



FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

DECEMBER 2018 | VOLUME 35, NUMBER 11 | CHRISTMAS ISSUE

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Preparing for the light of Christ



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Merry Christmas

A Very 'Immaculate' Christmas!

DANBURY—"We were glad that our neighboring families and their friends were able to join us in celebrating the wonderful joys of the Christmas season," said president of Immaculate High School, Mary Maloney, of the "A Very Immaculate Christmas!" concert and tree lighting which took place on Sunday, December 2.

The event featured seasonal performances by Immaculate High School's acapella group, mixed and concert choirs, guitar ensemble and concert band, as well as a special guest performance by the choir from St. Joseph School in Danbury.

In addition to hot cocoa and festive cookies, guests enjoyed a special lighting of a Christmas



tree and a visit from Santa Claus. "The voices of our choirs, ensemble group and guest children's choir group captured the hearts of all in attendance," said principal Mary Maloney.

Immaculate High School is a private, non-profit Catholic college-preparatory institution serving students from 28 communities

in Connecticut and New York. Founded in 1962, Immaculate High School allows students to focus on academic excellence, spiritual development, personal commitments and service to others. Immaculate High School is located at 73 Southern Blvd. Danbury, CT 06810. Online at www.immaculatehs.org.



Preparing for the Light of Christ

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

My experience has been that the days become ever more hectic as we approach Christmas!

There are many competing obligations that demand our time and attention. As a result, if we are not intentional in making time to prepare, we will find ourselves, before we know it, on the threshold of Christmas, having lost a great opportunity to prepare ourselves to receive the only gift of Christmas that matters- the Lord Himself.

Earlier this month we celebrated the great generosity of Saint Nicholas, who was a powerful force to evangelize the people of his own age, especially young people. I wondered to myself whether imitating his example might be a great spiritual exercise to prepare for the birth of the Savior.

More specifically, can you and I identify concrete ways by which, despite the busy time of year, we give of our time, money and presence to help others in need? Do we visit those who are sick and alone? Do we reach out over our differences to those who have offended or alienated us?

The gift of our generosity would only mirror in a small way the wildly generous love of God shown in His willingness to share our human life in all things but sin, so that we could one day inherit the richness of God's own life!

The key lesson of Advent reminds us that God is always and forever coming into our lives, inviting us to draw closer to Him. The task for us is to clear our vision and learn to see His many comings into our lives, one day at a time.

Perhaps the greatest gift we can give to ourselves and those around us is the choice to transform these days of busy work into a time of silence and peace for which our minds and hearts so desperately desire.

I pray that the Light of Christ will shine upon you and your family, and that you have a joyous Christmas and Happy New Year.

+ Frank J. Caggiano

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano,
Bishop of Bridgeport



ON THE COVER

A VERY 'IMMACULATE' CHRISTMAS! Students from St. Joseph School in Danbury joined in joyful song with Immaculate High School's A Capella group, mixed and concert choirs, guitar ensemble and concert band at the "A Very Immaculate Christmas!" concert and tree lighting which took place on Sunday, December 2.
(PHOTO BY AMY MORTENSEN)

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Latest News

Bishop provides update on Accountability Report

BRIDGEPORT—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano issued the following letter on November 27, 2018. It was read in parishes throughout the Diocese and also posted on the Diocesan website and social media. In it he provides an update on the progress in the **Diocesan Accountability Report** being led by retired Connecticut Judge Robert Holzberg.

The **Accountability Report** is one of several administrative measures announced by the Bishop in September in response to the sexual abuse crisis in the Church. "I believe that the Church is facing a moment of crisis that demands honesty and repentance from the bishops and decisive action to ensure that these failures will never happen again," said the Bishop said in his August 18 pledge to move forward in transparency. His latest letter offers an update of work underway on the report:

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

In my letter of September 7, 2018, I announced the urgent need for administrative action with regards to the current crisis in the Church. Several initiatives have already begun and additional initiatives are planned. I am pleased to take this opportunity to report on these efforts.



On September 15, the Diocese came together at St Augustine Cathedral for a **Mass of Reparation**. It was a humbling and healing moment for the many who participated. Many parishes have had their own Masses of reparation as well. On October 31, the Diocese published its **Financial Accountability Report**, a copy of which is available on the "A Pledge to Protect" page of our Diocesan website. In all of these efforts to address the crisis with the utmost transparency and accountability, we have been truly blessed by the support we have

felt from the faithful of our Diocese who have made their voices heard and also offered their prayers.

In addition, we have begun our engagement with retired Judge Robert Holzberg, who is leading the team that will produce the **Diocesan Accountability Report**. Judge Holzberg and his team have begun this work in earnest and expect to complete the effort by Spring of 2019. As I indicated

in my earlier letter, this work will examine information regarding the sexual abuse of minors contained in the Diocesan files and the Diocesan response to this abuse over the years. The Judge's investigation will result in a comprehensive and transparent accounting of sexual abuse of minors by Diocesan clergy between 1953 and today, and the Diocesan response to such abuse. I further indicated in my letter that the methodology for this work would be posted on the diocesan website.

I write to you today to share this methodology. Judge

Holzberg has indicated that, as a part of his investigatory process, his team has been:

- (1) Conducting interviews of current and former Diocese religious and lay personnel;
- (2) Reviewing and analyzing hundreds of thousands of documents, including confidential and canonical files; and
- (3) Reviewing litigation records.

In addition, the team is planning to speak to some victims and survivors of or witnesses to abuse. Given the broad scope of this assignment, Judge Holzberg's team is approaching the investigation systematically. As a critical part of this process, they have also begun consulting with outside experts familiar with canon law, child sexual abuse and investigations of religious institutions.

With the methodology articulated above, it is expected that the information collected will then be analyzed and consolidated into findings that may lead to follow up work by the team. Again, as earlier reported, this work will ultimately lead to a report of the findings for the benefit of the faithful of the Diocese, including

constructive recommendations for Diocesan policy and procedure as it relates to sexual abuse of minors by clergy and the Diocesan accountability in its response to this issue.

I welcome the professional and thorough work that Judge Holzberg's team has begun and look forward to the full cooperation of all those who will contribute in some way to the unprecedented work that this effort will entail. I truly believe that the report will be a moment of both transparency and grace for the Diocese of Bridgeport. While we are limited as to what changes we can effect for the larger Church, my hope as your Bishop is that these measures will begin to heal the wounds that we feel, address the legitimate desire for real change and restore your confidence in every level of leadership so that we can fully live out our faith with dignity, honesty and love for the Lord.

With an assurance of prayers, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Frank J. Caggiano

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport

Dr. Sauers named Parish Life Coordinator

FAIRFIELD—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano announced that Dr. Eleanor W. Sauers has been appointed Parish Life Coordinator of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Fairfield and will oversee the daily administration of the parish while a team of priests will fulfill its sacramental needs.

Dr. Sauers, who has been director of Religious Education and Pastoral Minister since 2002, has been in charge of church administration since the death of its pastor, Father John Baran, last March.

"St. Anthony's has had a long history under Father John Baran of developing an extensive and co-responsible lay leadership that has allowed the parish to prosper, and Eleanor was instrumental in helping to make that a reality," Bishop Caggiano said. "Saint Anthony's was ideal to have this new model of leadership, where

Eleanor is the parish administrator and a group of priests will come to attend to the sacramental ministerial needs of the people."

While the model is new to the Diocese of Bridgeport, it has been in use a long time in other dioceses, including Albany, Syracuse and Baltimore, and is supported by Canon law, the bishop said.

He added that Father Baran's illness in many ways necessitated that Dr. Sauers assume administrative responsibilities and that her appointment as Parish Life Coordinator was a "natural evolution for the people of St. Anthony's." Bishop Caggiano also said that he met twice with the leadership of the parish in discerning who should follow Father Baran.

"I am delighted that this is possible in part because it is another avenue being opened for lay leaders who with the proper training and



experience can exercise leadership in the Church," Bishop Caggiano said. "The key for success in our parishes is that we engage lay leadership in real, substantial, competent and appropriate ways."

"I am thrilled to have been appointed to the position of

Parish Life Coordinator of St. Anthony's," Dr. Sauers said. "I am grateful to Bishop Caggiano for his recognition of the unique character of the parish, and his understanding of the culture of lay involvement and ownership. This new model of governance is

a tribute to that recognition and hopefully will lead to the continued flourishing of the parish."

She also expressed gratitude to the parishioners for their support and for assisting in many ways to the life of the church. "I know they stand ready to continue to work together as we move forward in mission and ministry, and in doing so, honor the legacy of Father John."

Since his death, she, Frank Macari, director of music, and Beth Paris, pastoral minister for youth, have worked with Father Michael Boccaccio, director of the Propagation of Faith, to manage the pastoral and administrative needs of the church. Father Boccaccio will continue to serve the parish as part of the pastoral ministry team.

Dr. Sauers has a master's

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

Safe Environments

Healing Mass offers hope and reconciliation

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

WESTON—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano reflected on the abuse of power within the Church at the Mass of Hope, Healing and Reconciliation at St. Francis of Assisi Church held on Sunday, November 18 in Weston.

“There is one thing at the root of all the sins suffered by our brothers and sisters at the hands of the priests and bishops—they are victims of power that was misused. What should have been self-sacrifice was twisted into the abuse of innocence for decades,” said the bishop at the annual Mass.

“Their exercise of power was not lived in the mind of Christ,”



BISHOP CAGGIANO CHATS with Healing Mass committee member Peggy Fry. Peter Philipp, also a committee member, welcomes all to the Mass.

said the bishop who added that true power is only found in accepting the Cross.

“Following the Cross is the exercise of life-giving power... It’s not about the desire for privilege



Deacon John DiTaranto, a member of the diocesan Safe Environments team, served as master of ceremonies.

The Mass was offered in memory of Joseph Cann, Jr., and John Dwyer. The beautiful music was provided by Don Rickenback and the musicians of St. Francis Parish.

“The Church has had much bad news lately,” said Peter Philipp, a member of the survivors group in his welcome, but I’m looking ahead to what we can do to rebuild this Church of ours,” he said.

Philipp said that members of the survivors group

or honor. True power is only exercised when life is given over in love. Too many people have forgotten and forsaken that lesson.”

“We pray for the reform and purification of the Church and that we may find a way forward in this crisis,” the bishop said in his welcome to the survivors, family members and all those who attended the afternoon liturgy.

Members of the survivors planning committee delivered the readings, led the Prayer of the Faithful and spoke briefly after Mass. In spite of their suffering and the current crisis, they said they were hopeful and also grateful for the leadership of Bishop Caggiano.

The bishop called for healing and reconciliation for survivors and all those who are broken and “hurt by betrayal, disappointment, failure, poverty, injustice, discrimination and simply forgotten.”

“We come here to allow Christ’s love to touch our brokenness. We are all called to bring healing, by allowing Christ’s love to get into the cracks of our broken heart first so we can help others.”

“This journey will continue throughout our lives. We must work to become messengers of hope in a broken world,” the bishop said, adding that his friendship with victims and survivors has been a very great gift to him.

Bishop Caggiano celebrated the Mass with Father Jim McDevitt, a member of the survivors group; Father Jeff Couture, pastor of St. Francis Parish and Father Michael Boccaccio, director of Pontifical Mission Societies.

have worked to protect children and to reach out to others who have been abused but who have not yet come forward.

Joseph Cann, a member of the survivors group, delivered a powerful post-Communion reflection. As he choked away his sorrow, he remembered his son Joseph Jr., a victim of clerical sexual abuse who passed away in June 2016 of an accidental overdose.

“My son is not a survivor. Members of my family are. He suffered in silence for 16 years and came forward in September 2015,” Mr. Cann said, noting that his son, who always reached out to help others, agreed to go to rehab on the night before he died.

“I’m not here to point a finger at the Church. My family and I remain faithful,” said Mr. Cann who is in the diocesan deacon formation program. “We’ve been tested but we remain faithful.”

Mr. Cann urged the Church and all those present to “stay close” to the victims of abuse and work to be their advocates.

Peggy Fry, one of the leaders of the survivors group, thanked members of the diocesan Safe Environments team and others who have worked to bring healing and reconciliation.

“As survivors we had challenges in dealing with the diocese of the past. It’s a blessing to have the diocese we have now and to have Bishop Caggiano who does the right thing regardless of the cost. We are grateful for that,” she said.



March for Life

Friday, January 18, 2019

Bus Pilgrimage to Washington, DC for the 46th March for Life

Schedule

5:00 AM | Depart The Cathedral Parish, Bridgeport
5:30 AM | Pick up at St. Thomas Apostle in Norwalk
6:00 AM | Pick up at Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, Stamford
11:30 AM | Arrive at March for Life
4:00 PM | Depart for Connecticut

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Revised Liturgical Norms

Making the Case for Norms

By PATRICK DONOVAN

On the first Sunday of Advent, Bishop Frank Caggiano promulgated the new Diocesan Norms Governing the Liturgical Ministries. These norms are not intended to create anxiety, but to celebrate in a new way our liturgical life as Catholics. Though there will be some who will wonder why, with all that is going on both in the world and in the Church, we are making these revisions now, a close reading of the document will find that this revision can be an opportunity for renewal and new life.

The revision of the norms that govern how we celebrate the sacraments and the liturgical feasts in our diocese was mandated by our fourth diocesan synod that concluded in 2015. Its purpose was both to create a greater unity of liturgical practice among our parishes and to use the occasion to renew our understanding of the beauty, nature and responsibilities we have when we offer our worship to God. This process of revision will continue to unfold over the next four years, with a different section of the norms being revised, implemented for

one year on an experimental basis and after final consultation, approved as final norms

The revised Norms for Liturgical Ministries are not designed to be restrictive in nature. In fact, for many parishes, very little will change. Rather, the norms for our diocese are based on the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and many other Church documents that teach us how to pray the Mass—the “source and summit” of our Catholic faith—in such a way that both engages the faithful and is authentic to the Church’s teachings. In fact, throughout the year long process of revising these first set of norms, a fundamental principle that guided the revision process was to avoid restricting any option which the universal norms allow, allowing our diocesan norms to take into consideration that every parish community is different.

The norms also provide a time for conversation about the liturgy. The promulgation of these norms offers us the opportunity for catechesis, to reexamine our current practices, and challenge us to be more intentional about how we celebrate liturgy. They call for more uniformity in our Eucharistic cele-

brations. It can be confusing to go to Mass at one parish and see ministers acting one way and then visit a neighboring parish only to have ministers doing something differently. The Church, in her wisdom, sets out how the Mass is to be celebrated. No parish, no matter how well intentioned, may add to the Mass that which is not prescribed.

The norms celebrate the laity too and the many roles we are called and challenged to fill. The Church recognizes that the ordinary minister, the priest and deacon, cannot do everything, so (again in her wisdom) there are norms outlining the ways that the laity are involved. Whether we read at Mass, collect the offering, serve at the altar, sing in the choir, or even assist the ordinary ministers by distributing Holy Communion as extra-ordinary ministers, we are called to well-formed and well-prepared. These norms outline the requirements for ministry, the necessary formation, and the way many of these ministries are to be exercised.

The Venerable Fulton Sheen

once said, “If you don’t behave as you believe, you will end by believing as you behave.” The implications of this statement are perhaps no more clearly felt than at the celebration of Mass. If I believe that my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is truly present—body and blood, soul and divinity—in the Blessed Sacrament, then that must inform how I behave whilst in the presence of the Eucharist. Do I genuflect when passing in front of the tabernacle? Do I approach the altar at Communion with reverence, a clear conscience, and a reconciled heart? If I am an Extraordinary Minister, do I prepare prior to Mass so that I might fulfill this awesome responsibility with respect?

If we believe that the Word proclaimed at Mass is the Sacred Scriptures, do I listen attentively? Do I internalize that which I hear and consider the implications for my own life? If I am the one proclaiming the Word (not just reading), am I prepared? Can I pronounce all the words correctly? Do I know the story such that I can tell

the story? These are the questions the norms ask us to consider.

Am I prepared to serve at the altar? Am I prepared to sing in the choir? Am I dressed in a way that shows respect for the role I play? Do I enter into the celebration, fully, actively and consciously? Or am I a passive observer, checking off a box with my weekly attendance? The norms challenge all of us to ask these important questions. This is a great occasion for dialogue and catechesis. Let us not miss this chance because we think the timing is bad.

Yes, there will be anxiety for some and the need for minor adjustments in a few of our parishes. But following the guidelines the Church lays out for the celebration of the Eucharistic feast is not only important, it is essential. Go back to Bishop Sheen: if the way we behave is not indicative of what we believe, it will take very little time for people to begin to question what believed in the first place.

(To learn more about the norms, visit [The Leadership Institute’s website](http://TheLeadershipInstitute.org), formationreimagined.org.) ■

Institute Launches LEAD

To coincide with the required formation for the promulgation of the new Norms for Liturgical Ministries, The Leadership Institute has launched LEAD, a new learning platform. The platform, which stands for leadership, evangelization, accompaniment and discipleship invites user into an online learning experience that will track their use, remind them of upcoming formation and allow participants to register for events.

The site provides formation that can be used on any device and, if parish leaders wish, with large groups. Formation is available in English and Spanish at this point, but plans are in the works for adding Creole and Portuguese. Through a series on videos, articles and even interactive exercises, those in liturgical formation are being introduced to the new norms through sight, touch and sound.

In time, parish leaders will be able to name “team managers” for the site, allowing local leaders to track the usage of their ministers and sending reminders, recordings and resources directly to those who are in formation for their faith communities.

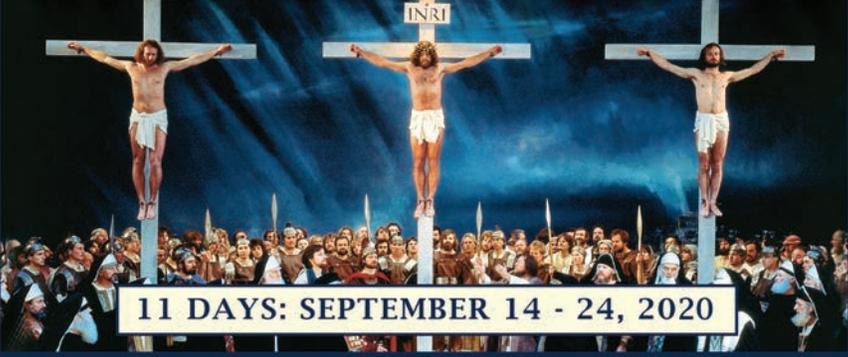
“More than 3,500 invitations were sent to those whose names and email addresses were submitted by their parishes,” said Patrick Donovan, executive director of The Leadership Institute. “So far, so good. We have not had any major complaints and the launch seemed to go off without a hitch. We are still missing about 1,500 names and email addresses from parishes and as they arrive, more invitations will be sent.”

One of the reasons the launch was invitation-only is because of the new norm’s allowance for those currently in ministry to be grandfathered into formation, Donovan added. After January 1, 2019, those new to ministry will be able to register for formation and, in February or March 2019, catechists will be invited into formation.

(To be kept up to date on all the Institute has to offer, sign up for “What’s Next?” the Institute’s weekly newsletter, by visiting www.formationreimagined.org.) ■

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EDITORIAL

In Gratitude

Christmas is the time to deepen our gratitude for the many gifts we have received, most notably, the great gift of Christ coming into our lives. Despite problems and challenges in our society and in our Church, we have so much to be grateful for as people of faith. Perhaps now more than ever, it is important to celebrate that which unites us in our parishes and in the life of the diocese:

... For all of those who recently received the St. Augustine Medal of Service. Many of the individuals and couples honored in this issue have spent a lifetime of quiet and faithful service to the diocese and their parish communities

... For all the young people who attended Fan the Fire, Convivio the SHU Journey experience, and many other events that invite them to live their faith with exuberance and joy

... For our teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators and all those who work with the young of our diocese to guide them and help to form them in faith

... For the readers, choir members, altar servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and all those in ministries of liturgical service who enhance the praise and worship of God in our parishes

... For the men and women who serve on boards, parish councils, and in other volunteer positions in which they freely share their expertise and talent to build up the faith community

... For the great faithfulness of our brothers and sisters in parishes who kneel in Adoration during Holy Hours, pray the Rosary, faithfully attend Mass, and participate in diocesan liturgies

... For those who participated in the *National V Encuentro*, a celebration of the faith of Spanish-speaking Catholics and their contribution to the Church

... For all of those who have taken parish and diocesan pilgrimages in the past year, finding a faith-filled and joyous way to travel, to pray and to enjoy life together

... For the priests and laity throughout the diocese who attended the Mass of Reparation and Purification at St. Augustine Cathedral—a powerful moment of contrition and healing

... For the survivors of sexual abuse in our own diocese who have stepped forward to organize the Annual Healing Mass, and who have joined in diocesan Safe Environments efforts by speaking out publicly, encouraging prevention, and helping others who have been abused

... For all of our seminarians at a time when it may be increasingly difficult to hear the call and discern a vocation to the priesthood

... For the generosity of donors who have contributed to support diocesan efforts in education, faith formation and charity

... For the young people who joined the March for Life in 2018, and volunteered to serve the needy and elderly in their parishes and communities

... For the 250 faithful of all ages who walked down the aisle as new Catholics in this year's Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)... and for the many young couples who walked down the aisle after exchanging their marriage vows

... For priests, deacons, and religious who continue to inspire us by their faith and their commitment to holiness throughout the year

... For our bishop who leads from the front, never shrinking away from tough issues. His sacrificial witness, commitment to renewal and his leadership are a gift to all

For these and so many other reasons, we have much to be grateful for. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

December Light

The great sidelight of December paints the roads and houses with the tall shadows of the maples and oaks. At noon we find ourselves squinting as if walking into a vision: the golden spokes of sunshine proclaim the revelation of light; the shortest days of the year speak of the brevity of our lives; the cold clarity of the day offers a purity of thought and intention; the broad silences of early afternoon are an invitation to reflection. If we did not have hope of the light of Christ, we would certainly search for it. "The key lesson of Advent reminds us that God is always and forever coming into our lives, inviting us to draw closer to Him," Bishop Caggiano writes in this year's Christmas message. Let us live in the fullness of this understanding, and find our December Christ in the great gift he has given us.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

New acolytes installed in Permanent Diaconate program

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano recently gathered with newly installed acolytes in the permanent diaconate program and their spouses at St. Augustine Cathedral.

The acolyte is instituted for service at the altar and to assist the priest and deacon. It is his place principally to prepare the altar and the sacred vessels and, if necessary, to distribute the Eucharist to the faithful as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

In the ministry of the altar, the acolyte has his own proper functions, which he must carry out in person. For example, in the procession to the altar, the acolyte may carry the cross. Also, the acolyte will approach the priest or deacon, whenever necessary, in order to present the book to them and to assist them in any other way required.

Left to right: Joseph and Laura Klimaszewski, Stephen and Susan Hodson, Richard and Christine Lawlor, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, Eric and Kathleen Keener, Joseph and Frances Cann, Michael and Kathy Ronan.



CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

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



PASTOR

FATHER JHON J. GOMEZ, from Medical Leave of Absence to Pastor, Saint Peter Parish, Bridgeport. Effective date was December 8.

FATHER WILLIAM F. PLATT, from Parochial Vicar, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Riverside, to Pastor, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Riverside. Effective date is January 31.

PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATOR

FATHER CYRUS M. BARTOLOME, from Parochial Vicar, Saint Aloysius Parish, New Canaan, to Parochial Administrator, Church of the Assumption Parish, Westport. Effective date is December 31.

FATHER WILLIAM M. QUINLAN, to temporary Parochial Administrator, Saint Cecilia Parish, Stamford. Effective date was November 30. Father Quinlan will remain Pastor, Saint Gabriel Parish, Stamford.

PAROCHIAL VICAR

FATHER MARCELO R. LOPRESTI, IVE, from Parochial Vicar, Saint Roch Parish, Greenwich, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Mary Parish, Stamford. Effective date was December 17.

RETIREMENT

FATHER THOMAS P. THORNE, from Pastor, Church of the Assumption Parish, Westport and Dean of the "Queen Assumed into Heaven" Deanery, to retirement.

Effective date is December 31.

MONSIGNOR ALAN F. DETSCHER, from Pastor, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Riverside, to retirement. Effective date is January 31. Monsignor Detscher will reside at the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of the Clergy Residence in Stamford.

DIACONATE OFFICE

DEACON GERALD LAMBERT, to Coordinator of Diaconate Formation. Effective date was December 1. Deacon Lambert shall temporarily remain Coordinator of Diaconate Continuing Formation.

Father Joseph A. Marcelllo
Vicar for Clergy
December, 2018

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Editorial



Christmas with Martha, Mary and Grandma

A YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

Libby Clyons is Communications Associate for the Diocese of Bridgeport. She can be reached at elizabeth.clyons@diobpt.org.

Around the holiday season, I am increasingly reminded of the story of Mary and Martha in the Gospel. Martha grows impatient with her sister as she bustles around the kitchen, preparing food and making things nice for her guests. Meanwhile, Mary sits at the feet of Jesus, listening to what He says, being near to Him, loving Him.

A common question that runs in Christian circles is: "Are you a Martha or a Mary?" I have

attended many talks centered on the idea that we all need a little bit of both. Both a serving heart and a loving heart are necessary.

I find my own answer when I think of my grandma—both the sweetest little lady and the strongest woman I know. Being the matriarch of a family of five children and 11 grandchildren, she has had her share of both heartbreak and celebration.

My family has undergone many changes over the years. The view from our Christmas table

has molded and shifted to fit the surroundings. The people around the table look different, some are no longer with us, while some come and go at different times. The table itself has also changed, as the white house on Hilltop is now being enjoyed by another family.

Despite all this change, the holiday doesn't seem lacking. Somehow, during the holidays,

my grandma has a way of bringing everyone together. Being an only child and having grown up attending boarding school, cooking and hosting didn't always come naturally to her. And yet somehow, she manages to host us all for holidays, birthdays and every celebration in between.

"Somehow, during the holidays, my grandma has a way of bringing everyone together."

But, during these celebrations, she is not "distracted with much serving," (Luke 10:40). She sets out the food and spends time in loving conversation with each of her family members.

Christmas is a good season to ask, "Are you a Martha or a Mary?" Personally, I tend to lean more toward the contemplative nature of Mary but I recognize that the importance of striving to

be a Martha is necessary to properly serve God and His people. And it is so important. We always need to recognize

those who serve, especially those who serve with the utmost humility.

In our modern world, especially around the holidays, being

a Martha seems to be held to a higher esteem, or at least the more "practical" option. The one with the spectacular menu, flawless decorations and Instagram-worthy spread is considered the "goal" of the holiday season.

But while Marthas breathe a sigh of relief while they dry the last dish, Mary's memories of the holidays are a bit different.

Is it about the serving, or is it something else that makes holiday memories stand out?

Being with one another, talking, conversing, sharing. A laugh and a piece of pie...while drying the last dish, together.

My grandma has taught me both the importance of being a generous hostess and taking the time to connect and visit with your guests. I would even go so far as to say my grandma is the perfect combination of Martha and Mary...but I may be a little biased.

Merry Christmas, Grandma! ■



You're in Good Hands this Christmas

A DAD'S VIEW

By MATTHEW HENNESSEY

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

Steve Largent was my hero.

For a hot second in the 1980's a lot of kids like me looked up to the Seattle Seahawks wide receiver. He was short (for a football player) and not too fast or well-built. Despite these obvious disadvantages, Largent had something special that set him apart. He had good hands.

Steve Largent was the perfect role-model for the 12-year-old me. I was a decent athlete, pretty good hands, but I had no chance of ever playing collegiate sports, let alone professionally. I was too small and too slow. Neither reality ever stopped me from dreaming that I would one day

quarterback Notre Dame to a national championship.

Although an All-American college player at the University of Tulsa, Largent barely squeaked into the National Football League in 1977. The league had expanded the year before and the Seahawks, a new team, needed every pair of good hands they could get.

Another inspiring thought for semi-soft suburban strivers: Numbers don't always tell the whole story. Some guys bring the intangibles.

Largent's small stature and slow feet really didn't hold him back. When he retired in 1992 he possessed all the NFL's receiving records, including the one that

started me following the career of a flyweight on the far side of the country in the first place—177 consecutive regular-season games with a reception.

Fourteen seasons as a pro and he almost never dropped the ball. Those aren't good hands; they're great hands.

I was so enthralled by Steve Largent that in 1985 I told my parents what I wanted more than anything for Christmas was a Seattle Seahawks jersey with #80 on the back. That may sound like a reasonable request in 2018, but it wasn't 2018. It was 1985. And we didn't live in the Pacific Northwest. The stores in our part of New Jersey weren't exactly overflowing with branded merchandise for NFL teams on the west coast.

Needless to say there was no internet, no Amazon, no NFL store then and wearing sports jerseys wasn't as common a thing as it is now. Still, my parents somehow pulled it off. They scored a Steve Largent jersey for me and got it under the tree in time for Christmas. The happiest kid in North America that day was the only kid in New Jersey repping

not Big Blue but the Blue Wave.

I asked my dad recently how he managed such a trick, but he has no memory of buying the #80 jersey. He remembers Steve Largent, and he remembers my fascination with him, but whatever strings got pulled to find me that shirt have receded into the mists. His best guess, he says, is that he bought it at a store. But we all know that no such store existed in New Jersey circa 1985. Something extra was involved.

Now that I'm a parent, I know what it feels like to worry that your kids are going to be disappointed on Christmas morning. Children have outrageous expectations. I did too, once upon a time, and that was long ago. The outrageousness of the expectations has evolved exponentially. Kids today want drones, phones and smart homes.

But I also see now what my parents also surely saw then—none of the stuff that goes under the tree really matters. The only thing that matters are the intangibles. If the family is together it's a good Christmas. If the Holy Spirit fills the home, then the

baby Jesus smiles. If Christ is at the center of the family celebration, then nobody should worry too much about dropping the ball. You're in good hands.

Most of my childhood Christmas memories have blended into one. When I look back on those magical mornings, I don't see piles of presents or overstuffed stockings. I see my parents drinking coffee in their bathrobes. I see my brother and sisters sitting cross-legged on the rug eating homemade cinnamon buns. I see Darby O'Gill, our inexplicably morose black lab, curled up under the boughs of the tree, tinsel draped across his forehead. It was the best day of his year, with all his favorite people gathered in one place.

And I see myself, with a 100-yard smile, pulling Steve Largent's jersey over my pajamas and saying, "Thanks mom! Thanks dad!" And then, giving nothing away about their extraordinary achievement, smiling and saying, simply, "You're welcome, son."

From my family to yours, have a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. ■

St. Rose of Lima Parish

School tragedies bond two priests in faith

By JOE PISANI

An ocean and 3,000 miles separated two Catholic priests in Newtown, Conn., and Dunblane, Scotland, but they were brought together in faith, friendship and suffering by the terrible tragedies they shared.

The bond that developed between Msgr. Robert Weiss, pastor of St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown, and Msgr. Basil O'Sullivan, pastor of Church of the Holy Family in Dunblane, is the topic of a recently released film titled, "Lessons from a School Shooting: Notes from Dunblane."

The 22-minute documentary by the director of the film "Newtown" follows the two priests in the months after the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012, which took the lives of 20 young children and six educators. Eight of the children and one adult were from Msgr. Weiss's parish.

Msgr. O'Sullivan, whose community lost 16 children and one teacher in the deadliest mass shooting in British history on March 13, 1996, reached out to Msgr. Weiss and shared his own experiences and offered compassion and encouragement.

Msgr. Basil wrote, "Your tragedy brought a lot of memories back to us here in Dunblane...I write to inform you that in this Church of the Holy Family, there were prayers and tears for you all at Mass this Sunday morning." Thus began an exchange between the two priests, trying to bring compassion and hope to their communities, and searching for light as they confronted the darkest of evils.

In an on-camera interview, Msgr. Weiss says, "This hurt is so real; it's just unimaginable that something like this could happen here. How do you live with it?"

Later, he adds, "I will admit it continues to overwhelm me. I find myself exhausted —physically I'm exhausted, spiritually I'm exhausted... and emotionally."

Msgr. O'Sullivan confided that he could not stop crying in the months following the Dunblane shooting and that he suffered an emotional breakdown. For a year or two, the sight of a five-year-old would make him weep. He turned off his television because the violence disturbed him so much.

Both priests received counseling and rehabilitation, but to this day, Msgr. Weiss still suffers from symptoms of post-traumatic



stress disorder.

"I break down a lot," he said in a recent interview. "I haven't slept well one night since this happened, and I have terrible anxiety about flying and crossing bridges. It has been hard, and it has certainly taken a toll on me physically and emotionally."

At the invitation of Msgr. Weiss, the Irish priest, who was then 81, came to Newtown to mark the first anniversary of the shooting. A humble man, he described himself as "a very ordinary chap with no charisms of any kind." And yet in a moving display of faith, this simple man of Christ told the congregation at St. Rose of Lima, "Love, although it looks weak, always overcomes hatred and evil."

"To me, the message of the documentary is that you never know what is going to bind you to another person," Msgr. Weiss said. "In this day and age, the film captures a different side of the priesthood that is really important. It points to the importance of faith in the midst of tragedies like this. We were both called on to minister to the families we knew. Priests are human and just because you're a priest doesn't mean you don't feel and experience the terrible loss."

In October, St. Rose of Lima hosted a screening of the film, which won a first prize at the 2018 Tribeca Film Festival. Producer Maria Cuomo Cole and director/producer Kim Snyder were on hand, along with former Newtown First Selectman Pat Llodra. The film, which can be viewed on Netflix, includes news footage, interviews with the priests and coverage of Msgr. O'Sullivan's visit to Newtown.

Looking back, Msgr. Weiss says, "The one thing that really

surprised me in my situation is that from the beginning, people saw this clearly for what it was — an act of evil by a very sick young man. For me, it was not a matter of losing faith in God, but of losing faith in people. The lack of respect for life that has overtaken this country just amazes me."

On the Sunday after the tragedy, he recalls, the church had to be evacuated because someone made a threat against it. SWAT teams and police cars arrived in the middle of the service.

"The accumulation of that within 48 hours just was overwhelming," he said. "Why would a person call us in the midst of all this and want to inflict more evil? That is what we had to struggle with as we tried to rebuild our lives."

The path to healing and forgiveness has not been an easy one, he said. The emotional strain weighed heavily on families in the community, and in some cases led to breakups, substance abuse and domestic turmoil.

"The tragedies in these people's lives continue and as a priest, you have to be present," he said. "What we learned rather quickly is that tragedies happen every day. For a while, we got so focused on this that we failed to be sensitive to others who lost a spouse or lost a child in another situation. There were a lot of lessons to be learned going through this."

With each anniversary, anxiety wells up in the community. "This is a little town with limited resources that had to deal with 26 deaths," he said. "To this day, it has taken a lot of local concentration and energy. Every time there is another shooting, the media look back to Sandy Hook and you have to keep reliving it."

The town is currently considering a permanent memorial

to the victims, and while some residents question the decision, many others are convinced it is something that must be done.

The tragedy of Sandy Hook Elementary School has affected the community in countless ways, he said. Today, even the parish school has a security guard and a counselor.

At the same time, his congregation is looking to the future with renewed hope. St. Rose of Lima is currently in the middle of a \$6.1 million church renovation, and the enthusiasm that the project has inspired is a positive development, he believes.

"That's a sign we are moving ahead," he said. "People are excited about it. The whole town is excited about it. In addition to the renovation, we are building an addition and creating a Garden of Peace that is going to be really beautiful."

Msgr. Weiss, who has been pastor for 19 years, is three years away from retirement. He would like to remain a fourth year, which would be his 50th anniversary as a priest, bringing Christ to others in joyful times and in their darkest hour.

Looking back on the past six years, he says the school shootings at Sandy Hook and Dunblane are tragic reminders that "Something has to change. We have to reclaim the value of human life, and the changes have to come from within each person."



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(SAINT AUGUSTINE MEDAL PHOTOS BY AMY MORTENSEN)

St. Augustine award recipients inspire gratefulness

BRIDGEPORT—"My friends, we have come here today because those of you who are being honored are being honored not simply because of all the good that you do, as important as that is, not simply because of the witness you give, as important as that is, but because you have discovered the mystery of love and willing what God wills," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, addressing the over 150 honorees gathered at St. Augustine Cathedral for the St. Augustine medal award ceremony on Saturday, November 17.

Every seat in the cathedral was filled as the pastoral leaders who nominated the recipients, their friends, family and loved ones gathered to acknowledge and celebrate the honorees for their volunteer service to parishes, schools and charities throughout Fairfield County.

Bishop Caggiano reflected on the words of St. Augustine: "love and do whatever you will," during his Saturday homily.

"God is love, my friends...God teaches us that this life is about self-gift, self-offering, self-emptying for the good of the other before us," said the bishop.

"Those who discover love, discover God...and those

who discover God quickly realize that to be loving as He is, what we chose to do will be what God wants us to do."

The bishop continued, addressing the medal award recipients, "You have been a force of unity and acceptance...you have been the agent to give life abundantly."

The bishop said, "You are here because you do not walk the journey to paradise alone...you have many people walking with you because of your witness, your faith and your life," a point that was brought to even greater light as each medal recipient did not walk up to receive their award alone, but was accompanied by their pastors, principals, or parochial administrators.

Bishop Caggiano reflected on the number of years this ceremony has been celebrated, saying, "This year above all others I am deeply grateful that we are here together...for we are living in a time of great storm, great crisis...and we will spend many of years ahead not simply purifying our church, bringing it to new life and reform, but to become once again a voice that is uncompromising in the world...showing the world the way of the will of God. There is much to do, but I am so grateful you are doing what you are doing now. For now more than ever,

you are the light in the darkness...who are not afraid to love and do not what you want but what God wills in you, and for that I and the Church are deeply grateful."

With the Thanksgiving holiday around the corner, the bishop reflected on his gratitude for the medal recipients and what it means to give thanks:

"Next week, as you know, we will join our sisters and brothers throughout the country to celebrate the day of Thanksgiving. For those of us here in faith, we do that every day when we come to the altar to give thanks to Almighty God. But on that day, above all others, we give thanks to God for our country for the principles upon which it is founded, for the common good we form as Americans of every religion ethnicity culture and way of life...as in all things, we face challenges, but we commend our country to the Lord's mercy, love and providence."

The bishop thanked the recipients once again before the closing of the ceremony, "I am very grateful, in light of that day to come, for each and every one of you who are the honorees. Thank you for your witness, generosity, faith, courage and what you do to make God's will real in the world."

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BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
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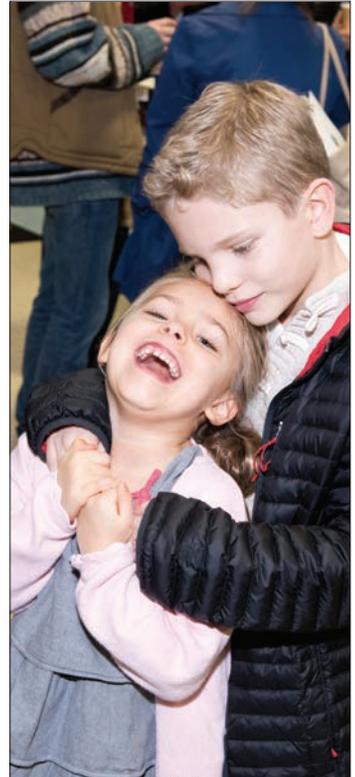
SAINT LAWRENCE PARISH, SHELTON: **MRS. MICHELINE HOPE (2017 RECIPIENT)** — Nominated by Reverend Michael K. Jones, S.T.D., Pastor



SAINT MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE PARISH, SHELTON:
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HOLY TRINITY PARISH, SHERMAN:
MRS. JEANNE HERNON — Nominated by Reverend Richard Genza, Pastor



THE CATHOLIC ACADEMY OF STAMFORD, STAMFORD:
MR. MICHAEL J. RADUAZZO — Nominated by Ms. Patricia Brady, Head of School



TRINITY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, STAMFORD:
MR. JOSEPH MAIDA — Nominated by Mr. Scott E. Smith, Principal



HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. ZYGMUNT & MRS. LINDA ZAJKOWSKI — Nominated by Reverend Pawel M. Hrebenco, Pastor



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. WILLIAM BUTLER — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Kevin T. Royal, Pastor



OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. JOSEPH & MRS. WENDY VERMEER — Nominated by Reverend Peter K. Smolik, Pastor



SACRED HEART PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. JEFF & MRS. ROSE CURTIS — Nominated by Reverend Alfonso Picone, Pastor



SAINT BENEDICT-OUR LADY OF MONTSERRAT, STAMFORD: **MS. ALICIA SANCHEZ** — Nominated by Reverend Gustavo A. Falla, Pastor



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MR. FRANK CAVENEY — Nominated by Reverend Albert G. Pinciario, Pastor



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MRS. ITALIA MALAGISI — Nominated by Reverend William M. Quinlan, Pastor

2018 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



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MRS. MICHELLE MOORE — *Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Martin P. Ryan, Pastor*



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SAINT JAMES PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. THOMAS & MRS. VIRGINIA ROGERS —
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Nominated by Mr. Scott Clough, Principal



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SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA PARISH, TRUMBULL:
MS. GLORIA V. BENDER —
Nominated by Reverend Joseph A. Marcello, Pastor



SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA SCHOOL, TRUMBULL:
MRS. ANNETTE DEMOURA —
Nominated by Ms. Eunice Giaquinto, Principal



SAINT JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL, TRUMBULL:
MR. TOM & MRS. MARY DINEEN —
Nominated by Dr. William Fitzgerald, President



SAINT STEPHEN PARISH, TRUMBULL:
MRS. CAROL GANNON —
Nominated by Reverend Christopher J. Samele, Pastor



SAINT THERESA PARISH, TRUMBULL: **MR. STEPHEN & MRS. SYLVIA PELAK, POSTHUMOUSLY** — *Nominated by Reverend Brian P. Gannon, Pastor*



SAINT THERESA SCHOOL, TRUMBULL:
MR. RICHARD LAFRENIERE —
Nominated by Mr. Salvatore Vittoria, Principal



SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH, WESTON:
MR. MIKE & MRS. LEIGH MECCAY —
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CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, WESTPORT:
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MR. ERASMO & MRS. ANGELINA SIGNORE —
Nominated by Reverend Reginald Norman, Pastor



OUR LADY OF FATIMA SCHOOL, WILTON:
MR. DECLAN & MRS. ELIZABETH HALPIN CARBIN —
Nominated by Stanley T. Steele, Principal



Holy Land Pilgrimage

Walking in His footsteps

Those who read the four Gospels and understand the power of the messages each Gospel carries has the opportunity to grow more deeply in faith. There is, according to the late Benedictine monk, Father Bargil Pixner, a fifth Gospel. Whereas the first four record the life of Jesus, the fifth invites you to walk in Jesus' footsteps.

From July 18-27 2019, The Leadership Institute invites those between 19 and 35 to visit this "fifth Gospel" and travel to the Holy Land to study Sacred Scriptures and the life of our Lord and Savior. Beginning in Bethlehem and ending in Jerusalem, the pilgrimage will follow the life of Christ chronologically. The trip will also include a boat ride across the Sea of Galilee, a visit to the Mount of Beatitudes, and day in Capernaum, where Jesus taught and performed many signs of wonder.

"Pilgrims will celebrate Mass

together each day, take turns leading reflections, and participate in classes that assist in their faith development," said Bishop Caggiano, who accompanied the young adults for the 2018 pilgrimage in January. "This year's pilgrimage was moved from March, when it was originally scheduled, to July. Our hope is that moving the pilgrimage to the summer will allow more of our school teachers to participate."

"My own pilgrimage experience was a powerful week of reflection, prayer and spiritual growth," said Grace Shay, who participated in the 2018 pilgrimage and will help guide the 2019 pilgrims on their journey. "There is something very special about traveling with others who are energized on the trip, but also working to navigate what it means to be a faithful disciple back home."

Shay's desire to grow in her faith was one of the reasons she took part in the inaugural pilgrimage. "There is no better way to

continue our Catholic education and explore the foundations of our Catholic identity than by traveling to the source of our faith."

Another one of the original pilgrims, Marcelle Morrisey, agreed. "We were in the same spot, physically and mentally, that the disciples were in. They had to figure out what they were going to do next. They had to muster up the courage to step out and be the witnesses they were called to be, which is exactly what my fellow pilgrims and I were called to do after what we experienced on our trip."

Looking ahead, Shay hopes that other young adults will join the 2019 journey. "This is a chance for a personal encounter with the Lord," Shay said. "Challenge yourself to grow more deeply in your faith in the place where it all began. Feel the breeze of the Sea of Galilee, read the Gospels among the olive trees and attend Mass in the Church of the



Holy Sepulchre – and risk having your life turned upside down."

"The cost is \$3,500 per person," according to Patrick Donovan, executive director of The Leadership Institute, which sponsors the pilgrimage. "This includes just about everything pilgrims will need." Some scholarship money is available, and the complete registration process and scholarship information can be found on the Institute's website, www.formationreimagined.org.

"Many of those who traveled with the bishop last year still get together to pray and study," Donovan said, "Those who were friends before we left have only grown stronger and those who were strangers when we departed quickly became friends. One of the beautiful things about pil-

grimages is the lasting impact the journey has on those who participate. I anticipate that will be no different this year. In fact, post-pilgrimage meetings are built into our schedule."

"The bishop invites those that fall in this target age to consider joining the pilgrimage," Donovan said. "I know it is a sacrifice to miss work or to try to arrange to be away from school, which is why we changed our plans from March to July. But the benefits far outweigh the costs. To wake up each day and find yourself walking in the footsteps of Jesus is a powerful antidote to the busyness in which we so often find ourselves."

(To learn more about the journey or how you can help sponsor participants, please email institute@diobpt.org.)



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Catholic Scouts

Father Cervero celebrates Mass for Boy Scout families

REDDING—On October 12-14, hundreds of Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and their families from the Connecticut Yankee Council's Pomperaug District converged on the John Sherman Hoyt Scout Reservation in

troop 68 provided the readings. In his homily, Father Cervero reminded the scouts that the central values of our Catholic faith mirror those of the scout oath and scout law: to put God before all things and to love our neigh-

1977 to 1989. Prior to Father Conlisk's service, St. Patrick was in Bethel then of Sacred Heart in Georgetown. BSA troop 68 is chartered by Father Brian Gannon of St.



Redding for a weekend of fun and learning. Scouts camped and cooked in the woods, learned essential survival and safety skills, all while getting to know more about the BSA's High Adventure destinations in the United States.

One troop, however, believed there was a key piece missing from the weekend's packed agenda: Catholic Mass. Troop 68 committee member Ben Strong resolved to provide the missing piece not just for this fall's camporee, but also for each of the main camping events this year. The CT Yankee Council plans and organizes three camporees annually: a Fall Camporee in October, a Spring Camporee in May and the annual favorite Klondike Derby in January.

Strong reached out to St. Patrick Parish in Redding to see if a priest would be available and willing to meet the scouts in the woods, where they are. What he found was a most enthusiastic reply. Father Joseph Cervero celebrated Mass with more than 35 people in attendance: Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and their families. Dylan Dos Santos and Nick Strong of Trumbull's pack 468 and Sean Murphy of Trumbull's

bor as ourselves.

Also in attendance were Sean and Kevin Murphy, great-nephews of Father John Conlisk, who was pastor of St. Patrick from

Theresa Parish in Trumbull Conn. It is the only BSA troop in Trumbull chartered by a Catholic Church, and is very proud of their Catholic association.

NEW LEADERSHIP MODEL FROM PAGE 3

degree and Ph.D. in religious education from Fordham University and a bachelor's in history from Emmanuel College. While at Fordham, she was named to the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. She is an adjunct professor at Fairfield University, where she teaches a course in Christian spirituality and is a board member of the Center for Catholic Studies.

Her dissertation was a case study in the transformation of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, and her writing has been published in "Commonweal" and "Church."

"Eleanor is tremendously competent in what she does, and I have confidence in her," Bishop Caggiano said. "She certainly is very well respected by the people of the parish and has a keen pastoral sensitivity to them and their needs. I am very confident she will do a great job."

Patrick Turner, director of the Office of Strategic and Pastoral Planning, said the leadership model of Parish Life Coordinator has been implemented in dioceses across the country from Los Angeles to Indianapolis, as well as many Northeast dioceses, as many undergo reconfigurations as a result of the declining number of clergy in recent decades. One of the primary purposes is to allow the priest as the sacramental minister to focus on the sacraments and to allow a lay person, as administrator, to focus on the various aspects of parish life.

Turner said that when he and Bishop Caggiano met with the parish leadership about the appointment, they were excited and supportive of the change.

"As our Church looks to increase lay involvement in our parishes, this is an ideal opportunity for us to implement this model," he said. "St. Anthony of Padua Parish is fully ready for this type of leadership. Eleanor has been there as a full partner with Father Baran in the life of the parish community, and she has the theological and pastoral credentials to do this. This is someone who has been formed in ministry and administration for a number of years."

In her new role, Dr. Sauers will have the decision-making authority for the parish and be responsible to Bishop Caggiano. She will work with the Parish Council and the community to develop a pastoral vision and mission, in addition to overseeing the day-to-day operations and administration of the parish, including its financial management and strategic planning. She will also be responsible for recruitment, training and management of employees and volunteers and work with a sacramental ministry team that will be named by Bishop Caggiano.

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Obituary

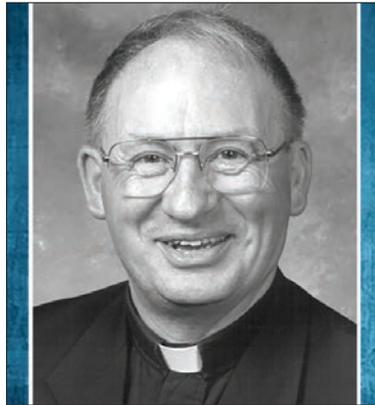
Father Carducci D'Amico, 83

BRIDGEPORT—Father Carducci D'Amico, born on November 1, 1935, returned to his Heavenly Father on Friday, November 23, 2018 in Cercemaggiore, in the province of Campobasso, Italy.

"Many in the Bridgeport area fondly remember Father D'Amico for his energy, vision and commitment to the renewal of St. Margaret Shrine," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. "Please pray for the repose of the soul of Father D'Amico and the consolation of his family."

Father D'Amico served at St. Raphael/St. Margaret Shrine from 1977 to 2006, becoming pastor in 1984. It was his vision to begin the St. Anthony Feast at the shrine in 1978. Many parishioners remember that he used his own talents as a carpenter and mason to begin the restoration of the original chapel and ground of the shrine.

In 1973, Father D'Amico was welcomed into the Diocese of Bridgeport as assistant to the late Msgr. David Bannon, pastor of St. Peter Church in Bridgeport. He also served as associate pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Stamford.



REVEREND CARDUCCI D'AMICO

"As your pastor, I have tried to devote all of my energies to the service of St. Raphael/St. Margaret parish. I have been given a precious heritage and the inspiring example of many holy priests, sisters and laity. Encouraged by their untiring zeal and generous commitment, I have tried in my own way to build a community of faith within our church," Father D'Amico wrote on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee as a priest in March, 1989.

He entered the Seminary of the Somascan Order in Corbetta, Milano at the age of thirteen. There he completed his secondary school studies and in 1954 professed vows in the Order of St. Jerome Emiliani. Father D'Amico obtained a degree in philosophy and went on to attend the School of Theology at Saint Anselm University on the Aventine Hill in Rome.

On March 14, 1964, he was ordained to the priesthood by Cardinal Giuseppe Ferretto in the Basilica of Saint Alessio.

Father D'Amico retired on March 12, 2009 and returned to Italy, where he resided in his last years.

Father Giandomenico Flora celebrated a Memorial Mass for Father Carducci S. D'Amico at St. Margaret Shrine, 2523 Park Avenue, Bridgeport on Saturday, December 1, 2018 at 5:30 pm. ■

Sister Pietrina Mazzola, MPF

Sr. Pietrina Mazzola, MPF, 96, died early Sunday morning, Nov. 25, 2018, at St. Joseph Hall, Villa Walsh, Morristown, N.J.

Born and raised in New York City, in 1922, Sr. Pietrina entered the Religious Teachers Filippini in 1937. She received her habit in 1938, and made her religious profession in 1941.

In 1960, Sr. Pietrina moved to Connecticut where she remained for the rest of her professional ministry. She administered as principal in the following schools: St. Sebastian, Middletown, Conn.; St. Anthony Bristol, Conn.; and Sacred Heart, Stamford, Conn. Although Sr. Pietrina retired in 2009, she continued to volunteer her time at St. Peter, Torrington, and then the Montessori School at Queen of Apostles in Bristol, Conn. Visiting hospitals and nursing homes were also part of her continued ministry during these years of retirement.

Through her many years in Connecticut, Sr. Pietrina also served as local superior. She further ministered as Provincial Councilor for the Queen of Apostles Province for two six year terms. In 2004, Sr. Pietrina received the Pro Ecclesia Award from the Diocese of Bridgeport, Conn., a papal award conferred for distinguished service to the Church.

Sr. Pietrina became a resident at St. Joseph Hall, Home Healthcare Center for the Filippini Sisters in late September 2018, two months prior to her passing. She will always be admired as a faithful community member of the Filippini Sisters.

Sr. Pietrina was predeceased by her parents Santo Mazzola and Rosalie (Ferdico) Mazzola, brother Peter and her sisters Nancy Termine, Ida De Maio, Santa Scerbo, and Grace Gaetano. She is survived by sister Josephine Leone and many devoted nieces and nephews. ■



SISTER PIETRINA MAZZOLA

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DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT DECEMBER 16—JANUARY 19

DECEMBER

17	Rev. Kieran T. Ahearn.....	1997
19	Rev. Philip Morrissey.....	2008
21	Msgr. Constantine R. Caldas.....	2015
26	Rev. Vincent P. Cleary.....	1965
27	Rev. Ignatius Baraniak, OFM Conv.....	1980
29	Msgr. James H. Grady.....	1967
30	Rev. M. Joseph McCarthy.....	2006

JANUARY

1	Rev. Michael J. Flynn, C.S.Sa.....	1995
2	Rev. Joseph J. Malloy.....	2016
	Rev. Robert J. McDermott.....	1989
3	Msgr. Pierre A. Botton.....	2010
4	Msgr. Francis Medynski.....	2008
6	Msgr. William J. Fox.....	1962
7	Rev. Walter E. Bozek.....	1995
8	Rev. Mr. Edward R. Kovacs.....	1999
	Rev. Joseph P. Biondino.....	2001
9	Rev. Gerald T. Devore.....	2011
	Rev. Mr. Hugh Sweeney.....	1990
	Rev. Robert Nemeth, O.F.M. Conv.....	1998
13	Rev. Daniel J. Dechan.....	1976
14	Rev. M. Joseph Joaquin.....	2013
	Msgr. Joseph A. Sullivan.....	2001
15	Msgr. Harry L. Hale.....	2003
	Msgr. G. Robert Hanover.....	1992
16	Rev. Thomas B. Gloster.....	1956
18	Rev. Edward J. Small, SJ.....	2010
19	Rev. Andrew L. Horvat.....	1973
	Rev. William D. Thompson.....	2004

Immaculate Sports

Improbable title trifecta

By **DON HARRISON**

Winning one state championship is a cause for celebration at any high school. Capturing two state championships in the same season doubles the pleasure. But three seems unfathomable.

Immaculate of Danbury achieved that rare trifecta this fall, winning its first CIAC state field hockey title and earning state championships in both boys and girls cross country. The Mustangs came oh-so-close to a fourth state title in November, but the girls' soccer team came up short against Old Lyme in the Class S championship game, 2-1.

Immaculate put the exclamation point on its Class S field hockey championship by defeating top-seeded Granby Memorial, 3-0, in the title game at Wethersfield on November 18. The Mustangs, who finished 20-3, were seeded third in the tournament.

"We have many great players, but the biggest factors in our success are camaraderie and teamwork," said Shannon Horosky, the head coach who across nine seasons has transformed Immaculate's field hockey program from mediocre to contenders to champions.

There were stars galore this fall. Senior center halfback Madison Halas, a co-captain since her sophomore season, was selected to the Connecticut High School Coaches Association's All-State

team for the third straight year. She was joined on the All-State team by classmate Kristen Cirone and junior goalie Lauren "Lala" Oskam. Sophomore Celia Preveza was selected to the All-State second team.

"Kristen suffered a torn ACL in the (South-West) league semi-final game last year," Horosky said. "So I'm so pleased that she was able to come back and play so well."

Halas scored the first Mustangs' goal in the title-game victory over Granby, and junior Molly Coyle registered the other goals.

Horosky, who operates a Danbury-based fund-raising company, Apex Leadership, with her husband, was overwhelmed by the support her team received from alumni this season. "We must have had 36 alumni reach out and congratulate the girls," she noted.

In cross country, Immaculate's boys' squad notched its first Class SS state title in school history while the Mustangs' girls team raced to their fourth straight state championship and sixth in the past seven seasons on October 26 at Wickham Park in Manchester. "It's about tradition," said Brian Hayes, who coaches both teams. "It's all about believing and hard work."

For the Immaculate boys, it was about balance, too. Drew Mitchell, a junior from Brookfield, placed eighth in the state championship meet, covering the 3.1-mile course in

17:24. He was closely followed by Mustang teammate Ryan McNerney in 10th position (17:31), and then James Sullivan, Parker McKenzie and Logan Plaisted, who finished 13th, 14th and 15th, respectively. The Mustangs' 60 points edged runner-up East Catholic of Manchester with 68 points.

Immaculate was a dominant victor in the girls' race, putting up 31 points to second-place finisher Haddam-Killingworth's 78. Senior co-captain Angela Saidman finished third with a 19:42 clocking—just eight seconds faster than teammate Ailene Doherty in fourth position. Taylor Mascetta, Kaitlyn Segreti and Natalie Dudas placed sixth, seventh and 11th, respectively, for the Mustangs.

Hayes, who gives credit to new assistant coach Chris Houser for this season's successes, was also pleased by his girls' team's performance at other, more competitive venues.

"We finished second in the State Open (November 2) and third in the New England (November 10th)," he said. "We were second to Danbury in the states, just one point behind."

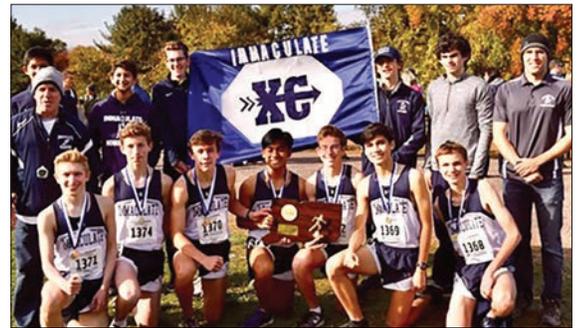
Hayes, who just completed his 14th season at the helm, has been named Connecticut's Coach of the Year in girls' cross country by the U.S. Track & Field Cross Country Coaches Association. ■



IMMACULATE HIGH SCHOOL'S 2018 field hockey team celebrates its first state championship in school history.



SENIOR CO-CAPTAIN ANGELA SAIDMAN, who finished third, sparked Immaculate's girls team to its fourth straight state cross country championship.



JUNIOR DREW MITCHELL LED a well-balanced Immaculate boys squad to its first cross country title in school annals.

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A Family Business That Cares

Column: Thomas Hicks



The Leaking Cistern

POTPOURRI

BY THOMAS H. HICKS

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

“When I was 12 years old, my daddy took me to the circus. The greatest show on earth. There were clowns and elephants and dancing bears. And a beautiful lady in pink tights flew high above our heads. And as I sat there watching I had the feeling that something was missing.

I don't know what but when it was all over I said to myself, "Is that all there is to the circus?" And then I fell in love With the most wonderful boy in the world. We'd take long walks down by the river, or just sit for hours Gazing into each other's eyes, we were so very much in love. And then one day, he went away

and I thought I'd die, but I didn't. And when I didn't. I said to myself, "Is that all there is to love?" Is that all there is, is that all there is? If that's all there is my friends, then let's keep dancing. Let's break out the booze and have a ball If that's all there is."

These lyrics are from a popular song of the 1970s, "Is That All There Is," sung by Peggy Lee. The theme of these lyrics is something I've written about before, but that theme, it seems to me, goes well with Advent—so a bit more.

There's Tom Brady's interview with Steve Kroft on 60 Minutes. By most men's standards, Brady had achieved ultimate success. He had four Super Bowl rings, extreme wealth, a supermodel wife, and a lovely family. Yet Brady wondered, "God, there's

got to be more than this." When Kroft asked what else there could be, Brady's only response was, "I wish I knew, I wish I knew."

At the peak of her fame and fortune, with 157 singles and 33 double titles behind her, and having been inducted into the Tennis Hall of Fame, Chris Evert married fellow tennis star John Lloyd. They seemed to have it all: a passionate courtship, romantic trips around the world. They chronicled their marriage in a biography titled Lloyd on Lloyd. In that text Chris Evert tells of a special date-night she had with her husband: dinner at an expensive restaurant, followed by a movie, followed by some drinks at an expensive club. When they came home, Chris put her head against a wall and said, "Jack, there has to be more than this."

"The Leaking Cistern." The cistern cannot contain all the water that is needed to slake thirst—it always leaks. It was John's way of saying that nothing in this world could ultimately satisfy. We are searching for God. There is in the human spirit a desire for God. We sense an absence at the core of things. Even though many people seemingly behave without regard for God or for the spiritual realm, there is a spiritual hunger. The Italian spiritual writer, Romano Guardini, claimed that there is in each person an instinct for worship, to establish a relationship with the Creator Who placed us here. We reach out for the Infinite, the Ineffable. We know at some fundamental level that we long for something sacred.

I believe that everyone carries around inside himself/herself a sense that something is missing, a certain emptiness, a restlessness, an incompleteness, a disappointment. At some point in life we may acknowledge the ache we feel within for something more. Nothing satisfies as we thought it would. I think this lack is seen everywhere. There's the look of weariness and disappointment on the faces of people on a train or bus. We all come to deal with the world's disillusionments. I doubt there are many who do not recognize this experience. Various things in the world promise to give us ultimate satisfaction, but they never quite keep their promises. Something fades away in the reality. There is a kind of loneliness, an abiding discontent.

The Catholic mystic, John of the Cross, gave the image of

I believe this, and the longer I live, the more evidence I see that God pursues us. It is a story happening in every human life—God's search for humans. There's Jn.6:44: "No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me," and John 15:16: "You did not choose me but I chose you." There's 1 Jn.4:19: "We love because He first loved us," and 1 Jn.4:10: "not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son." The Book of Job has Job exclaim "You hunt me like a lion" (16:16).

What's going on, whether we know it or not, is a person seeking God and God seeking the person.

*As a heart yearns for the streams of water,
So does my soul yearn for You, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and see the face of the Lord? (Psalm 42:2).*

"We have, as a church, lost our way; our structures are weakened if not corrupt; our leadership in disarray."

— Michael W. Higgins

CONTRIBUTORS: Tina Beattie, Catherine E. Clifford, David Gibson, June-Ann Greeley, Michael W. Higgins, Paul Lakeland, Brent Little, Robert Mickens, Catherine Mulrone, Gerry O'Hanlon, Jennifer L. Reek, Daniel A. Rober, Brian Stiltner, Myroslaw Tataryn, Michael Sean Winters



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Column: Joe Pisani



The left hand versus the right hand

SWIMMING UPSTREAM

By JOE PISANI

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

“When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that your almsgiving may be in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” — Jesus

I've been having trouble with my right hand. I have trigger finger from too much text messaging, but even worse, my right hand keeps telling my left hand what it's doing ... if you get my meaning.

When I give a panhandler a few bucks, I let people know, or if I donate to one of the many worthy causes out there, the

news is broadcasted from the right hand to the left hand to the world. When I was at Walmart recently, I gave a few dollars to help a women's organization and I put my name on a paper flower that was displayed on the wall. My right hand didn't resist. Neither did my left hand. Neither did I.

When it comes to giving in its various shapes and forms, it's about recognition—a donation for my high school, my college, a monastery, a soup kitchen, a church restoration or a scholarship. My name is on bricks and plaques and lists. I do nothing in secret, as Jesus recommends. Play the trumpets, please.

I recently met a man whose philosophy of philanthropy is entirely different. Let's call him Tom, because he refused to let me use his name. Why all the secrecy? He doesn't work for the CIA or the FBI. He just doesn't want to reveal his identity because he wants no recognition.

I can say he is a retired surgeon who lives in Southern Connecticut and who started a very successful business that provides a corporate service. But that's where any similarities with other businesses end.

You see, after operating expenses are accounted for, all the profits go to charity. His strategic plan, you might say, is a simple one. He makes money and he gives it away. He takes no salary and he shuns notoriety.

Tom's company provides scholarships for students who would otherwise not be able to attend Catholic schools, it finances programs for victims of human trafficking and it supports orphanages in countries like India. He has given away thousands of dollars, but you won't see his name on any scholarship, any building, any program. You won't see his name ... period.

"I want purity of purpose," he says. "It's not about me at all. I have been blessed for reasons that I don't understand. Whatever resources I have, I figure, God trusts me to do with them what he wants done. I am just a steward."

He prays about which causes and charities to support and trusts the resources will come.

"When Christ calls us to do his will, he always provides," he said. "Everything we do, he sees, and one day when we are with him, the only thing that will matter will be his assessment of what we have done. Nothing else."

As a young man, he had the same vision that most of us have about the purpose of life: "You work, you do your best and plan for your retirement and then you hang out."

But as time went on, his relationship with Christ grew deeper and he developed a spiritual maturity.

"Now I look at this part of my life's journey as a time when

I want to be devoted to fulfilling the mission that I seem to have been assigned," he said.

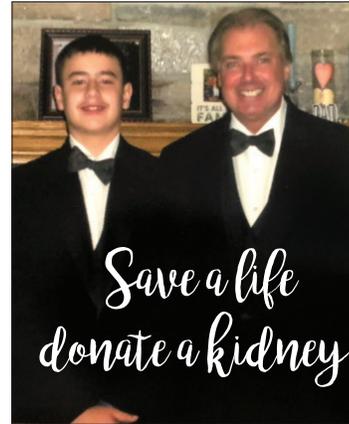
His father was an Italian immigrant who was a butcher and gave not from his surplus but from his want. And his mother always reminded him to give to others who were deprived and she told him, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

"If you do things for other people and allow yourself to be directly or indirectly rewarded or recognized for what you have

done, then that's your reward," he says.

Pope Francis once said that when we do something good for others, we should be discreet and not try to attract attention.

"Jesus teaches us that good should be done without clamor and without ostentation, without sounding the trumpet. It must be done in silence," he said. "Jesus always acts with discretion. He does not want to impress people; he is not looking for popularity or success." ■



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Book Review

Heroic Navy chaplain armed only with faith

By JOE PISANI

Monsignor Stephen M. DiGiovanni, historian, author and pastor of The Basilica of St. John the Evangelist in Stamford, tells the compelling story of Father Capodanno's life, his missionary work in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and his service as chaplain during the Vietnam War, in a new book titled, "Armed with Faith: The Life of Father Vincent R. Capodanno, M.M."

Servant of God Father Capodanno, who died at 38 on

a hill in Vietnam during a fierce firefight on September 4, 1967, stands as an example for priests in our troubled time. A Navy chaplain, he often said that where his men were he wanted to be. He shared the hardships and the deprivations of war with them and was known among Marines as "the Grunt Padre."

Throughout his 16 months in Vietnam, he was a humble hero, who never told his family about the military awards and decorations he received. He was a priest so committed to his Marines and

to his faith that he ultimately died for them and was posthumously awarded our nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor. Now, he is being considered for a much higher honor — sainthood.

Vincent Capodanno was the youngest of ten children and named after his father, a native of Gaeta, Italy, who came to the United States in 1901 and worked as a ship caulker in New York City. Vincent attended P.S. 44 on Staten Island, where his classmates voted him "Best Looking" and "Best Dresser." At the time, he wanted to be a doctor and he claimed as his motto, "Do a good turn daily."

After graduating from Curtis High School, he began taking night classes at Fordham University. He attended daily Mass and Eucharistic adoration in the evening, and by the summer of 1949, he considered applying to the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, known as Maryknoll. He was inspired by the stories of missionaries that he read in the society's magazine, *The Field Afar*.

Vincent Capodanno was ordained on June 14, 1958 by Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, and began his new life as a priest in Maryknoll, which actor Gene Autry famously described as "the Marine Corps of the Catholic Church," Msgr. DiGiovanni said.

After seven years of missionary work in Taiwan and briefly in Hong Kong, he asked to be assigned as a Navy chaplain, and on December 28, 1965, he received a commission as lieutenant in the



bleeding and part of his right hand had been blown off, but he refused assistance from a corpsman and told him instead to help the others. He refused to leave the battle even though he was bleeding and choking from tear gas.

In his eulogy at Father Capodanno's funeral, his friend and fellow chaplain Eli Takesian told the congregation, "Hearing the fatal news, a young Marine tearfully came to me and asked, 'If life meant so much to Chaplain Capodanno, then why did he allow his own to be taken?' 'The answer is in your question,' I replied. 'It was precisely because he loved life—the lives of others—that he so freely gave of himself.' His was the pilgrimage of a saint. Even to the end, he faithfully held to the precept of Our Lord that 'greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'"

Msgr. DiGiovanni's book is a moving account of bravery and faith and Father Capodanno's unselfish concern for servicemen in the struggle of battle. It is the story of a man who eschewed the glories of the world to follow Christ, even unto death. Equally important, Father Capodanno stands as an inspirational example of everything that Christ intended a Catholic priest to be.

Msgr. DiGiovanni had been asked to serve as the chairman of the historical commission of Father Capodanno's cause for sainthood by Archbishop for the Military Services USA Timothy Broglio.

(For more information about Servant of God Father Vincent Capodanno, visit www.Capodannoguild.org.)



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KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MUSEUM

Saint Matthew Parish Journey to the Holy Land

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

Fifty-three parishioners, two ordained priests and one permanent deacon and his wife from St. Matthew Church in Norwalk, St. Mary Church in Stamford and St. Benedict Church in Stamford traveled to the Holy Land this past October.

The pilgrimage began in a prayerful way as the bilingual group gathered for two meetings before the trip in order to pray, build community and learn about where they would be going on their journey.

“About a year and a half ago, this was Father Abelardo’s idea to me. He approached me and I thought it was just a great opportunity to bring our parishes together for a journey to the Holy Land,” said Msgr. Orlovski of St. Matthew Parish.

Each day, the pilgrims began their journey at 8 am and ended it at 7 pm.

Upon arrival, Msgr. Walter, Father Abelardo and Deacon Mark celebrated Mass at St. Peter’s Church in Jaffa, Tel Aviv. They led the pilgrims to sites including King Herod’s Theater and Palace in Caesarea, where St. Paul was tried and sentenced, and the first Gentile was baptized.

Pilgrims were able to visit the Basilica of the Annunciation and celebrate Mass on the Mount of Beatitudes and the Church of Peter’s Primacy.

“Yesterday we were in Nazareth at the Blessed Mother’s house, where the Angel Gabriel appeared to her, which is now a basilica. At Cana, our pilgrim

couples renewed their wedding vows,” Msgr. Walter shared on Facebook, on the second day of their journey.

Pilgrims spent an afternoon on the Sea of Galilee, singing, dancing and casting their nets.

They visited Capernaum, the Church of the Transfiguration, the baptismal site on the River Jordan and the birthplace of Our Lady.

“Each day, we had scripture preparation for the places we were to visit. So we read the scripture everyday together out loud on the bus,” shared Msgr. Walter.

Pilgrims were also able to walk the Via Dolorosa, the Way of the Cross. “We were crushed by the crowds, but we kept our eyes firmly on the Cross,” remembers Lorraine DeRosa, one of the pilgrims from St. Matthew Church.

The group visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where they prayed at Golgotha and venerated the slab on which Jesus lay, the Church of the Nativity, the Shepherds’ Field and the Basilica of Gethsemane.

The pilgrims’ last day in the Holy Land was spent at the birthplace of John the Baptist and the site where St. Peter denied Jesus three times.

Msgr. Walter shared, “I have an affinity for the Shepherds’ Field, where the angels proclaimed the Good News and the Church of the Nativity, Jesus’ birthplace. I was one of the few in the group whom they allowed to go down the steps below the sanctuary over the spot where He was born. I had the oppor-

tunity to get down on my hands and knees and pray. It was a magnificent spot, as was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Christ died. The Mount of Beatitudes was another magnificent spot and of course, the Sea of Galilee—in which we journeyed out to the sea.”

Msgr. Walter shared that this bilingual group became one, having shared all they did on their journey and that a reunion of the group is already being planned, saying, “I think a journey to the Holy Land is a very personal experience for a priest. It helps us to align ourselves more with



the very life of Jesus Christ and the opportunity to serve as Christ served, to walk in His footsteps. But in a sense, I think the journey also brings us all together as one. One in Christ. One in faith. One in understanding how much this means to us in our own spiritual lives. It’s truly a life-changing experience. We had the opportu-

nity to celebrate Mass every day in special places. There were so many facets to the Holy Land – it’s hard to say what is the most special. They all have a profound effect on our spiritual lives. You know, you make the trip as an individual, but in many ways, you become one with Christ on your journey.”

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The joyful sounds of Christmas

Youth Choir to perform on December 21st

By EMILY CLARK

It seems few things inspire the Christmas spirit more than the joyful music of the season, especially when it is performed by young people eager to share their faith through song. One such special group is the Diocesan Youth Choir (C4Y) which is preparing for their fourth annual “Arise and Shine” concert at the Klein Memorial Auditorium in Bridgeport on Friday, December 21.

With over 135 singers from children in grade six through seniors in college, this is a musical journey in which the students and their director showcase a passion for song and a devotion to God.

“This is so exciting for them!” said Mary Bozzuti-Higgins, a professional performer and opera singer who has directed C4Y since its inception in 2014. “This is a special night—a feast for the eyes, ears, heart and soul.”

With a seven-piece ensemble, including piano, oboe, flute, trumpet, violin, trombone and percussion, the program will include traditional carols and contemporary favorites.

Beginning with the customary first piece “Arise and Shine,” Bozzuti-Higgins has also chosen singer favorites like “Mary, Did You Know?,” a modern Christmas classic, and “Believe,” a selection from the popular

small candles, enhancing the mood of the dark and silent night.

“The pieces we choose are music they love,” the director said. “And I want them to feel that connection—and have a passion for music throughout their lives.”

like-minded Catholic youth.”

Singer Sophie Chorek, a junior at St. Joseph High School, considers her involvement with C4Y to be a stress reliever, saying, “This is just another way to express my faith in addition to

at various locations throughout the diocese during the school year. At a recent rehearsal at the Catholic Center in Bridgeport, students were consistently encouraged by their director who called out “Gentlemen—good



movie *The Polar Express*.

The students also plan to combine with three children’s choirs from local parishes—St. Theresa in Trumbull, Our Lady of Fatima in Wilton and St. Matthew in Norwalk—to perform “Christ Child Noel.” Additionally, concert-goers will be treated to the eight-movement musical journey “Were You There on That Christmas Night?” with four C4Y narrators and two college soloists accompanying the ensemble.

A highly anticipated number is always the final selection “Dark Is the Silent Night,” performed against a backdrop set to resemble a snow topped pine forest. As the lights descend and the piece concludes, choir members hold

In addition to the regular choir, dozens of former C4Y members will be returning from college to participate, sharing their devotion to their faith does not end when they graduate. “We have 40 alumni performing,” said Bozzuti-Higgins, who holds the Dress Rehearsal with dinner, cookie swap, and gift exchange for the entire choir the evening before the concert. “It’s so much fun for them that they keep coming back!”

It is that true sense of joy exuded through the music and camaraderie that keeps students involved. During a recent rehearsal, Evan Bean, a senior from Fairfield Prep, said, “At C4Y we really have fun. I love being in a community of

school and church. And I just love to sing!”

Such reactions from the young people involved validate the original purpose of C4Y, which grew from the 2014 Synod. “This was the brainchild of Bishop Caggiano,” said Bozzuti-Higgins. “He is so passionate about young people and wants to keep them growing on their faith journey. We are so lucky to have him as the Shepherd of our diocese! We also have an amazing array of dedicated and talented young people.”

This dedication begins long before the Christmas season, as students start practicing in July and attend one of six weekly rehearsals Bozzuti-Higgins holds

job! Ladies, together now!”

When she then suggested the group review *The Polar Express* selection, one 6th grader whispered to his friend, “Ooo, I love ‘Believe’!”

With their feet keeping time with the music and their hands holding folders emblazoned with “C4Y,” sopranos, altos, tenors and bass joined voices in the memorable refrain, singing, “We find ourselves again on Christmas Day....”

In sharing a devotion to their faith through a passion for their music, the youth of C4Y will surely bring joy to all those who believe in the glory of this season.

(Tickets online: www.bridgeportdiocese.org/faith-formation or phone 203.416.1670.)

St. Catherine Center Celebrating Special Needs

FAIRFIELD—On Sunday, December 2, Holy Cross Church in Fairfield was full of family and friends who gathered for the annual Mass Celebrating People with Special Needs, hosted by Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs.

“Even though it is just the first Sunday of Advent... today is like Christmas,” proclaimed Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, who celebrated the Mass. Twelve young people from eight parishes received the Sacraments of Baptism,

Confirmation and First Holy Communion. “This is one of the most important days of your life,” Bishop Caggiano said. “Thank you for saying ‘yes’ to Jesus.”

Each year, Saint Catherine Center offers the opportunity for individuals with special needs to receive one or more Sacraments of Initiation outside the typical faith formation program. Gail Milkosky, director of parish and community support for the Center, worked with directors of religious education throughout

the diocese to coordinate preparation and participation.

Members of the Knights of Columbus Honor Guard, Saint Catherine Center board members and staff joined the celebration and a student from Saint Catherine Academy and an adult participant from the Center’s Day Program gave the readings for the Mass. “I thank the parents, sponsors and godparents who support these young people,” Bishop Caggiano said. He also acknowledged the staff of Saint Catherine Center for



their work with young people with special needs. “They don’t just serve them,” he said, “They love them.”

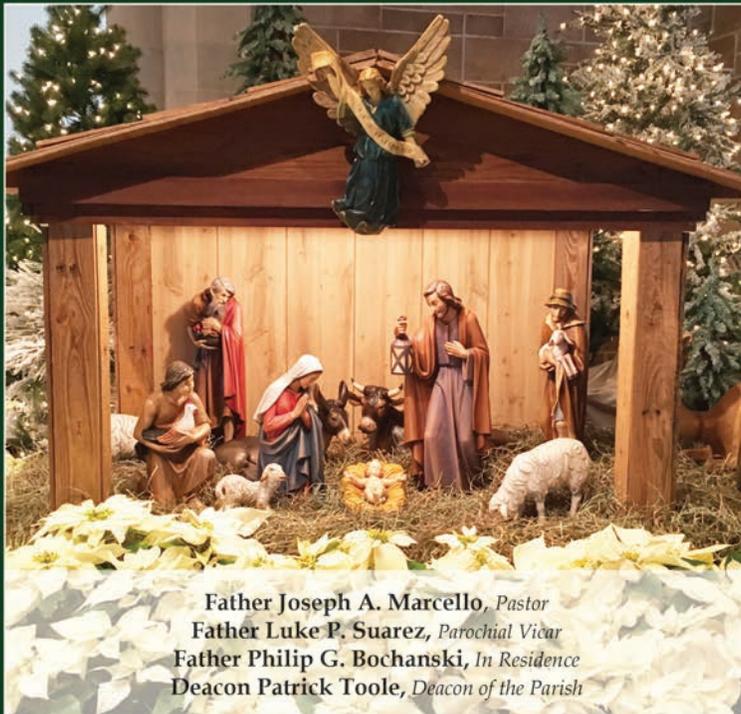
“It’s so important that we remember that everyone is welcome in our Church and should feel included,” said Helen

Burland, executive director of the Center. “This beautiful Mass reminds us of that.”

(For more information, visit the website at: StCatherineCenter.org, call: 203.540.5381, or email: info@stcatherinecenter.org.)



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Deacon Patrick Toole, *Deacon of the Parish*

**CHRISTMAS 2018
MASS SCHEDULE**

Christmas Eve: Monday, December 24

4:00 pm *Prelude music begins at 3:45 pm*

6:00 pm *Especially for families with younger children
The Parish Children’s Choir will sing
Prelude music begins at 5:45 pm*

12:00 *Midnight* *The Midnight Mass of Christmas
Prelude music by the Parish Choir, soloists
and instrumentalists begins at 11:30 pm*

Christmas Day: Tuesday, December 25

8:00 am, 10:00 am & 12:00 noon
Festive Mass with Choir and Instrumentalists at 10:00 am

**The Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God
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Tuesday, January 1, 2019 (New Year’s Day)

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Advent/Christmas

Seminarians sing ‘Lessons and Carols’

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

NORWALK—Low notes of chanting reverberated through the beautifully ornate St. Mary’s Church in Norwalk for a Sunday evening “Lessons and Carols,” as a prayerful and reverent way to welcome in the Season of Advent.

On this First Sunday of Advent, December 2, over 100 people including children and families gathered together to enjoy the evening filled with the sounds of Advent. Seminarians processed in to *Veni, Veni Emmanuel* and sang hymns such as *Savior of the Nations, Come, Comfort, Comfort Ye My People* and *Lo, He comes with Clouds Descending*.

The seminarians of St. John Fisher in Stamford, accompanied by Father Paul Check, rector and Father John Connaughton, direc-



tor of vocations, joined in Advent song with David Hughes, director of music and Samuel Schmitt, organist and choirmaster of the Cathedral Parish, Bridgeport.

The Festival of Lessons and Carols is a service of Scripture and song that dates to the late 19th century. In this service, the faithful listen to nine Scripture lessons which recount the Fall, the promise of a Messiah, the Incarnation,

and the Great Commission to preach the Good News. Each lesson is followed by a carol or other song that reflects on the lesson’s message and a brief prayer.

Seminarians of the Diocese of Bridgeport came forward to present a reading pertaining to the Season of Advent and the coming of Christ, followed by an Advent hymn centered on the subject of the reading.

Readings included the angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-38), John the Baptist appears in the wilderness, proclaiming the baptism of repentance for sins (Matthew 3:1-12) and many others.

One reading, The Season of Advent from St. Charles Borromeo, explained the importance and holiness of the Season of Advent in the following way: “The Church asks us to understand that Christ, who came once in the flesh, is prepared to come again. When we remove all obstacles to his presence he will come, at any hour and moment, to dwell spiritually in our hearts, bringing with him the riches of his grace. In her concern for our salvation, our loving mother the Church uses this holy season to teach us through hymns, canticles and other forms of expression, of

voice or ritual, used by the Holy Spirit. She shows us how grateful we should be for so great a blessing, and how to gain its benefit: our hearts should be as much prepared for the coming of Christ as if he were still to come into this world.”

St. John Fisher Seminary is an initiative of the Diocese of Bridgeport to prepare college-aged men and young adults for entrance into major seminary and eventual ordination to the Catholic priesthood. The St. John Fisher Seminary program exists to provide young men with a place in which they can come to a deeper relationship with Christ Jesus as they discern whether He is calling them to His priesthood.

(For more information, please contact Fr. John Connaughton, vocation director by phone at: 203.322.5331 or by email at: vocations@diobpt.org.)





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Sacrament of Penance
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Friday, December 21
7:30-8:00am, 4:00-5:15pm; 7:00-8:00pm
Saturday, December 22
3:00-4:15pm

Masses
Christmas Vigil
Monday, December 24
4:00pm, 6:00pm and 12:00 midnight
Christmas Concert at 11:30pm
before Christmas Eve Mass



Christmas Day—Tuesday, December 25
7:30am, 10:00am and 12:00 noon

New Year’s
Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God
Vigil—Monday, December 31
4:30pm
New Year’s Day—Tuesday, January 1
7:30am, 9:00am and 12:00 noon

Advent/Christmas

St. Matthew Knights give thanks by serving others

NORWALK—Norwalk's Knights of Columbus St. Matthew council 14360 joined the Catholic Daughters of the America's St. Matthew Court 2640 to provide and deliver a full Thanksgiving meal for the residents of Homes for the Brave for the sixth consecutive year.

In addition, Grand Knight Scott Criscuolo and past Grand Knight George Ribellino helped serve the meal along with George's wife Heather and daughter Mia. "Our men and women both loved the food and we could not be more appreciative. What a blessing St. Matthew Council 14360 and Catholic Daughters Court 2640 have been to us. Your Thanksgiving visit and the meal you delivered was a wonderful blessing," said Homes for the Brave CEO/Executive



SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR—Norwalk's Knights of Columbus St. Matthew council 14360 began the holiday by leading the Rosary during 24 hours of Adoration, celebrating Mass on Thanksgiving Day and delivering a full Thanksgiving meal for the residents of Homes for the Brave for the sixth consecutive year.

Director, Vince Santilli.

The day after Thanksgiving, for the fourth consecutive year, some members of Knights of Columbus Council 14360 joined forces with brother knights from Norwalk Council 46, New Canaan Council 2287, Westport Assumption Council 3688 and Knight of Columbus

Bishop Fenwick Fourth Assembly 100 to hand out coats for children in need at St. Joseph Church in South Norwalk as part of the Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids initiative. The coats were purchased by the four Knights of Columbus councils and Fourth Degree Assembly with money generated from the council's respective fundraising activities.

The council wrapped up the long weekend by helping deliver a donated freezer to Malta House in Norwalk and string lights around the St. Matthew Church campus. "It's great to see Knights and parishioners help decorate our beautiful parish grounds for the season of Advent," said Council 14360 Grand Knight Scott Criscuolo.

(For more information, please go to www.saintmatthewknights.com.)



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December 24th, Christmas Eve: **4 pm, 10 pm, Midnight**
December 25th, Christmas Day: **8 am, 9:30 am** in Italian, **11 am**

2523 Park Ave, Bpt 203-333-9627 SaintMargaretShrine@gmail.com
Masses: Mon-Sat 8:15 am, Sat Vigil 4 pm, Sunday 8, 9:30 (Italian), 11 am

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St. James Church

2110 Main Street, Stratford, Connecticut – 203-375-5887
www.stjamesstratford.com – Rev. Arthur C. Mollenhauer, Pastor

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Monday, December 24 – 4:00pm, 6:00pm and 11:00pm
Tuesday, December 25 – 7:00am, 9:00am and 11:00am

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Monday, December 31 – 4:30pm
Tuesday, January 1 – 9:00am and 11:00am

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Saturday, January 5 – 4:30pm
Sunday, January 6 – 7:30am, 9:15am, 11:15am, and 6:00pm



*For
unto us
a Child
is born.
Unto us
a Son
is given.*

St. Joseph Parish Advent 'Lessons & Carols'

SHELTON—St. Joseph Parish in Shelton welcomed in the Advent season with a Lessons and Carols concert on Saturday, December 8 at 7 pm.

The concert featured festive seasonal hymns accompanied by readings from the books of Isaiah, Matthew, Luke and John pre-



sented by members of the parish. Carols included *O Come, O Come Emmanuel, O Holy Night, Ave Maria, Silent Night, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* and more. The concert featured vocalists Krista Adams Santilli and Ron M'Sadoques, violinist Darwin Shen, flutist Monica Attell, cellist Tom Hudson and pianist Yuan Wang. The congregation joined together in joyful song and enjoyed a light reception afterward!

Darien Garden Club donates



DARIEN—The Garden Club of Darien donated over 200 hand-made holiday arrangements to the clients of Catholic Charities' Meals on Wheels of Lower Fairfield County program. Columbiettes Auxiliary 5833 (Stamford) helped deliver the floral arrangements to the Meals on Wheels of Lower Fairfield County clients.




Our Lady of the Assumption Church
545 Stratfield Road, Fairfield
Rev. Peter A. Cipriani, *Pastor* • Rev. Michael F. Flynn, *Parochial Vicar*

Advent Reconciliation
Saturday December 15 11 am-1 pm
Tuesday December 18 6:30 pm-8:30 pm
Saturday December 22 2 pm-3:45 pm

Our Christmas Mass Schedule
Christmas Eve
4 pm (Church), 4 pm (Hall), 5:30 pm and 11 pm
Christmas Day
7:30 am, 9 am, 10:30 am, 12 pm
Solemnity of Mary (January 1)
5:30 pm (vigil) 7:30 am, 12:10 pm and 5:30 pm



The Parish Family of St. Matthew
216 Scribner Avenue
Norwalk, Connecticut 06854
203-838-3788
www.stmatthewnorwalk.org

Christmas Schedule
CHRISTMAS EVE — MONDAY, December 24th
4:00 pm with Children's Pageant, 5:30 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:30 pm, and 12:00 Midnight Mass
CHRISTMAS DAY — TUESDAY, December 25th
9:00 am, 10:30 am, and 12:00 noon
SOLEMNITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, VIGIL
New Year's Eve — MONDAY, December 31st
Vigil Mass — 4:00 pm
SOLEMNITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
New Year's Day — TUESDAY, January 1st
9:00 am, 12:00 noon, and 5:00 pm
CONFESSIONS
TUESDAY, December 18th 1:00-2:00 pm and 7:00-8:00 pm
SATURDAY, December 22nd 11:00 am-12 noon, 3:15-4:00 pm, 5:00-6:00 pm

A la Virgen de Guadalupe Mariachis, cánticos y aplausos

Por MARICARMEN GODOY

NORWALK. El P. Juan Gabriel Acosta, pastor de la iglesia Saint Ladislaus, dio una bendición especial para que Dios proteja a la comunidad, sobre todo aquella que es devota de la Virgen María, y de esa manera se dio por iniciado las fiestas en honor a la Guadalupeana, Emperatriz de América, evento preparado con muchos meses de anticipación por el Grupo Guadalupano de Norwalk.

En las afueras del restaurante El Río, lugar en donde se cocinaron más de 500 raciones de comida para brindar a los feligreses que acudieron a las celebraciones marianas los devotos de la Virgen junto al sacerdote rezaron, cantaron y recibieron la bendición especial.

Luego, el domingo al mediodía, desde el restaurante Los Portales que está ubicado frente a la Estación de Policía de Norwalk salieron junto al mariachi



Emperadores de Puebla en procesión. En el Trayecto iban cantando y a su vez gritando vítores en honor a la Guadalupeana: "A la bio a la bao, a la bin bon, baum, la Virgen de Guadalupe: ra, ra.." fue repetido por decenas de veces, mientras rezaban Dios te Salve María y can-

taban al son del mariachi.

¡Qué viva al Virgen de Guadalupe!, ¡Qué viva Cristo Rey!. ¡Que Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe!.

Un aplauso para el Mariachi que ha tocado en este frío a la Guadalupeana", se escuchó muy constantemente en las cuadras que duró la procesión.

Y eso dio paso a que cantaran con constancia el himno popular mariano que se oye en la Basílica Nacional de la Virgen de Guadalupe: "La Guadalupeana, la Guadalupeana, a Juan Diego la Virgen le dijo: Este será el hijo, este será el hijo, este será el hijo para el Tepeyac".

Después de la procesión y la misa en donde el P. Juan Gabriel volvió a darles una bendición especial, el público asistente a la fiesta se ubicó en el sótano de la

iglesia y desde ahí fueron atendidos con un almuerzo típico mexicano, mientras el mariachi Emperadores de México cantata una y otra vez temas del repertorio azteca.

Durante el evento, Alberto de la Rosa, coordinador y fundador del Grupo Guadalupano, agradeció al público el apoyo y les informó de la presencia del abogado de Inmigración Felipe Berns, quien indicó que vendrá a Saint Ladislaus cuántas veces sea necesario para darles información sobre las leyes y reglamentos acerca de Inmigración.

El P. Juan Gabriel, puesto un sombrero de mariachi cantó Mujeres Divinas y El Rey, lo que dio ocasión a que los presentes se animaran y empezaran cantar acompañados por el mariachi tal como lo hizo Marlon.

Saint Patrick's Youth

REDDING—Now in its fourth year, the St. Patrick's youth group has completed 40 missions.



The focus of the group has been serving those in need around the community and beyond and includes everything from visiting with senior citizens at Meadow Ridge, cleaning up school yards in Norwalk, stuffing Christmas stockings for soldiers serving overseas, working in food banks and homeless shelters, and painting a 102 year old resident's home in Easton as part of the HomeFront Project.

(For more info call 203.664.1387.)



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Advent/Christmas Notre Dame Service Day

FAIRFIELD—"I am tremendously proud of our entire school community for rallying around this event each year. Knowing that hundreds of lives will be touched in one way or another today is fantastic. Service Day is a great example of Notre Dame fulfilling our mission to build character, faith and intellect," said Notre Dame High School Principal, Chris Cipriano, commenting on the school's annual Service Day.

Notre Dame's Service Day is coordinated by Jessica Medoff, director of campus ministry, and is part of the school's celebration of Catholic School's week and its 26 Acts of Kindness campaign.

"While a tremendous amount of planning and coordination goes into making the day possible, today fulfills and supports a core



component of the school's mission and certainly helps to put smiles on faces of all those involved," commented Jessica Medoff.

Volunteers visited 41 different work sites in Fairfield, New Haven and Litchfield counties. Take a look at all of the wonderful work of Notre Dame Fairfield students in the ND Service Day 2018 video!

The vision of Notre Dame High School is to be the model of

secondary education in the state of Connecticut. It achieves that with demanding academics coupled with a supportive learning community, a range of enriching extracurriculars, a competitive sports program, and a fierce commitment to service—all guided by Catholic values. Above all, they strive to instill in each student a sense of moral responsibility. Because, after all, leadership is worthless if it's not guided by ethics.

St. Theresa School honors Veterans

TRUMBULL—In honor of Veterans Day, the middle school students of St. Theresa in Trumbull honored several local veterans for their service to our nation during a moving ceremony.

The veterans honored in the ceremony were from World War II, Vietnam War, Korean War, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During the ceremony, the school's student council officers each gave a message of thanks to the veterans in attendance and to all the veterans who have served our nation, both living and deceased. The school choir also performed the school's alma mater and a band member played taps on the trumpet. Afterwards, the veterans had a moment to share several stories from their experience of service.

"The stories that the veterans shared enabled all of the students in attendance to realize the importance of serving our country," said middle school social studies teacher John Agostino.



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Advent/Christmas St. Bridget's Ministries

STAMFORD—St. Bridget of Ireland Parish in Stamford's Ministry for the Homeless, Hungry and People in Need offers support and help to those in need through many different projects. Richard Capraro is coordinator for the group, which includes 35 active members.

They recently conducted a joint project with Congregation Agudath Shalom, a synagogue in Stamford, called Two Faiths, One Heart in which they collected 1,170 food items and donated \$400 to a Thanksgiving Food Drive at Inspirica, with whom they have a partnership.

St. Bridget's also held a Christmas in July drive in which they collected and donated 2,000 items to the New Covenant



Center in Stamford. "This, to me, is something positive that will keep the Church going," said

Capraro, "I believe it is what the bishop is telling us and what the Pope is telling us."

Bishop confirms sixteen youth at St. Augustine



BRIDGEPORT—Sunday, November 25, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano joined the Vietnamese community at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the canonization of the Holy Vietnamese Martyrs. It was a blessed occasion, during which Bishop Caggiano confirmed 16 students and one adult!



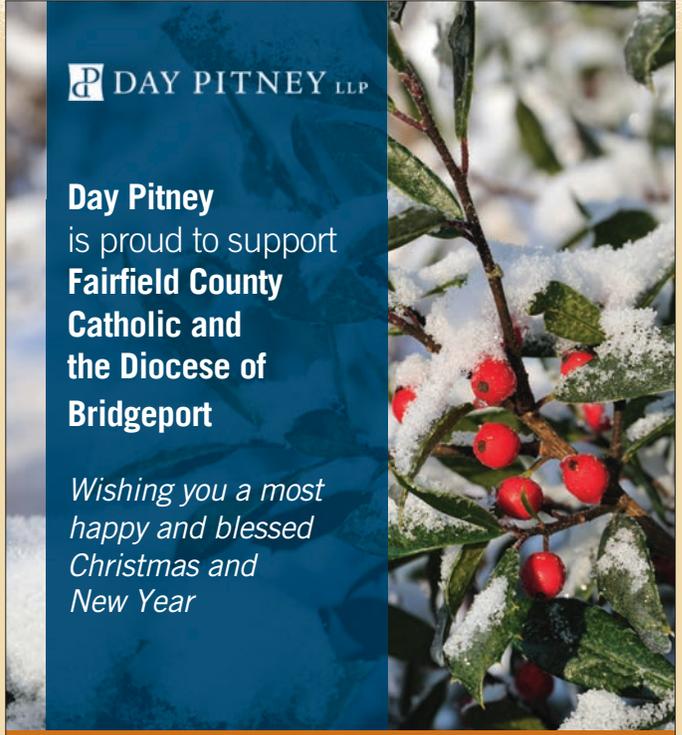

*Merry Christmas from
St Joseph High School*

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ~ Luke 2:11



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Advent/Christmas A Spectacular Harvest Table!



STAMFORD—Over 275 friends of New Covenant Center attended the 8th Annual Harvest Table at the Italian Center in Stamford on November 8, rais-

ing over \$200,000—an increase of \$75,000 over last year! Guests enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres in our Harvest Marketplace, had the chance to bid on 90 silent auction

items and participate in a “Pledge to Support” component to the event.

Throughout the evening, the New Covenant Center paid tribute to the thousands of volunteers who served

the hungry in their first 40 years. Three generations of volunteers have helped provide over 600,000 meals this past year in New Covenant Center’s Café and Food Pantry.

(New Covenant Center, a program of Catholic Charities, is located at 174 Richmond Hill Ave., Stamford, CT 06902. For info call 203.964.8228 or visit: www.newcovenantcenter.org.)



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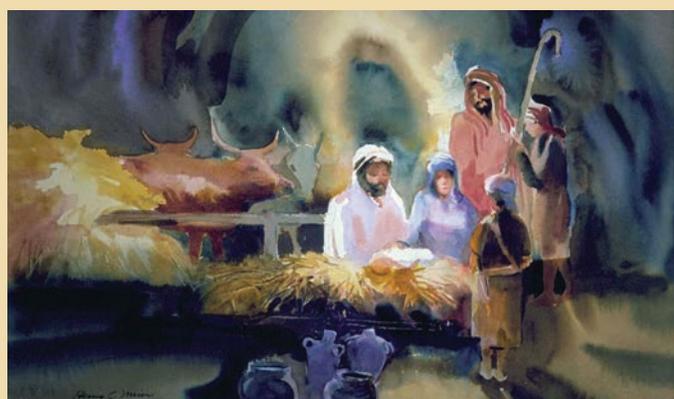


Peace on Earth

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Advent/Christmas

Teddy Bears with Love program celebrates 20 years

FAIRFIELD—Fairfield University’s Office of Alumni Relations and Student Alumni Association are once again hosting the Teddy Bears with Love Drive, and are accepting stuffed animal donations through Friday, December 7. Celebrating the program’s 20th year, Fairfield University is inviting the community to make this year’s drive the most successful yet by donating a new, unused teddy bear or stuffed animal this holiday season.

Teddy Bears with Love was founded in 1999 with the goal of providing children across the country with a “teddy bear hug” during the holiday season.

Heading into its 20th year, Teddy Bears with Love has collected nearly 21,000 new teddy bears and stuffed animals for children’s charities, thanks to the generosity of the Stag community. Alumni from across the country have helped in this effort, hosting regional chapter collection events and drives in their local schools and businesses, to ensure that as many children as possible received a plush embrace from a stuffed animal during the holiday season.

The Franciscan Children’s Hospital in Boston, Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital, and Hour Children in Manhattan are among charities across the coun-

try that have benefitted from the efforts of Fairfield’s Teddy Bears with Love Drive.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) recognized the program with its Affiliated Student Advancement Programs’ Award for 2008 Outstanding External Program, and the 2011 Outstanding “Tried & True” Program in CASE District 1. The program also received distinction with a 2014 Yale New Haven Hospital Auxiliary “Toy Closet Award” for consistent support of the Toy Closet Program.

“Teddy Bears with Love is an impactful program that brings joy



to those in need during the holidays,” said 2018 Student Chair and Student Alumni Association Director of Community Service Kathryn Peters ’20. “I am excited and honored to be the chair for our 20th anniversary and hoping for great success. It is amazing to see Fairfield University students, alumni, and members of our community coming together to support this wonderful cause. It makes me very proud to be a Stag!”

To participate in the 2018 Teddy Bears with Love Drive, please donate a new, unused

teddy bear or stuffed animal (all donations must have original tags) to a local Fairfield alumni chapter, or directly to the Office of Alumni Relations.

(For more information including alumni chapter event details please visit fairfield.edu/teddybears.)

Teddy bear drop off and mail in address:

Office of Alumni Relations
Fairfield University
1073 North Benson Road
Fairfield, CT 06824
fairfieldteddybears@gmail.com ■




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for more information.

Advent/Christmas

‘Peace Light’ comes to Danbury

DANBURY—Each year, a child from Upper Austria fetches a light from the grotto in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. The light is carried in two blast proof miners’ lamps on an Austrian Airlines jet from Tel Aviv, Israel to Vienna, Austria from where it is distributed at a Service of Dedication to delegations from across Europe who take it back, with a message of peace, to their own countries.

Austrian Airlines then flies the miners’ lamps containing the Peace Light from Bethlehem to New York City. This year, the light arrived at JFK on Saturday, December 1. Upon arrival, the Peace Light was transferred through a ceremony at Our Lady of the Skies Chapel.

Gary Allen Prybylski, long-time member of St. Peter’s



GARY ALLEN PRYBYLSKI, JR., along with his father were Peace Light coordinators this year and brought the Peace Light to St. Peter Church in Danbury.

Church, and his son who attends religious education classes there, were Peace Light coordinators this year and brought the Peace Light to St. Peter Church in Danbury on Friday, December 7 from 7-9 pm.

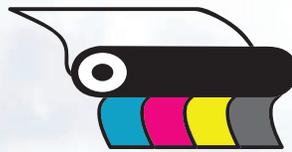
On Friday, St. Peter’s, along with other churches in Danbury came together to welcome the Peace Light and stand together for peace throughout the world.

“Our aim is to see this Peace Light offering grow year by year in the Greater Danbury area and to share this message of peace and harmony with as many people in our community as possible,” said Prybylski.

This beautiful evening consisted of lighting candles, having a bonfire, light refreshments and joining together in the name of peace. ■



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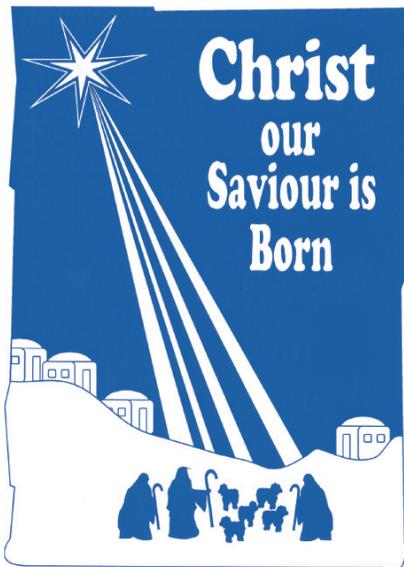
Advent/Christmas

Knights of Columbus Christmas Tree Festival

Some of the Diocese of Bridgeport schools have the privilege of being a part of the Christmas Tree Festival at the Knights of Columbus Museum. This festive display showcases the creativity and imagination of students from elementary schools across Connecticut whose handmade ornaments and trim colorfully decorate the museum's two dozen Christmas trees in the theme of the annual Christmas crèche exhibit, which this year is "Christmas In Poland."

Students handmade their ornaments and took a field trip out to the museum to decorate their tree. Prior to decorating their tree, the museum treated them all to hot chocolate and a snack, a craft project and a tour of the "Christmas In Poland" exhibit.

The display is open until February 3! If you visit, you can be a part of the people's choice award and vote for our schools!



May the angels from on high be with you this Christmas season and bring you health and prosperity during the coming year.

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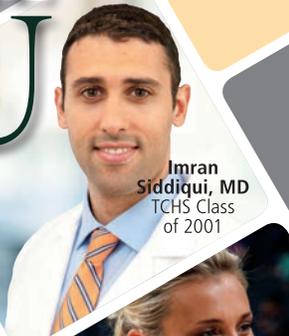
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