joseph & Patricia Ellul, 40 years
Thomas & Christa Frazer, 40 years
Gene & Lois Freeman, 40 years
Michael & Diane Garwacki, 40 years
Bob & Nancy Holland, 40 years
Desmond & Leila Hudson, 40 years
Joseph & Karen Kralic, 40 years
Ralph & Catherine Lenoci, 40 years
David & Carol Osborne, 40 years
Vincent & Nancy Pescosolido, 40 years
Gaeton & Geraldine Stella, 40 years
Erich & Linda Tobitsch, 40 years
Ralph & Ronnie Lazzaro, 37 years
Raymond & Diane Boratko, 35 years
Dr. Stevan & Maria Dawis, 35 years
Dr. John & Maria Dubaz, 35 years
Joseph & Josephine Eichner, 35 years
Robert & Barbara Geitz, 35 years
James & Ellen Gil, 35 years

Henrique & Ana Gregori, 35 years
Robert & Clare Kretzman, 35 years
David & Lisa Mangini, 35 years
Kyle & Linda McDonald, 35 years
Michael & Paula Mollica, 35 years
Robert & Lorraine Morlath, 35 years
Augusto & Maria Magali Pineiro, 35 years
John & Mary Ellen Robertson, 35 years
Jim & Denise Rogers, 35 years
Lawrence & Ann Marie Seavy-Cioffi, 35 years
Richard & Virginia Silva, 35 years
Craig & Susan Van Steenbergen, 35 years
Jose & Cecilia Alvarez, 30 years
James & Donna Bizak, 30 years
Gary & Diane Camillo, 30 years
John & Gloria Carvajal, 30 years
Jack & Donna Delli Carpini, 30 years
Dr. Napoleon & Oliva Flores, 30 years
Domenick & Juany Fumai, 30 years
Dr. George & Marilyn Kain, 30 years
Damian & Nancy Klein, 30 years
Joseph & Maureen Kubik, 30 years
Vincent & Karen Maniscalco, 30 years
Daniel & Ann McCarthy, 30 years
Michael & Judy McGorty, 30 years
Joseph & Kathy Merole, 30 years
Michael & Maria O’Shea, 30 years
Daniel & Maria Renzulli, 30 years
Michael & Ann Marie Smith, 30 years
David & Doreen Urban, 30 years

Michael & Karen Vickerelli, 30 years
Kevin & Sandy Walsh, 30 years
John & JoAnn Zimmerman, 30 years
Anthony & Kathleen Albano, 25 years
David & Marisol Aubrey, 25 years
Gregory & Donna Bartolo, 25 years
Timothy & Christina Butler, 25 years
Thomas & Felicia Conrod, 25 years
Richard & Amy DeZenzo, 25 years
John & Ellen Dierna, 25 years
Roger & Alyson Donohue, 25 years
Robert & Deborah Ferri, 25 years
Jay & Ann-Marie Francino-Quinn, 25 years
Mark & Jane Frillici, 25 years
Hugo Avila & Livia Ganzhi, 25 years
Dr. Gerald & Maura Gibson, 25 years
Joseph & Toni Grassi, 25 years
Raymond & Charlotte Hallock, 25 years
Dr. Eugene & Lori Hickey, 25 years
James & Mary Higgins, 25 years
John & Lesley Kostyszyn, 25 years
Frank & Angela Mantero, 25 years
John & Karen Mattera, 25 years
Christopher & Melissa Pinto, 25 years
Daniel & Edith Romanello, 25 years
James & Michelle Smith, 25 years
Matthew & Maureen Spies, 25 years
Carl & Antonietta Surrusco, 25 years
William (Bill) & Janine Walsh, 25 years
Sergio & Camila Waldeck, 20 years

Column: Joe Pisani



The lifelong search for meaning

SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

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

My younger sister, who has MD after her name, regularly sends family members and friends advice on how to live healthy and happy lives so our bodies make it to the average life expectancy of 78.6 years—if not Abraham’s 175 years or Noah’s 950.

It can get a little annoying, though, because she sends these healthy-living emails to seven or eight people at a time, most of whom don’t know one another, and I’m convinced everyone is thinking, “Hmmm, why am I on this list? I don’t suffer depression. I avoid Popeye’s Cajun chicken wings. I don’t have shingles. I’m not prone to outbursts of anger, well most of the time.”

Her most recent email included a story from the *New York Times* titled, “Finding Meaning and Happiness in Old Age.” I’m sure everyone who got it groaned simultaneously.

My first reaction was “Is she calling me old?” (For the record, I was the youngest person on the list. At least I think I was. At least I hope I was.)

My second reaction was to send her research by Marist Polling that showed Baby Boomers don’t think old age starts until well past the 60s. To them, 67 is middle-age. As Baby Boomers get older, they keep pushing their definition of old age into the future. Pretty soon it will be 92. Old age, I guess, is in the eye of the beholder. It’s as relative as modern morality, which is why we love saying, “60 is the new 40.” Just tell that to your joints on a rainy day.

If you ever heard of the “real age” movement that Dr. Oz subscribes to, you understand what I mean. Your “real age” isn’t determined by your birth certificate, it’s determined by a quiz you take to assess how healthy your

body is. So you could really be ten years younger than your birth date—or ten years older.

Are you looking for “meaning and happiness in old age”? Are you looking for meaning and happiness at any age? There’s only one path—God. And he wasn’t mentioned in the *Times* story.

Here’s my theory: Aging should bring us closer to God because it takes us further from the transitory pleasures of the world. When you “get old,” your primary concern should be spiritual unless, of course, you didn’t save enough for retirement.

We’re all obsessed with aging, but we should make our spiritual health a greater priority. There comes a time when you need to tell yourself, “God should be the center of my life—not my career, not my position in the corporate food chain, not my love life, not my yoga class, not my gym member-

ship, the Yankees or the Red Sox.

Pope Benedict XVI said, “To what extent does a life that is totally spent in achieving success, longing for prestige, and seeking commodities—to the point of excluding God from one’s horizon—truly lead to happiness? Can true happiness exist when God is left out of consideration? Experience shows that we are not happy just because our material expectations and needs are satisfied.”

At the top of a large pile of books on my nightstand, there’s one with the title “Dr. Burns’ Prescription for Happiness” by the late comedian George Burns, who lived to 100, so he must have known something about meaning and happiness and old age.

His definition of happiness included young women in bikinis, Caribbean vacations and winning streaks at Vegas casinos. But he also said this: “If you were to go around

asking people what would make them happier, you’d get answers like a new car, a bigger house, a raise in pay, winning a lottery, a facelift, more kids, less kids—but probably not one in a hundred would say a chance to help people. And yet that may bring the most happiness of all.” That, of course, is a fundamental message of our faith.

Everyone has a personal theory about how to find meaning and happiness. We want good health, a prosperous financial portfolio, a loving spouse, respectful kids and a high-paying job. Yet we’re surrounded by unhappiness and lack of meaning because we pursue false sources of happiness instead of the True Source.

In old age, middle-age and young adulthood, it’s never too late or too early to make God the center of your life. Best of all, he will provide the meaning, and he will provide the happiness. ■

NUESTRA VOZ FROM PAGE 27

“La iglesia es un comunidad de amor”, dice Alexandra; “estamos tratando de construir una mejor comunidad. Esta es la forma en que agradecemos a Dios por todo lo que tenemos.”

(Para donar a la Campaña Anual Católica, comuníquese con Pam Rittman: prittman@diobpt.org o 203.416.1470. Usted puede hacer su regalo en línea en: www.2018ACA-bridgeport.com.)

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Bits and Pieces

MASS OF HEALING AND HOPE: the Charismatic Renewal Services announces a Mass of Healing and Hope: Mon., **May 21**, at 7:30 pm at St. Lawrence Church, Shelton, with Fr. Larry Carew. For more info, call the

Charismatic Renewal Office: 203.456.5610.

GOLF OUTING sponsored by St. Mary Parish, Bethel, will be held on Wed., **May 23**, at Richter Park, Danbury. 12 noon shotgun start with lunch and bev-

erages, followed immediately by dinner at the Cafe on the Green. Fee: \$175; includes two meals and prizes. For more info and reservations, contact Tim Lavelle: 203.515.1801.

"SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST" Immaculate High School, Danbury, 2018 Arts in the Park will celebrate the beauty and diversity of Mexico and the Southwest United States on Thurs., **May 24**, from 5:30-8 pm in Immaculate's gym. Art mediums created by students will be displayed, and musicians will perform. The event is free and open to the public. Proceeds will be donated to the Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary and the Caroline Previdi Foundation, both based in Newtown. For more info, call 203.744.1510.

RETREAT DAY for Busy Women: "Lord I Believe, Help My Lack of Trust." Sat., **June 2**, 9 am-3:30 pm, at the Convent of St. Birgitta, 4 Runkenhage Rd., Darien. Directed by Fran Fraleigh Karpiej, OFS, of Sharing Christ Ministry. Cost: \$60; includes hot lunch served by the Birgittine Sisters. Registration required before Fri., **May 25**. For more info or to register, contact Fran: paxjc@aol.com or 203.452.7040.

HOLY HOUR to pray for priests is hosted by the Secular Franciscans Sacred Heart Fraternity Sat., **May 26**, at 9 am in the adoration chapel at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Danbury. All are welcome. For more info, contact Debbie Isaacson, OFS: dli42@comcast.net or 475.206.9436

MEMORIAL DAY: St. Andrew Parish, Bridgeport, Knights of Columbus Frances X. Cabrini Assembly #136 will sponsor its annual Memorial Day Mass Sun., **May 27**, at the 11:30 am to honor all military from past and present. Local and state dignitaries will speak followed by a special dedication on the church's front green with a local rifle corps and K of C Honor Guard. A coffee social will conclude the day. All are welcome. For more information, contact Ray Berry: 860.919.5762 or ray_29@att.net

MEMORIAL DAY: Assumption Parish, Fairfield, Knights "Star" Council #11077 is sponsoring its 24th annual Memorial Day Service on Sun., **May 27**, "To Honor the War

PRAY-FOR-PEACE Walk goes from NYC to Boston **June 23-August 4**. Join for all or part of the route. The **June 30th** leg from Grand Central Station will arrive at Yankee Stadium in time for the Yankees/Red Sox game. Walk will pass through Fairfield County starting **July 8**. For dates/times/locations, and for ticket info on Yankee games, go to prayforpeacewalk.org/walk 2018 or call Al Forte: 203.940.3651.

Dead of our Country." The Memorial Mass is at 12 noon. The main celebrant and homilist is Father Charles Allen, SJ. Father Peter Cipriani, Assumption's pastor and council chaplain, will be concelebrant. A military salute will follow on the Church grounds including prayers, pipers, gun volley and Taps. The Knights invite all to attend and remember our fallen heroes. For more info, call Fred Coseglia: 203.371.8181.

LOURDES IN LITCHFIELD, 50 Montfort Rd., Rte. 118, Litchfield, has opened its 60th Pilgrimage Season. Mass is celebrated Tues.-Sun. at 11:30 am in the outside Grotto. Special events in May: Sun., **May 27**: Monthly prayer of the Sacrament of the Sick occurs at the conclusion of Mass. Mon., **May 28**: Memorial Day Mass celebrated at 11:30 am in the Grotto. For more info, call 860.567.1041, email lourdesshrinct@gmail.com or visit www.shrinct.org.

MERCY LEARNING CENTER in Bridgeport, a literacy center for women, offers the National External Diploma Program, (NEDP), a web-based high school diploma. Monthly

information sessions are held the first Friday of each month (**June 1**), at 11 am at the Mercy Learning Center, 637 Park Ave., Bridgeport. These sessions give a general overview of the NEDP and the next steps to enrollment. For more info, call Lynn Davies: 203.334.6699.

PAPER SHREDDING will take place at Catherine of Siena Parish, Trumbull, Sat., **June 2**, from 9 am-12 noon, rain or shine. All kinds of papers and documents will be shredded while you wait by a professional shredding truck. No need to remove staples or paperclips. Cost: \$10 for one standard archive box; \$25 for three boxes, cash or check, payable to St. Catherine of Siena. For more info, call the parish: 203.377.3133 or email office@stcatherinetrumbull.com.

TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS is celebrated at St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Parish, Brookfield, the first Sun. of each month (**June 3**) at 4 pm. For more info, call the parish: 203.775.5117.

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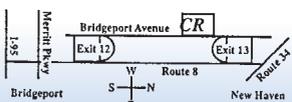
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**LEADERSHIP
SUMMIT**

**A CHANGING
LEARNING PROCESS**

June 20, 2018

The Catholic Center
238 Jewett Avenue
Bridgeport, CT

All ministry leaders are invited to attend a dinner and share in an important conversation

We will be joined by nationally known speaker Charlotte McCorquodale, who will discuss how the learning process has changed and how we can be more effective at engaging those we are called to serve. In addition, we will discuss the progress of Bishop Caggiano's *Invitation to Lifelong Faith Formation* and how the diocese is working to meet the needs of our parishes.

Other topics for this meeting include:

- Safe Environments (Erin Neil)
- Communication Policies and Best Practices (John Grosso)
- The Face of Prayer 2.0 (Emma Ryder)
- Catechetical Formation and Parent Outreach (Rose Talbot-Babey)
- The Future of Convivio and High School Apostles (Jess Nayden)
- New Liturgical Norms for the Diocese of Bridgeport
- Ministry with and for Seniors

The audience for this meeting includes anyone who works with young people or adults, sacraments or liturgical ministries. In short, all are welcome to learn more about the ministry we share.

We will also announce the renewed mission and vision for faith formation and give out prizes!



THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
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To register, please email
institute@diobpt.org

Bits and Pieces

first Tues. of every month (**June 5**) at 7 pm. How? Before 7 pm, call 877.216.5269 and type in the pin number 96869.

ST. ANTHONY FEAST at St. Margaret Shrine 2523 Park Ave., Bridgeport starts Fri., **June 8**, from 6-11 pm, and continues Sat., **June 9**, 2-11 pm and Sun., **June 10**, from 12 noon-10 pm. Join us for delicious Italian food and family friendly fun. Daily entertainment, rides and a raffle. On Sun., **June 10**, we will have our Special Outdoor Mass at 11 am followed by a procession in honor of St. Anthony. For more info, contact the Shrine: 203.3339627.

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

ANGEL-ADE Lemonade Stands needs your help again this year! Lemonade stand captains & volunteers needed for Sat., **June 9**. Angel-Ade is an important fundraiser for Al's Angels. 100% of all donations go directly to help children and families battling cancer, rare blood diseases and severe financial hardship. Al's Angels needs business that would allow a lemonade stand in front of the store and volunteer Stand Captains and helpers. For more info, to volunteer, or to make a donation, contact Al DiGuido: www.alsangels.org

BACON AND BREWFEST

at Notre Dame High School, Fairfield will be held Sat., **June 9**, from 12 noon-4 pm. Join us for an afternoon of beer sampling, food trucks, live music and fun! To purchase tickets, visit our website: notredamebaconandbrew2018.eventbrite.com. For more information, contact Theresa Marzik: tmarzik@notredame.org or 203.372.6521, ext. 242.

"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., **June 16**, at 9:30 am for Mass with Fr. Norm Guilbert, Jr. Social and meeting follow. For more info, call Pat Heile, OFS: 203.255.8801 or pheile5713@aol.com.

MOMs+DADs prayer/support group for those with Down syndrome, their family and friends meets the third Thurs. of every month (**June 21**), at 7:30 pm at St. Mary Parish, Norwalk. For more info, contact strapostolate@optimum.net. No summer meetings. A dial-in number connects those who can't make it personally. Dial 515.604.9636, access code 341308.

MAKING ROOM FOR GOD'S LOVE: "*Humanae Vitae* at 50," a symposium marking the 50th anniversary of Pope Paul VI's encyclical, will take place at the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, Stamford, on Sat., **June 23**, from 9:30 am-4 pm. Talks by George Weigel, Mary Eberstadt and Mary Hallan

RioRito. Vigil Mass celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. For more info and to register, visit www.stjohnsstamford.com.

SPRING FESTIVAL will be held at St. Andrew Parish, 435 Anton St., in the North End of Bridgeport on Sat., **June 23**, from 10 am-3 pm, Food trucks, vendors, family activities for all ages, car show, white elephant sale, music in the outdoor chapel, raffles. Loads of fun and activity! Rain Date: Sat., **June 30**. For more information or vending inquiry, call 203.374.8118.

LANCER OPEN in memory of Bob Shea will be sponsored by Notre Dame High School on Mon., **June 25**, at the Great River Golf Club in Milford. For more info, contact Theresa Marzik: tmarzik@notredame.org or 203.372.6521 ext. 242.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY to Jordan, the Holy Land and Dubai with Fr. Marcel Saint Jean: Sun., **Sept. 23-Sat., Oct. 6**. Price: \$3,899 includes airline tickets, all taxes, hotels, breakfast and dinner daily, sightseeing, tips for guides and transportation to JFK. For more info and for reservations, contact Fr. Marcel Saint Jean at Christ the King Parish, Trumbull: 203.434.7208, or 203.268.8695, or marcelsaintjean@gmail.com.

BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY support group meets monthly at St. Lawrence Parish, Shelton. For more info, call 203.929.8499.

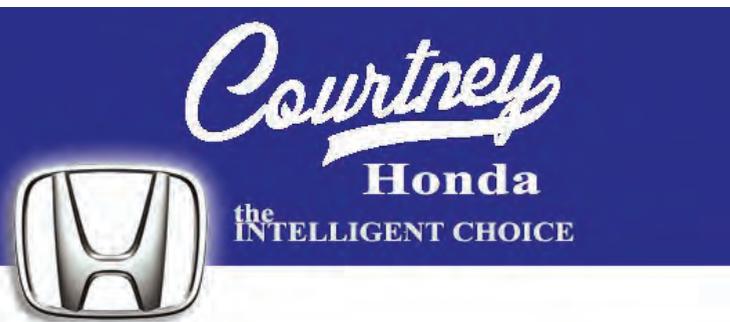
ENCOURAGE apostolate for friends and family of loved ones with same sex attrac-

tions or gender ID confusion. Confidential meetings are held monthly. For more info, email 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.

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 projectrachel@diobpt.org. God's mercy, healing and forgiveness are waiting for you!



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