Leaders of Tomorrow

‘Your future is bright’

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

BRIDGEPORT—October 24 marked Foundations in Education’s third annual Leaders of Tomorrow Breakfast Reception at the Catholic Center. A record high of 53 students were honored this year.

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano thanked all in attendance for being there, saying, “we come here to celebrate the great gift of Catholic education, which brings us all together.”

“You are here because God wants you to use everything you have been given to change the world,” the bishop said to the students.

He thanked them and encouraged them, “Never take for granted the gift God has given you in the education you are receiving.”

LEADERS OF TOMORROW—Holly Doherty-Lemoine, executive director of Foundations in Education, congratulates one of the young honorees at the Leaders of Tomorrow breakfast reception held recently at the Catholic Center.

“I am so proud of you for being the best possible version of yourselves through Catholic education,” said Patricia Zaccone, director of school finance and leadership potential.

Sponsors of Leaders of Tomorrow help subsidize the cost of a Catholic elementary school tuition, providing a life-enhancing gift that helps transform the lives of our students.

“Your future is bright and there are many doors that will be opened to you. And when I and the rest of us here grow old and we pass on the leadership of our country and our Church to you, it will be in the best of hands,” said the bishop.

The bishop commended Foundations in Education on its great work, thanked and applauded the board and its members, and expressed sincere gratitude to the generous donors.

“As a sponsor and a donor, you are investing in the goals and dreams of these students to be the best possible version of themselves through Catholic education,” said Patricia Zaccone, director of school finance and leadership potential.

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School Name | Leader of Tomorrow | Grade
---|---|---
All Saints Catholic School | Ella Trudeau | 7
All Saints Catholic School | Chloe Wilberg | 4
All Saints Catholic School | Phoebe Wilberg | 4
Assumption Catholic School | Julis Bassato-Oliveira | 7
Assumption Catholic School | Alana Davis | 7
Assumption Catholic School | Madison Jelks | 2
Assumption Catholic School | Gabrielle Latibeaudiere | 6
Assumption Catholic School | Lorenzo Porzio | 8
Catholic Academy of Bridgeport | | |
St. Andrew Academy | Liz Arantes | 4
St. Ann Academy | Joshua Kalamala | 1
St. Augustine Academy | Kelly-Ann Antoine | 8
St. Augustine Academy | Destiny Diaz | 5
St. Augustine Academy | Katherine Rodriguez | 8
St. Raphael Academy | Frederick Ansh-Saforo | 2
Catholic Academy of Stamford | Valerie Alvarez | 6
Catholic Academy of Stamford | Melyssa Deleean-Moise | 3
Catholic Academy of Stamford | Nathalia Echeverria | 6
Catholic Academy of Stamford | Isabella Quintero | 3
Greenwich Catholic School | Milena Lenczyk | 4
Greenwich Catholic School | Quinn Lombardo | 6
Holy Trinity Catholic Academy | Abigail Auffiero | 4
Holy Trinity Catholic Academy | Roberto Lopez | 5
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Academy | Alison Edouard | 8
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Academy | Brigitte Interiano | 1
St. Aloysius School | Maya Ruszczek | 6
St. Catherine of Stina School | Maddux Vargas | 5
St. Gregory the Great School | Sergio Gonzalez | 4
St. James School | Conner Lilliehaid | 6
St. James School | Adrianna Ralabate | 1
St. James School | Samantha Roman | 6
St. James School | Shayne Roman | 8
St. Joseph Catholic Academy | Cameron O’Rourke | 7
St. Joseph Catholic Academy | Spencer O’Rourke | 7
St. Joseph School-Danbury | Arthur DaSilva | 7
St. Joseph School-Danbury | Kendra Pires | 2
St. Mark School | Avani Jacobs | 5
St. Mark School | Savanna Schwartz | 3
St. Mary School-Bethel | Hugo Araujo | 7
St. Mary School-Bethel | Christian Coogan | 3
St. Mary School-Ridgefield | Liliana Kalbous | 3
St. Mary School-Ridgefield | Morgan Manfro | 3
St. Peter School | Eliza Castillo | 3
St. Peter School | Erick Saldana | 4
St. Rose of Lima School | Emily Braun | 7
St. Rose of Lima School | Paige Keane | 4
St. Rose of Lima School | Kolbe Ortega | K
St. Theresa School | Natalia Cram | 7
St. Theresa School | Sophie Castro | 5
St. Theresa School | Richard Yorozumi | 1
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School | Kerri Garber | 5
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School | Aaliyah Gonzalez | 8
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School | Mborah Powell | 3
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School | Victoria Powell | K

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ST. AUGUSTINE MEDALS—Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and Shelah Brown of St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull were among the 165 recipients of St. Augustine Medals at the recent prayer service and awards ceremony held at St. Augustine Cathedral. (Photos by Amy Mortensen)

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‘We are people of Hope’

By JOHN GROSSO, JOE PISANI, KATHY-ANN GOBIN

St. Mary Putnam Cemetery, Greenwich

“We come here not simply to pray for our sisters and brothers who stay here for a time, a resting place until their resurrection in glory, but we come here to pray for one another as our pilgrimage continues,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano in his All Souls Day Mass homily at St. Mary Putnam Cemetery in Greenwich.

More than 1,000 turned out to remember their loved ones in prayer at the six All Souls Day Masses celebrated in diocesan cemeteries around Fairfield County including Danbury, Stratford, Norwalk, Greenwich and Trumbull.

All the Masses were held under a large heated outdoor tent and despite the cold and the wind, drew both young and old.

More than 225 people gathered in Greenwich on a beautiful late autumn morning for the All Souls Cemetery in Danbury.

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More than 225 people gathered in Greenwich on a beautiful late autumn morning for the All Souls Day Mass celebrated by the bishop and Father Ian Jeremiah, pastor of St. Michael Parish.

In his homily, which was streamed live on the diocesan Facebook page, Bishop Caggiano noted that: “We do not celebrate Mass everyday here, but on this most special day we come to remember that this ground is holy ground.”

“All of this ground is consecrated, so that all who lie here, lie here only for a time. For do we not believe as Catholic Christians that Christ returns in his glory and the dead will rise from these graves?”

“The scripture tells us that we are a people of hope. We gather here in hope. And what is hope? It is the virtue that allows us to believe that heaven is our final destination. And it is for you, and for me and for all who believe of St. James Church told the several hundred people who had gathered at St. Michael Cemetery for the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, “The Church is asking us to pray in a very special way for all the deceased, for all those whom we knew but also for all those who have died.”

It was a very special occasion for Father Adamski, who was ordained last June at 65 years old. During Mass, among those he prayed for was his late wife, Kathy, to whom he was married more than 40 years.

“This was a very special Mass for me today to be here for the first time on All Souls Day as a priest, remembering not only the soul of my beloved wife, Kathy, but to be here in this sacred space among all these faithful departed, was so moving for me, so moving,” he said. “I thought about it for the past few days—what it would be like to be the celebrant at Mass on All Souls Day. It touched me profoundly. I am so thankful to God that he has graced me with my priesthood. I thank him so many times a day for my priesthood. I know that I was created to be this priest, to minister to this flock, and despite the cold that I felt in my hands today, when I held Jesus in my hands, they were warm. They radiated the love of God.”

“Praying for our loved ones expresses our ongoing communion with them. We commit all who have gone ahead of us to God, who also accompanies us on our journey of life. Our communion in the Church keeps us in fellowship with all who have died.”

St. Peter Cemetery, Danbury

DANBURY—Father Peter Towsley, pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, presided over the All Souls Day Mass at St. Peter Cemetery in Danbury.

During his homily, Father Towsley shared several stories with the faithful gathered under a white tent amid the hundreds of weathered gravestones honoring lives of the past in the decades-old cemetery.

He relayed the story of how St. Monica implored her son Augustine, who had finally come to conversion as a Christian and was conflicted about where to bury his mother at the end of her life, to not worry about where she was buried but to “remember me at the altar of the Lord,” as many gathered had gathered, so that all who lie here, lie here only for a time. For do we not believe as Catholic Christians that Christ returns in his glory and the dead will rise from these graves?”

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You and I are faithfully doing that today,” he said as he invited the congregation to say out loud or silently, the names of those they came to remember in prayer.

A touching personal story shared by Father Towsley included one from his departed mother who he said prayed for her mother (his grandmother) for years after her passing and one day heard the message. “I’m ok. I’m resting in peace because of you.”

“We come here with love in our hearts to remember those in faith,” he said, concluding with words of a prayer for the departed from Passionist Father Antonio Rungi, prayed by Pope Francis during the Angelus address of Nov. 2, 2014, “...may none be afraid to meet you after their earthly pilgrimage.”
We Stand With Christ

An extraordinary demonstration of generosity

BRIDGEPORT—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano announced that more than $30 million has already been collected in the We Stand With Christ diocesan capital campaign which recently passed $100 million in pledges.

“We already have 30 percent of the pledge money and the campaign is on schedule,” he said. “This means we can fulfill the vision of We Stand With Christ, which is to create parishes for future generations and establish foundations for education, charitable works and pastoral ministries. In addition, many parishes have completed their capital projects and others are scheduled to start.”

Donors are encouraged to begin activating their pledges and making payments to the We Stand With Christ capital campaign, so they will be able to get credit for the 2019 tax year. According to the campaign office, payments may be accelerated and as soon as the pledges are paid, the parishes and foundations will be able to put the money to work.

Now that the redemption phase has begun, the campaign office has set up systems to make payments. Organizers stress that there will be a cost savings if donors fulfill their pledges electronically, which will help the campaign save on printing, postage and processing fees. Donors will be able to select the frequency and mode of their reminders to make payments. The redemption phase of the campaign will continue over the next five years.

The campaign, which began in January 2018, has reached 135 percent of its original goal of $75 million and has been the most successful in the 65-year history of the Diocese of Bridgeport. It represents the efforts of 72 parishes; nine others will start fundraising in 2020.

“This is an extraordinary demonstration of generosity and leadership and support of the mission of the Church during a difficult period,” Bishop Caggiano said. “To date, $101.5 million has been pledged, which is a true indication of the overwhelming generosity of the faithful in the diocese.”

Bishop Caggiano thanked the 14,500 people who have made pledges, the pastors and hundreds of volunteers whose efforts have made the campaign so successful.

The campaign has received 10 gifts of $1 million or more, 100 gifts of $100,000 plus and 700 gifts of $25,000 plus. The average gift at this point of the campaign is $7,000.

A number of parishes have completed work on projects that were made possible by the capital campaign. Bishop Caggiano said there are many stories of the wonderful impact the campaign has had.

Of the ten parishes that performed the best in achieving their goal, five were in Bridgeport. On average, the 12 Bridgeport parishes reached 110 percent of their goals—better than any city in the diocese.

The campaign has designated 50 percent of the funds raised for long-term needs of parishes, and the remaining 50 percent will be invested in diocesan ministries—Foundations in Education, Foundations in Faith and Foundations in Charity, three lay-run non-profits committed to

Continue on page 6

The Gift of Giving

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2019 Red Mass

Climate change is spiritual issue for Catholic youth

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

FAIRFIELD—Climate change is a moral and spiritual issue that has galvanized Catholic youth on college campuses and has the ability to bring young people who identify as “nones” back to the Church, said Jose Aguto, associate director of the Catholic Climate Change Covenant in Washington, D.C., at the recent Red Mass Breakfast held at Fairfield University.

“The issue is a source of great vitality and spirituality. Catholic youth want to work for climate change in a faith-filled way,” he told the men and women who had gathered for breakfast in the “Dogwood” Room of the student center.

Members of the Jesuit community of Fairfield University joined Bishop Frank J. Caggiano in celebrating the Red Mass honoring members of the legal profession in the Egan Chapel.

“We’re in a crisis of epic proportions,” Aguto said to 100 lawyers and others who gathered for the Annual Red Mass. “The Church must bring the same strength to the environmental issue that we have brought to life and immigration,” he said. “Our moral power can turn the nation’s consciousness toward climate action.”

Aguto, who has worked on climate and energy issues with Native American communities and Catholic environmentalists, said that Laudato Si, the 2015 encyclical by Pope Francis, received a “ tepid reception” by many Catholics and is a seldom discussed topic by Church leaders.

Aguto, a parishioner of the Basilica of St. Mary in Alexandria, Virginia, said that Pope Francis views climate change as a moral issue because it is already having an impact on the poorest and most vulnerable people around the globe.

He said the two previous popes, St. John Paul II and His Holiness Pope Benedict, have spoken out about our responsibility for environmental stewardship. “It was John Paul II who coined the term ‘ecological conversation,’” Aguto said. “And his holiness Pope Benedict has consistently taught our obligation to care for creation.”

He cited recent research that found that 67 percent of all Americans believe climate change is occurring and 53 percent understand it to be a man-made problem as a result of burning of fossil fuels. Yet the climate debate in the U.S. has people locked into opposing sides, and there is a need for Catholics to have open discussion. “Pope Francis has a desire for us to be in dialogue in faith. We as Catholics should be able to talk about it. We must be humble and patient.”

Aguto said when Pope Francis met with oil and gas executives, he asked a question, “What kind of world do you want to leave to your children and grandchildren?” “The challenge is moving the national and collective conscience toward climate action and the Church can be a leader,” Aguto said.

During the breakfast Attorney John L. Altieri, Jr. of Fairfield was presented the 2019 St. Thomas More Award by Chief Legal Officer Anne McCrory for his distinguished legal career in which he used his litigation talents to protect human rights, freedom of speech and the environment, often on a pro-bono basis.

In particular Altieri was recognized for his work as former chairman of the board of Malta House in Norwalk, a residence for homeless, pregnant and parenting single mothers. Along with his late wife, Maudie, Mr. Altieri helped to guide and develop the Malta House program and to lead the effort to move Malta House to its new location in the former convent of All Saints School in Norwalk. He is a member of St. Pius X in Fairfield.

“He is being honored for what he has done to give back. He is an example of what giving back is all about. His service has been a gift to the Church and it is a gift to know him,” said Anne McCrory, chief legal officer of the Diocese of Bridgeport who presented the award along with Malta House founder Michael O’Rourke.

In accepting the award Mr. Altieri said, “I have so much to be thankful for. Maudie and I never thought of what we were able to do as a sacrifice. For us, there we so many blessings, so much joy.”

In his Red Mass homily the bishop said, “The challenge for both civil and Church law is to be fair and just, and be ‘blind to privilege.’”

“So much divides us into camps, status levels and the hierarchy between have and have-nots.” All we do must harken back to equality. We are all equal in the eye of God and we are all have-nots without him.”

The bishop thanked all the legal professionals in attendance and reminded them of their sacred duty to work for justice.

“You come here as legal professionals and also as people of faith. Your vocation is important and also sacred because God is the supreme lawyer,” the bishop said. “We pray for you.”

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Donors from page 4

Catholic education, faith formation and Catholic Charities of Fairfield County.

The We Stand With Christ campaign is led by Bishop Caggiano and a 26-member executive committee with the support of priests, deacons, religious and lay leaders, whose co-chairs are Brian Young of New Canaan and Father Reggie Norman, pastor of Our Lady of Fatima.

The three diocesan foundations that will receive funds from We Stand With Christ are Foundations in Education, Foundations in Faith and Foundations in Charity. Each is overseen by a lay board and a third-party accounting firm that will provide a system of checks and balances.

There are nearly 40 lay trustees on the boards of Foundations in Education, Foundations in Charity and Foundations in Faith, the three non-profit initiatives begun by Bishop Caggiano as a result of the Diocesan Synod to address the needs of the Church in Fairfield County in the areas of education, charity and pastoral ministries.

The foundations are made possible through contributions to the campaign, which will provide them with funds to support their missions into the future. At the heart of those foundations are three independent lay boards, dedicated to their missions and committed to overseeing the funds entrusted to them.
‘We are children and grandchildren of immigrants’

**By Brian D. Wallace**

DANBURY—Dr. John Murphy, CEO of Nuvance Health, delivered a powerful and inspiring talk on the need to care for the poor and immigrant population at the Sixteenth Annual Fall Celebrity Breakfast to benefit Catholic Charities.

Almost 400 guests and friends of Catholic Charities turned out for the breakfast at The Amber Room Colonnade. The event raised more than $65,000 for the behavioral health and social services provided by Catholic Charities to people of the greater Danbury area.

“The leaders of Catholic Charities know and face the same reality they confronted 150 years ago—private charity alone will not meet the needs of the millions,” he said, adding that only shared public and private responsibility and an acceptance that the poor “belong to all of us” will address the challenge of poverty in America.

In his featured talk, Dr. Murphy, who leads a new health system with seven hospitals (including Danbury and Norwalk hospitals in Fairfield County) serving 1.5 million people in Connecticut and New York, said social services provided by Catholic Charities and other organizations play a critical role in overall health and social wellness.

He added that Catholic Charities is part of a long tradition of standing up for the poor and the immigrants that began to arrive in this country in the 19th century.

“Most of us are the children or grandchildren of immigrants and Danbury has long been home to wave after wave of immigrant families. It is the most diverse city in Connecticut and the eleventh most diverse city in the nation with 31 percent of its residents being foreign born,” he said.

He cited a 19th century annual report of “The Association for Improving Conditions of the Poor” that referred to the children of Irish Catholic immigrants as “accumulated trash.”

“The Children’s Aid Society began breaking up Irish families by removing tens of thousands of children from their homes. It was around this time that Catholic child-caring institutions emerged and Catholics learned to leverage their position in charity to win a voice in local, state and national policy making.”

He said Catholic Charities not only provides services but its staff are “advocates and justice workers” for the poor, regardless of their faith.

Dr. Murphy, a Fordham University graduate, said that the United States spends 20 percent of its GDP on healthcare but only 10 percent on social services, less than half of other western nations. The gap between the two has led to repeat emergency room and hospital visits, which are costly and a poor use of resources.

“Housing, assistance, counseling, case management, homeless outreach and immigration services are precisely the kinds of service that we know are crucial to improving the health of a community,” Dr. Murphy said.

“Dr. Murphy captured the essence of what makes Catholic Charities so relevant, noting the critical role that it plays in filling the gap for so many people who are underserved, whether that gap is caused by hunger, addiction, immigration status or mental illness,” said Anne McCrory, chief legal officer and a member of the Catholic Charities board.

“He has a unique view as the leader of a large hospital system connected the work of Catholic Charities in improving outcomes for many of those with significant health challenges. His words were an inspiration for those who delivered the invocation and Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton expressed words of gratitude for those who support the work of Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities of Northern Fairfield County’s program include the Behavioral Health Clinic located at 405 Main Street in Danbury; The Family Loan Program to cover auto, rental and childcare expenses; the Morning Glory Breakfast Program located at Dorothy Day Hospitality House at 15 Spring Street; the Homeless Outreach Team; Community Support and Recovery Pathways, 24 Grassy Plain Street, Bethel; and New Heights psychosocial recovery programming for adults with mental illness, 64 West Street, Danbury.

(For further information contact Catholic Charities of Northern Fairfield County at 203.743.4412 or online at www.ccfairfield.org.)

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Redemptoris Mater
Seminary honors Nuncio

By JOE PISANI

STRATFORD—The President of Catholic University told more than 400 people at the Redemptoris Mater Seminary gala that in the fight over religious liberty, the goal of Catholics should not simply be to win court battles but to evangelize their opponents.

“We cannot practice or proclaim the faith in a crouched position,” John H. Garvey said. “In our battles about religious liberty, we should aim not simply to defeat our antagonists in the courts or to carve out government concessions that leave us alone. Our goal is to make them disciples.”

Garvey, an ardent defender of Catholic principles in higher education and in public life, said he was not suggesting that fights in the political sphere should be abandoned.

“But when the society we live in increasingly finds our religion abhorrent, we are less likely to win in court, and we are farther than ever from converting our antagonists, so our aim should not be our freedom, but their conversion,” he said.

Garvey and Archbishop Bernardito Auza, who served as Permanent Observer to the United Nations, were honored by the Stamford seminary.

Father Marco Pacciana, the rector, praised them as men of strong faith known for upholding Catholic values in a secular world.

“Archbishop Auza upholds the values of the Catholic faith, and his work at the United Nations is very important when you consider everything that is going on in the world,” Father Pacciana said. “And President Garvey is a man who gives witness to the Catholic truth in the world of higher education.”

During the event, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano announced that an anonymous donor had given $100,000 for the seminary. He praised the seminarists and Father Pacciana for his “great leadership.”

“These seminarists are growing in faith, and they are growing into young men of diligence and zeal because they are following your example and good guidance, so continue to do your great work,” he said.

Archbishop Auza, who on October 1 was appointed Apostolic Nuncio to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra, said that in this new role he will be 17 minutes away from where the Neocatechumenal Way began in 1964 on the outskirts of Madrid among the poor.

A native of the Philippines, he was ordained in 1985 and has been a member of the Holy See’s diplomatic corps since 1990, serving as nuncio to Haiti, in the nun-ciatures in Madagascar, Bulgaria, and Albania, and in the diplomatic section of the Secretariat of State in the Vatican.

“The [Neocatechumenal] Way is not a stranger to me,” Archbishop Auza said. “I have known it for many years and have been a guest at so many of your seminars.”

Redemptoris Mater (Mother of the Redeemer) seminaries and the Neocatechumenal Way have been a guest at so many of the events, he said.

“Archbishop Auza said. “I have known it for many years and have been a guest at so many of your seminaries.”

Redemptoris Mater (Mother of the Redeemer) seminaries are under the auspices of the Neocatechumenal Way, a 55-year-old charism in the Church dedicated to Christian formation and the New Evangelization.

Archbishop Auza also pointed out that in the 441-mile corridor from Washington D.C. to Boston, there are six Redemptoris Mater seminaries and said that the United States and Spain have the most with nine each.

He stressed the importance of the missionary role of the seminarists and the Neocatechumenal Way and said, “This mission has become more urgent in our times, and that is why it is very important that we wake up to this call and respond as effectively as we can. It doesn’t mean a new message. It means a new method, expressing our faith with a renewed enthusiasm and joy for your Gospel.”

He added, “In you, we see the missionary zeal that characterized the Apostolic Church. In our time, many would say that the Church has lost its ardor and zeal for proclamation, that its life has been diminished. May your ardor and freshness spread like wildfire and burn us all in Spirit and embolden us just as it did the Apostles at Pentecost.”

Redemptoris Mater international seminaries were inspired by St. Pope John Paul II’s call for a “New Evangelization.” The first seminary opened in 1987, in the Diocese of Rome, and today there are 127 on five continents and in cities such as Denver, Manila, Philippines, Brasilia, Brazil, and Medellin, Colombia. The first one to open in the United States was in Newark in 1990.

Since they began, more than 2,000 men have been ordained to the priesthood, and some 1,500 seminarists are in formation worldwide. Even though they have an international character, they function as diocesan seminaries with the same theological formation, except that the young men are also sent out to do mission work for two years.

Four years ago, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano opened the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Stamford to prepare priests for missionary work anywhere in the world—from China to the streets of Bridgeport.

Father Marco said 11 seminarists from seven countries are being formed for the Bridgeport Diocese and that four new men will be coming for the Archdiocese of Hartford.

In his comments, President Garvey cited a speech by U.S. Attorney General William Barr at the University of Notre Dame earlier this month, which was widely criticized in the secular media. Barr said that “moral values must rest on an authority independent of men’s will. They must flow from a transcendent Supreme Being.” He criticized society’s turn toward what he called “macro-morality.”

“The new secular religion teaches a macro-morality gauged not so much by private conduct but rather whether you are committed to political causes and corrective actions,” Garvey said.

“The reaction to growing illegitimacy is not sexual responsibility but abortion,” he said. “The reaction to drug addiction is not temperance but safe injection sites. The solution to the breakdown of the family is that the state set itself up as an ersatz husband for the single mother and an ersatz father for children.”

Among the critics of Barr, one columnist called the speech a tacit endorsement of theocracy and another said it was the language of witch hunts and pogroms and “sounded remarkably like America’s most unhinged religious zealots.”

“That I think is an overreaction,” Garvey said. “The attorney general was merely suggesting that we practice chastity, temperance and fidelity, and I think that would be a good idea. It is not an endorsement of theocracy.”

Garvey, who became the 15th president of the Catholic University of America in 2010, is a nationally acclaimed expert in constitutional law, religious liberty, and the First Amendment. He has authored and co-authored numerous books, including What Are Freedoms For?, Religion and the Constitution, and Sexuality and the U.S. Catholic Church.

As president, he has emphasized that a Catholic approach to scholarship enriches every school and discipline. He is a prominent voice in the media on issues such as higher education, culture, law, Catholicism and religious liberty.
GREENWICH—Sarita Hanley, a board member of the Catholic Relief Services foundation, saw the devastation in Haiti after an earthquake claimed 300,000 lives, and she has traveled to Iraq, Ethiopia, Egypt and Lebanon to witness global humanitarian efforts firsthand.

On Wednesday, she brought a message of hope to Fairfield County about what the Church is doing to help the poorest and most vulnerable people of the world, including children in war-torn Afghanistan.

“Thousands upon thousands of people I have seen have benefitted from CRS, which is involved in helping and aiding the poorest of the poor in 114 countries,” she said. “Their lives have changed, and I want to tell the world.”

Hanley of Stamford and Lennie de Csepel, a parishioner at St. Catherine of Siena who has been supporter of CRS for 40 years, hosted a presentation at Riverside Yacht Club, featuring Conor O’Loughlin, the organization’s representative in Afghanistan, where a community-based education program has helped more than 36,000 children since 2003. Some 6,000 are educated daily, more than half of them girls.

“Catholic Relief Services, which is based in Baltimore, is a Christian organization working in a Muslim country, there is community acceptance, O’Loughlin said, adding that assistance is provided to the needy, regardless of race, creed or nationality. Of his staff of 380, all but 10 are Afghans.
Youth in Action

Bishop Caggiano is eager to hear young peoples’ ideas on how best to re-energize the teen Catholic faith experience. “We need to listen to their voices and give them the space and resources to design programs and projects that will resonate with them,” said the bishop, who is challenging teens in our diocese to propose a project that involves collaboration, evangelization and mission work.

On September 25 the bishop announced the creation of “Youth in Action,” an innovative grant opportunity sponsored by Foundations in Faith, one of the three new foundations created by the We Stand With Christ capital campaign. Two $5,000 grants will be awarded; one to a Catholic High School and one to a high school-aged parish youth group in the diocese. The funded projects will begin in January 2020 and continue through the calendar year. For more info visit www.foundationsinfaith.org/youth-in-action-grant.

Gospel of Life

Bishop Caggiano was invited to speak at the Cornerstone Catholic Conference Greater Tacoma Convention Center on October 18-19. “United for Life & Justice” was the theme of the conference, where he had the opportunity to speak to more than 800 people on the critical topic of the “Gospel of Life.” In his talk, “Keeping the Faith by Daring to be Different,” he challenged young people to seek the truth. The following reflection originally appeared on Bishop Frank Caggiano’s Facebook page. Follow the bishop for daily reflections and weekly videos.

“I was deeply impressed by the spirit and enthusiasm of those who participated, especially the young adults who attended. I have often warned against the phenomenon of ‘false choices’ in life. A false choice is the decision to pick one aspect of the truth, while leaving other aspects, equally important, to the side. Such a tendency is powered perhaps by a deeply felt passion for a particular cause or pastoral work. When I spoke to the gathering, I challenged my listeners to avoid making false choices when dealing with the Gospel of Life. While it is a central part of that Gospel to protect life at its conception and at its natural death, it is also important that we value life at all its stages, especially when challenged by poverty, sickness, discrimination, racism, lack of drinkable water, unemployment, disability, social isolation, mental illness, lack of education, homelessness—just to name a few critical issues of our modern world.

It is a daunting task to embrace the fullness of the Gospel of Life and strive to be faithful to it. However, in our broken world and during this challenging moment in the life of the Church, it is the task that God has asked us to fulfill. Let us pray for heroic courage so that we can learn how the Gospel of Life will transform our church and the entire world.”

In Thanksgiving

Recently the bishop was joined by hundreds of faithful to offer a very special “Thank you” to this year’s St. Augustine Medal recipients. As reported in this issue, 165 men and women came forward, many of them couples, to receive awards from the bishop for a lifetime of service to their parishes. “You sacrificed and did not look for something in return. You learned that only the Sacred Heart of Jesus can bring us joy and peace,” the bishop said at the prayer service. Congratulations to all recipients. Your service challenges and inspires us!

As we prepare for Thanksgiving with our family and friends, we should also be grateful for the many people throughout the diocese who are taking steps now to ensure that no one is left out or left alone on Thanksgiving Day. Volunteers and staff at Catholic Charities houses of hospitality in Bridgeport, Stamford and Danbury are preparing to serve their traditional Thanksgiving meal to the poor, elderly and homeless, while many of our parishes, schools and ministries are collecting canned goods and stocking their own food pantries to help feed families. Many thanks to them and others who will work on Thanksgiving to make sure no one is hungry or forgotten.

In this season set aside for personal and national gratitude, we have much to be thankful for in the life of the diocese and in our own lives. We wish all readers and their families a blessed and Happy Thanksgiving.

Tickets on sale now for Arise and Shine Christmas concert

BRIDGPORT—CAY’s annual Christmas concert has become one of the most anticipated and joyous events of the year. The concert features the 100-member diocesan youth choir under the direction of Mary Bozzi Higgins, who will perform a plethora of seasonal Christmas songs, ranging from classics to new and challenging arrangements. This concert is a great way to ring in the Christmas season, and brings together the whole diocesan family in celebration!

(Tickets are $22 for general admission and are available for purchase at www.quickcenter.fairfield.edu.)

Clergy Appointments

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

Effective date was November 1.

FATHER AUGUSTINE NGUYEN, from Parochial Vicar, Church of the Assumption Parish, Westport, to Chaplain to the Newman Center of Western Connecticut State University. Effective date was November 1.

FATHER BRUCE F. ROBY, from Chaplain to the Newman Center of Western Connecticut State University, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Mary Parish / Saint Benedict-Our Lady of Montserrat Parish, Stamford.

From Our Lady of Grace Parish, Stratford, to Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Fairfield.

Effective date was October 1.

DEACON DONALD ROSS, has been appointed to serve on the Diocesan Council to represent the deacons of the Queen of Martyrs Deanery. Effective date was October 11.

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
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A Season of Change

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

I’ve always had a natural inclination toward fall. It is a season of change. A change that we can see in the leaves and feel in the air. It is almost as if through the changing of the seasons God permits change. Welcomes it, even.

But how often both our bodies and our hearts resist change. We get sick at the transition of the seasons and we hold onto things that might not be for us until we are almost forced to let go. The recently canonized St. Henry Newman once said, “To live is to change and to become perfect is to change often.”

Maybe that is why it often seems so hard, but is ultimately so necessary (as the most important things often are). Because being perfect isn’t something we can attain this side of heaven, so change needs to be constant, growth continual.

In the past year, I have witnessed my own changing. In my personal life as well as my spiritual life. Some changes were hard and I resisted them, but some seemed to be the natural progression of things. And it was through these changes that I realized how much God calls us more and more to be our authentic selves, as we continue to grow and change throughout our lives. I feel like, as humans, we have an innate desire to be accepted for who we truly are. The more I talk with people, the more I realize we all want to be welcomed.

We seek this sense of belonging in our families, schools, parishes and communities. But it is often amongst these same groups that we struggle to feel accepted. Or rather, we feel we are welcome the way they remember us to be, but not as we have become. Because it is in human nature to resist change. But I hear him say, “my child, it is okay that you’ve changed. Look at the leaves on the trees. They go from green to gold. Look at the tides, they roll in and out.”

We are not the same as we once were, but God does not expect us to remain the same. Things take time. Change takes time. Healing takes time. As with the gradual transition between each season. We should give ourselves the same respect as we do nature, saying, “for everything there is a season.”

We should look at change with the same anticipation as we do the excitement of the start of a new season. “We should look at change with the same anticipation as we do the excitement of the start of a new season.”

Because nothing happens overnight but rather slowly, patiently, with the care of a creator.

If the seasons can change, maybe we can too. Maybe it can become almost as natural as the transition from summer to fall, fall to winter, winter to spring.
Priestly Ordination

Keep your eyes fixed on God

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

DARIEN—“It is a blessed day for all of us as you have come forward to say yes to this great calling that God has given to you,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano to the newly ordained Father Michael James Vian Clark, ordained to the priesthood on Saturday, October 12 at St. Thomas More in Darien.

“It is a testimony to your humility that you have lived this great adventure of your life to get to this point,” said the bishop in his homily. “You have always followed His lead.”

Bishop Caggiano said, “Michael’s fidelity and journey reminds us that every single one of us is a pilgrim on a journey that the Lord leads us on.”

“As we gather here in faith and as you begin to live this next chapter it is going to be your life to get to this point,” said the bishop in his homily. “You have always followed His lead.”

Bishop Caggiano said, “Michael’s fidelity and journey reminds us that every single one of us is a pilgrim on a journey that the Lord leads us on.”

The bishop reflected that we live in a time of great challenge in the Church but he encouraged Father Clark to “seek heroic holiness” in his life. “Because it is only the light of holiness that will lead others to know who He really is,” said the bishop.

The bishop complimented Michael on being a man of great faith and great generosity, adding, “For those who have more, more is expected. But the Lord will be there to help you face any challenges that may come your way,” the bishop said. “Continue to be who God has asked you to be and you will bring many to Him.”

“Christ will allow you to be His vehicle so He can break into this world in the most intimate way possible,” said the bishop. “For you have been chosen to be sacrificed in sacrifice, to lead others to sacrifice, for the one Lord who has sacrificed Himself to set us free,” the bishop addressed Father Clark.

“I have come to know you as a simple, humble man,” said the bishop. “Continue to lead in that way so that others may follow you without fear.”

The bishop quoted the newly canonized St. John Henry Newman, saying, “If we are called to great ends then we are intended for great hazards.” He encouraged the newly ordained priest, “Do not let the challenges disturb you, you have Christ to be your advocate every moment of your life. Keep your eyes fixed on the great ends God has in store for you.”

The principal concelebrants of the Mass were Father Paul Check, Father John Connoughton, Father Marco Pacciana, Father Peter Lenox, Father Anthony Doe and Msgr. Paul Murphy. Deacon Timothy Bolton and Deacon Gauthier Vincent were also part of the ceremony. Patricia A. Catino and Lisa L. Von Stuegpegel brought up the gifts and Liz C. Sweeney and Barbara J. Ferrone were readers. The Seminarians of the Diocese of Bridgeport were servers at the Mass and music was provided by the ensemble Tolle Lege and David J. Hughes, director and organist, along with the St. Thomas More parish choir and Galen F. Tate, director and organist.

Father Clark celebrated his first Mass at St. Joseph Church in South Norwalk on Sunday, October 13 at 10 am. Father Peter Lenox concelebrated the Mass, along with Msgr. David P. Charters and Father Anthony Doe.

At the end of the Mass of Ordination it was announced that Father Clark’s first assignment will be at St. Thomas More in Darien, which was met with much applause from the congregation.

Aspirants admitted to candidacy

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

BRIDGEPORT—On Saturday, October 26 at 9:30 am at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport five aspirants were admitted to candidacy for ordination as deacons by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

The bishop addressed the men, explaining that for those discerning a call to ministry, it is a “sacred conversation.”

The bishop described this conversation: “When you hear the whisperings or the rustling of a Lord that is calling you, when you look and seek what His will might be for you.” Addressing the aspiring deacons, he said, “You my brothers have done that. And how fortunate we are that you said yes.”

“What a blessed day it is that the conversation has come together to this sacred home. That all involved in this great discernment recognize that the Lord is asking you to take the next great step,” the bishop said.

“For just like gold, as we are taught in Sacred Scripture, is put into the heat of the fire so that it can be purified, so too brothers you now need to be purified ever more deeply. This will cost much and much will be given in return,” the bishop addressed the five candidates.

The bishop encouraged the men, “In the months ahead, the Holy Spirit is going to invite you to purify your heart, to purify your mind, to fill it with the truth that is Jesus Christ...and by doing that, it will allow you to proclaim in word, in witness, in truth without you getting in the way, a truth that the world desper...”
2019 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

Recognizing the volunteers, the mentors and the prayerful servants of our diocese

Service ‘Surrenders the Heart’ to Jesus

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

BRIDGEPORT—“Discipleship is a journey of the heart,” Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said at the St. Augustine Medal of Service prayer service and awards ceremony.

Hundreds filled the Cathedral on a beautiful Saturday afternoon for the service, during which the bishop conferred medals on 156 men and women throughout the diocese. People came forward individually and as couples to be recognized for their service—often over a lifetime—to parishes, schools and diocesan ministries.

Recipients were accompanied by their pastors as they received their medals, which bear the likeness of St. Augustine on one side and the Seal of the Diocese of Bridgeport on the other.

The conferral of medals became an inter-generational celebration as nearly 100 members of the diocesan youth choir under the direction of Mary Bozutti Higgins, sang hymns of praise during the prayer service.

Speaking directly to the awardees, the bishop said that in an increasingly “divided, cold and hard world when many are tempted to close their hearts to others, the medal represents your choice to serve, to be a conduit of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to others.”

The bishop said that all hearts get broken over a lifetime as a result of suffering, pain or loss, but “surrendering your heart to the Lord Jesus is the path to eternal life.”

“Thank you for your service, courage, generosity and witness,” the bishop said in his homily. “I’m sure like all of us you have been tempted to be hard of heart, but you continued to work in service. You sacrificed and did not look for something in return. You learned that only the Sacred Heart of Jesus can bring us joy and peace.”

After the prayer service that included song and the reading of Psalms, the bishop blessed the medals before presenting them to recipients.

“Confer within these men and women the gifts of Your Spirit that they may continue to serve Your Church in strength of will and sincerity of heart. Bring us all one day into the peace of Your kingdom,” he prayed.

Al Barber, chief executive officer of Catholic Charities, read the names of the medal recipients who came forward to receive the medal and be photographed with the bishop. Patricia Hansen, the director of development operations and Patricia Zaccone, director of school finance, delivered the readings.

After the ceremony, recipients celebrated with family and friends at a reception held in the Kolbe Cathedral High School gymnasium, where they proudly displayed their medals for well-wishers.

The bishop also thanked Elizabeth Auda, executive assistant to the vicar general and the episcopal delegator for administration of the diocese, for her efforts in planning and coordinating the prayer service.

The St. Augustine Medal of Service was instituted in 2005 to recognize the “unsung heroes” who unselfishly give of their time and talents to build up parish communities.

(For further information contact Elizabeth Auda 203.416.1636, email: eauddia@diobpt.org.)
2019 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

Saint Mary Parish, Bethel:
Mr. Robert & Mrs. Debra Nelson — Nominated by Reverend Corey V. Piccinino, Pastor

Saint Mary School, Bethel:
Mrs. Eleanor McGeehan — Nominated by Mrs. Kate McDonald, Principal

Saint George Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Juan Carlos Cueva — Nominated by Reverend Pedro A. Sosa, IVE, Parochial Administrator

Saint Margaret Shrine, Bridgeport:
Mr. Art Falco — Nominated by Reverend Giandomenico, Rector and Deacon Donald Foust, Administrator

Saint Mary Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Jose Rivera — Nominated by Reverend Joseph J. Karcsinski, Parochial Administrator

Saint Augustine Academy, Bridgeport:
Ms. Kamara Moodie — Nominated by Mrs. Angela Pohlen, Head of School, and Cheryl Tokarski, Principal

Saint Mary Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Julio & Mrs. Maria Pineda — Nominated by Reverend Norbert M. Siwinski, O.F.M. Conv., Pastor

Saint Augustinian Academy, Bridgeport:
Ms. Kamara Moodie — Nominated by Mrs. Angela Pohlen, Head of School, and Deacon Patrick Toole, Secretary of the Curia & Episcopal Delegate for Administration

Saint Andrew Parish, Bridgeport:
Ms. Denise Lajoie — Nominated by Reverend Eugene R. Szantyr, Pastor

Saint Andrew Parish, Bridgeport:
Ms. Donna Lloyd — Nominated by Reverend Eugene R. Szantyr, Pastor

Saint Anne Academy, Bridgeport:
Mrs. Yves-Marie Moseret — Nominated by Mrs. Angela Pohlen, Head of School, and Mrs. Patricia Griffin, Principal

Saint Ann Parish, Bridgeport:
Ms. Linda Teja — Nominated by Reverend Norbert M. Siwinski, O.F.M. Conv., Pastor

Saint Ann Academy, Bridgeport:
Mrs. Yves-Marie Morisset — Nominated by Mrs. Angela Pohlen, Head of School, and Mrs. Patricia Griffin, Principal

Saint George Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Juan Carlos Cueva — Nominated by Reverend Padre A. Soza, IVE, Parochial Administrator

Saint Ann Parish, Bridgeport:
Ms. Alzira Alves — Nominated by Reverend Joseph J. Karcsinski, Parochial Administrator

Saint Charlemagne Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Marius Paul — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Chris Walsh, Pastor

Saint Andrew Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. James Mess — Nominated by Deacon John DiTiranno, Pastoral Administrator

Saint Andrew Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. James Mess — Nominated by Deacon John DiTiranno, Pastoral Administrator

Catholic Charities, Bridgeport:
Mr. Stephen & Mrs. Elena Schlegel — Nominated by Deacon Patrick Toole, Secretary of the Curia & Episcopal Delegate for Administration

Saint Mary Parish, Bethel:
Mr. Robert & Mrs. Debra Nelson — Nominated by Reverend Corey V. Piccinino, Pastor

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Mr. Robert & Mrs. Debra Nelson — Nominated by Reverend Corey V. Piccinino, Pastor

Catholic Charities, Bridgeport:
Ms. Linda Teja — Nominated by Mr. Al Barber, President

Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Bridgeport:
Mrs. Alzira Alves — Nominated by Reverend Giandomenico, Rector and Deacon Donald Foust, Administrator

Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. James Mess — Nominated by Deacon John DiTiranno, Pastoral Administrator

Saint Anthony Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Julio & Mrs. Maria Pineda — Nominated by Reverend Norbert M. Siwinski, O.F.M. Conv., Pastor

Saint Augustine Academy, Bridgeport:
Ms. Kamara Moodie — Nominated by Mrs. Angela Pohlen, Head of School, and Cheryl Tokarski, Principal

Saint Mary Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Julio & Mrs. Maria Pineda — Nominated by Reverend Norbert M. Siwinski, O.F.M. Conv., Pastor
2019 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

SS. Cyril & Methodius Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Gerard Cunningham — Nominated by Reverend Canon Andrew Todd, ICRSS, Pastor

The Cathedral Parish, Bridgeport:
Mr. Cong & Mrs. Trac Nguyen — Nominated by Reverend Michael Neujahr, Pastor

Saint Joseph Catholic Academy, Bridgeport:
Mr. Pat & Mrs. Jen Cong — Nominated by Mary Maloney, Head of School, & Mrs. Pamela Falls, Director of Education

Saint Joseph Parish, Brookfield:
Ms. Barbara Anderson — Nominated by Reverend George F. O’Neill, Pastor

Saint Margaret Bourgeois Parish, Brookfield:
Mr. Scott & Mrs. Darleen Senet — Nominated by Reverend Shawn W. Collier, Pastor

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Danbury:
Mr. Jabo & Mrs. Isaura Verissimo — Nominated by Reverend Jose Brito-Martins, Parochial Administrator

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Danbury:
Ms. Barbara Anderson — Nominated by Reverend Shawn W. Collier, Pastor

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Danbury:
Mrs. Angela Osoro — Nominated by Reverend John J. Perez, Pastor

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Danbury:
Mr. Jabo & Mrs. Isaura Verissimo — Nominated by Reverend Jose Brito-Martins, Parochial Administrator

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Danbury:
Ms. Angela Osoro — Nominated by Reverend Shawn W. Collier, Pastor

Saint Gregory the Great Parish, Danbury:
Mr. John & Mrs. Julie Poloebba — Nominated by Mrs. Suzanne Curra, Principal

Saint Gregory the Great Parish, Danbury:
Mr. Mark & Mrs. Theresa Grube — Nominated by Reverend Michael L. Dunn, Pastor

Saint Gregory the Great School, Danbury:
Mrs. Yelva Posca — Nominated by Mrs. Mary Lou Torre, Principal

Saint Peter Parish, Danbury:
Mr. John Gogletino — Nominated by Reverend Michael L. Dunn, Pastor

Saint Peter Parish, Danbury:
Mr. John Gogletino — Nominated by Reverend Michael L. Dunn, Pastor

Saint Peter School, Danbury:
St. John de La Salle School, Danbury:
Mrs. Velva Posca — Nominated by Mrs. Mary Lou Torre, Principal

Notre Dame Parish, Easton:
Mr. Charles & Mrs. Mary Welch — Nominated by Reverend Michael P. Lyons, Pastor

Notre Dame Parish, Easton:
Mr. Charles & Mrs. Mary Welch — Nominated by Reverend Michael P. Lyons, Pastor

Saint Thomas More Parish, Darien:
Mr. Arthur & Mrs. Patricia Sandor — Nominated by Reverend Paul G. Murphy, Pastor

Saint John Parish, Darien:
Mr. Tom & Mrs. Janet Green — Nominated by Reverend Franci T. Hoffmann, Pastor

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Darien:
Mr. Louis Howe, Jr., Principal

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Mr. Louis Howe, Jr., Principal

Saint Joseph School, Danbury:
Mr. Peter & Mrs. Kate Groppe — Nominated by Mr. Louis Howe, Jr., Principal

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Mr. Peter & Mrs. Kate Groppe — Nominated by Mr. Louis Howe, Jr., Principal

Saint Joseph Parish, Danbury:
Mr. Mark Azzara — Nominated by Reverend Samuel V. Scott, Pastor

Saint Joseph Parish, Danbury:
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Saint Peter School, Darien:
Mr. Mark Azzara — Nominated by Reverend Samuel V. Scott, Pastor

Saint Peter School, Darien:
Mr. Mark Azzara — Nominated by Reverend Samuel V. Scott, Pastor

Saint Thomas More Parish, Darien:
Mr. Arthur & Mrs. Patricia Sandor — Nominated by Reverend Paul G. Murphy, Pastor

Assumption Catholic School, Fairfield:
Mrs. Cynthia Doak — Nominated by Mr. Steve Santolo, Principal

Holy Family Parish, Fairfield:
Mr. James Fitzpatrick — Nominated by Reverend Norman J. Guibert, Pastor

Assumption Catholic School, Fairfield:
Mrs. Cynthia Doak — Nominated by Mr. Steve Santolo, Principal

Holy Family Parish, Fairfield:
Mr. James Fitzpatrick — Nominated by Reverend Norman J. Guibert, Pastor
2019 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

Notre Dame High School, Fairfield:
Mr. William & Mrs. Melanie Trutt — Nominated by Mr. Chris Cipriani, Principal

Saint Catherine Academy, Fairfield:
Mr. Joseph & Mrs. Carrie Snow, Jr. — Nominated by Mrs. Helen Rudland & Mr. Eric Spencer, Executive Director

Sacred Heart Parish, Greenwich:
Mrs. Eva Ojarovska — Nominated by Reverend David C. Leopold, Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Greenwich:
Mrs. Anna Gregori — Nominated by Reverend Cyprian LaPatinza, Pastor

Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, Fairfield:
Ms. Kathleen Raftery — Nominated by Reverend Peter A. Cipriani, Pastor

Saint Edward the Confessor Parish, Newtown:
Mr. Anthony Rowan — Nominated by Reverend Monseigneur Robert E. Weiss, Pastor

Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish, Fairfield:
Ms. Jeff & Mrs. Mary Dow — Nominated by Reverend Victor T. Martin, Pastor

Saint Jude Parish, Monroe:
Mr. Luis & Mrs. Isabel Santana — Nominated by Reverend Henry J. Hoffman, Pastor

Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, Fairfield:
Mr. Fredric & Mrs. Monica Wheeler — Nominated by Dr. Eleanor Sauers, Parish Life Coordinator

Saint Paul Parish, Greenwich:
Mr. Michael Musilli — Nominated by Reverend Robert M. Kinnally, Pastor

Saint Jude Parish, Monrovia:
Mr. Raymond & Mrs. Regina Schwartz — Nominated by Reverend John R. Alfano, Principal

Saint Augustine Parish, New Canaan:
Mr. Michael Musilli — Nominated by Reverend Robert M. Kinnally, Pastor

Saint Paul Parish, Greenwich:
Ms. Catherine Lista — Nominated by Reverend Leszek P. Szmaczek, Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Greenwich:
Mr. Michael Musilli — Nominated by Reverend Robert M. Kinnally, Pastor

Saint Edward the Confessor Parish, Newtown:
Mr. Nicholas A. Civilli — Nominated by Reverend Nicholas A. Civilli, Pastor

Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish, Fairfield:
Ms. Jeff & Mrs. Mary Dow — Nominated by Reverend Victor T. Martin, Pastor

Saint Jude Parish, Monrovia:
Mr. Raymond & Mrs. Regina Schwartz — Nominated by Reverend John R. Alfano, Principal

Saint Augustine Parish, New Canaan:
Mr. Michael Musilli — Nominated by Reverend Robert M. Kinnally, Pastor

Saint Edward the Confessor Parish, Newtown:
Mr. Nicholas A. Civilli — Nominated by Reverend Nicholas A. Civilli, Pastor

Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Newtown:
Mr. Anthony Rowan — Nominated by Reverend Monseigneur Robert E. Weiss, Pastor
2019 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

Saint Rose of Lima School, Newtown:
Mrs. Lisa Gjoka — Nominated by Mrs. Rastidry Gjoka, Principal

All Saints Catholic School, Norwalk:
Mr. Bruce Gall — Nominated by Mrs. Linda Dunn, Principal

Saint Jerome Parish, Norwalk:
Mrs. Judith Donnen — Nominated by Reverend Rujie Karivakal Manmadhan, Pastor

Saint Joseph Parish, Norwalk:
Mr. Ewald Vargas — Nominated by Reverend Peter F. Lenox, Pastor

Saint Ladislaus Parish, Norwalk:
Mr. Paul & Mrs. Debbie Soon — Nominated by Reverend Juan Gabriel Aosta-Quevedo, Pastor

Saint Patrick Parish, Redding Ridge:
Mr. Joseph Bowomo & Mrs. Janet Storace — Nominated by Reverend Joseph Cervero, Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Norwalk:
Ms. Carolina deMenezes — Nominated by Reverend F. John Ringley, Jr., Pastor

Saint Matthew Parish, Norwalk:
Mr. Victor & Mrs. Christine Larcher — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Walter C. Orlowski, Pastor

Saint Philip Parish, Norwalk:
Mrs. Constance Keaveny — Nominated by Reverend Sudhir D’Souza, Pastor

Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish, Norwalk:
Mrs. Anne Marie Walsh — Nominated by Reverend Miroslav Stachurski, Pastor

St. Catherine of Siena and St. Agnes Parish, River Cities:
Mr. Edward & Mrs. Patricia McCulloch — Nominated by Reverend William F. Platt, Pastor

Saint Elizabeth Seton Parish, Ridgefield:
Mr. Fred Santore — Nominated by Reverend Joseph A. Prince, Pastor

Saint John Parish, Ridgefield:
Ms. Bernard & Mrs. Janice Noble — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Kevin Royal, Pastor

Saint Mary School, Ridgefield:
Ms. Diana & Mrs. Sherri Annanappa — Nominated by Mrs. Anna O’Rourke, Principal

Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish, Shelton:
Mr. Tom & Mrs. Debbie Jensen — Nominated by Reverend Ciprian Bejan, Pastor

Holy Trinity Catholic Academy, Shelton:
Mr. Bruce Gall — Nominated by Mrs. Lisa Dunn, Principal

Saint Joseph Parish, Shelton:
Nominated by Reverend Michael F. Diogali, Pastor

Saint Lawrence Parish, Shelton:

Saint Mary Parish, Shelton:
Mr. Paul Gaetano — Nominated by Reverend Michael F. Dogali, Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Shelton:
Ms. Carolina deMenezes — Nominated by Reverend F. John Ringley, Jr., Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Shelton:
Ms. Lisa Gosse — Nominated by Mrs. Linda Dunn, Principal

Saint Mary Parish, Shelton:
Mr. Paul Gaetano — Nominated by Reverend Michael F. Dogali, Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Shelton:
Ms. Carolina deMenezes — Nominated by Reverend F. John Ringley, Jr., Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Shelton:
Mr. Paul Gaetano — Nominated by Reverend Michael F. Dogali, Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Shelton:
Ms. Carolina deMenezes — Nominated by Reverend F. John Ringley, Jr., Pastor
2019 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

Cardinal Kung Academy, Stamford: 
Mrs. Leon & Mrs. Nancy Grimm — Nominated by Mrs. Barbara Lagodzil, Principal

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Stamford: 
Mr. Pate Brakoniecki — Nominated by Reverend Paul M. Hierhenlo, Pastor

Holy Spirit Parish, Stamford: 
Mrs. Kathleen Keng — Nominated by Reverend Luke Suarez, Parish Administrator

Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, Stamford: 
Mrs. Margaret Broderick — Nominated by Reverend Peter J. Smolak, Pastor

Sacred Heart Parish, Stamford: 
Ms. Patricia Umile — Nominated by Reverend Alfonso Picone, Pastor

Saint Benedict-Our Lady of Montserrat, Stamford: 
Ms. Rosaura Gomez — Nominated by Reverend Gustavo A. Falla, Pastor

Saint Bridget of Ireland Parish, Stamford: 
Mr. Hans & Mrs. MaryLou Boss — Nominated by Reverend Edward McAuley Jr., Pastor

Saint Cecilia-Saint Gabriel Parish, Stamford: 
Ms. Victoria Alton — Nominated by Reverend John Connaughton, Pastor

Saint Clement of Rome Parish, Stamford: 
Mr. Dave Milillo — Nominated by Reverend Carlos Rodrigues, Pastor

Saint David Parish, Stamford: 
Mr. John J. Kennedy — Nominated by Reverend J. D. Gross, Pastor

Saint Leo Parish, Stamford: 
Mr. John J. Kennedy — Nominated by Reverend James D. Grosso, Pastor

Saint Mary Parish, Stamford: 
Ms. Donna Hughes — Nominated by Reverend Gustavo A. Falla, Pastor

Saint Maurice Parish, Stamford: 
Mrs. Donna Hughes — Nominated by Reverend Alfred A. Riendeau, Pastor

The Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist, Stamford: 
Ms. Sue & Ms. Diane Schmehl — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Stephen M. DiGiovanni, Pastor

The Catholic Academy of Stamford, Stamford: 
Mrs. Kiara LaRosa — Nominated by Ms. Patricia Brady, Head of School, and Ms. Christine Wagner, Principal

Trinity Catholic High School, Stamford: 
Mrs. Sue Oates — Nominated by Ms. Patricia Brady, Head of School and Mr. Scott Smith, Principal

Our Lady of Grace Parish, Stratford: 
Mr. David & Mrs. Elizabeth Christiansen — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Martin P. Ryan, Pastor

Our Lady of Peace Parish, Stratford: 
Ms. Barbara Morison — Nominated by Reverend Nicholas S. Pavia, Pastor
2019 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

Saint James Parish, Stratford:
Ms. Noranne Donovan — Nominated by Reverend Arthur Mollenhauer, Pastor

Saint James School, Stratford:
Mr. Mark & Mrs. Toni Piazza — Nominated by Mr. Jack E. Lynch, Principal

Saint Mark Parish, Stratford:
Mrs. Christine Préiffer — Nominated by Reverend Ritesh R. Srivastav, Pastor

Saint Mark School, Stratford:
Mr. Ron & Mrs. Jennifer Tymian — Nominated by Mrs. Melissa Warner, Principal

Christ the King Parish, Trumbull:
Mr. Ronald & Mrs. Karen Laracea — Nominated by Reverend Terrence P. Walsh, Pastor

Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Trumbull:
Ms. Salvatore Spadaccino — Nominated by Reverend Joseph A. Marcello, Pastor

Saint Catherine of Siena School, Trumbull:
Mrs. Tracy Ferreira — Nominated by Mrs. Rachel Ambrosio, Principal

Saint Joseph High School, Trumbull:
Mr. Richard & Mrs. Cynthia Andruszewski — Nominated by Dr. William F. Fitzgerald, President

Saint Stephen Parish, Trumbull:
Mr. Gerald Acciaia — Nominated by Reverend Christopher J. Semele, Pastor

Saint Theresa Parish, Trumbull:
Mr. Thomas & Mrs. Sheila Brown — Nominated by Reverend Brian P. Gannon, Pastor

Saint Theresa School, Trumbull:
Mrs. Susan Trigony — Nominated by Mr. Salvatore M. Vittoria, Principal

Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Westport:
Ms. Gloria Lucari — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Andrew G. Varga, Pastor

Saint Luke Parish, Westport:
Ms. Alice Davison — Nominated by Reverend Monsignor Andrea G. Varga, Pastor

Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Wilton:
Mrs. Nicole Wampler — Nominated by Reverend Ritesh R. Srivastav, Pastor

Our Lady of Fatima School, Wilton:
Mr. George & Mrs. Clare Taylor — Nominated by Stanley T. Sceelo, Principal
**Bible Challenge**

**Families Encounter Scripture and Christ**

By EMILY CLARK

BRIDGEPORT—What do the letters INRI on the Crucifix stand for? In Hebrew, what does “Amen” mean? Who was the first canonized saint from the U.S.? If you have accepted The Leadership Institute’s Family Bible Challenge, you know all these answers—and more.

Now wrapping up its third season, this Challenge has engaged over 2,100 families throughout the Diocese of Bridgeport and beyond with a goal of connecting the faithful with sacred scripture. Through biblical passages, reflection questions, videos, and online trivia, participants are embracing the Challenge’s motto of “Encounter Scripture. Encounter Christ.”

Patrick Donovan, director of The Leadership Institute, said interest in this program has “grown exponentially” since the first session began last spring. “There is a strong desire of people to learn about their faith,” he said. “We want people to open their Bibles.” Following the success of Seasons 1 and 2 which focused on Lent and Pentecost, respectively, Season 3 has aimed to educate participants on Women in Scripture, which has provided an opportunity for parents like Brenner LeCompte and his wife Kristen to be more intentional in passing on the faith to their young children. “My older daughter loved the animated video of the Book of Ruth,” said LeCompte, of St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield. “This has been a great opportunity for us. Our kids see that faith is not just one hour on Sunday.”

With a goal of engaging both families and individuals in the Bible, The Leadership Institute sends an email each Sunday with a passage to read and discuss. Quizzes on the material follow on Wednesday. The success of the online trivia, Donovan said, prompted the addition of Catequizem, a new site with less Bible-oriented and more general questions such as those on the Old Testament, the Mass and the Saints.

“I have heard that some families are doing the quizzes at dinner,” said Donovan. “They tell me that no electronics are allowed at the table except on Wednesdays when they do the quizzes.” These moments for discussion and reflection, whether at dinner, before bedtime, or while in the car, have allowed more time for bonding and togetherness for those participating, such as the Medeiros family from Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Danbury. Pedro Medeiros said he and his wife Hady enjoy reading scripture with their children.

“When we have a busy day and are caught up with work and chores, this gives us a moment when everything can stop and we can read together as a family,” said Medeiros whose five-year-old likes looking at the pictures that accompany the questions. “It keeps scripture close to us, and that’s the best part.” In addition to these activities, The Leadership Institute held several trivia nights last spring and has been partnering with Catholic high schools to encourage students to assist with writing future questions. Also benefitting from the Family Bible Challenge are religion classes at diocesan elementary schools, such as those at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Fairfield. Winnie Shay, a sixth and seventh-grade religion teacher, began printing out the reflections last spring.

“I want to be sure my students know how to use their Bibles,” said Shay, who feels these questions and passages are helping them learn their faith. “It’s definitely been enriching.”

As a gift from the American Bible Society, the diocese received 7,500 Bibles in both English and Spanish which have been distributed to those who registered for the Challenge with extra ones going to school children. Maria Ortiz of St. Peter’s Church in Bridgeport said she likes the option of reading passages in both languages.

“Sometimes I read the Spanish version and sometimes the English one. I get to read them twice!” said Ortiz, one of many who is doing the Challenge alone. “I am learning so much more about my Catholic faith. There is [CONTINUED ON PAGE 22]
Foundations in Education

2020 honorees to be recognized at Gala

BRIDGEPORT— Foundations in Education, a non-profit organization created to assist the Diocese of Bridgeport’s ongoing mission to support Catholic education in Fairfield County, announced its 2020 Gala Honorees—recognizing generosity in support of Catholic education and excellence in Catholic teaching and leadership.

The 2020 Honorees are Lynn and Frank Mara and Dr. Julia M. McNamara. Foundations in Education will celebrate the honorees at the 5th annual Spring Gala on Thursday, April 23, 2020 at Woodway Country Club in Darien.

“Each year, we have the privilege of recognizing honorees who are true partners in our mission,” remarked Foundations in Education Executive Director, Holly Doherty-Lemoine. “This year’s honorees have impacted thousands of children and their collective contributions may be felt across the Diocese of Bridgeport and region.”

Frank and Lynn Mara are longtime supporters of the Diocese of Bridgeport and have been active parishioners at St. Paul Catholic Church in Greenwich, since they were married in 1987.

After graduating from Fairfield University in 1982, Frank joined the New York Football Giants, Inc. as the assistant to the president and then worked in the college personnel division. Currently, he serves as vice president of community relations for the New York Football Giants.

Lynn and Frank have four sons, Sean, Jack, Frankie and Owen, and one daughter-in-law, Kaitlin Kelly. The sons all attended Greenwich Catholic School and Iona Preparatory School.

Lynn said, “Catholic education was the greatest gift our parents gave to us and we believe it’s the best gift we could give our children as well.”

Dr. Julia McNamara’s career in Catholic education began when she served as a teacher in elementary and high schools where the focus was always on the Dominican tradition of seeking truth and communicating the immense value of learning. After completing her academic studies at institutions which included Ohio Dominican University, Middlebury College in Vermont and Yale University, she was invited to join the faculty and administrative team at Albertus Magnus College, where she served as professor of French Language and Literature and as dean of students. In 1982, the college’s trustees selected her to serve as president of Albertus, the position which she held until her retirement in 2016, at which time the trustees voted to confer on her the honorary title of president emerita.

Since her retirement from Albertus, Dr. McNamara has continued her voluntary services as a trustee on the board of Foundations in Education, Inc. where she chairs the committee on innovation and leadership, as a trustee of Anna Maria College in Massachusetts, as a trustee of St. Martin de Porres Academy in New Haven and as chair of the first-ever Capital Campaign for Dominican Academy in New York City, her high school alma mater where, she says, her love for learning began.

The annual Spring Gala is Foundations in Education’s premier fundraising event. Gala proceeds benefit Foundations in Education, including Bishop’s Scholarship Fund and Innovation and Leadership Grants. This year alone, Bishop’s Scholarship Fund awarded 1,456 students nearly $2,800,000 in tuition assistance so they may experience transformational education based on Christian values and character formation at Catholic elementary schools throughout the Bridgeport diocese. Foundations will be funding grants to educators in the amount of $150,000 for innovative and leadership initiatives within diocesan Catholic schools, thus benefiting students further.

(See page 22 for more information.)

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St. John Henry Newman

Celebrating canonization with Great Mass in G Major

By JOE PISANI


The majestic music of Stanford’s Mass filled the Basilica on the day that Pope Francis elevated Newman to sainthood, along with three religious sisters and a Swiss priestess during a Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica. Cardinal Newman was a prominent Anglican priest who converted to Roman Catholicism in 1845 and became the most influential religious leader, educator and theologian of his day. He was also the founder of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in England, and Stanford’s Mass was written for the London Oratory. Newman’s conversion turned his previous life upside down, and friends and family members, including his sister, never spoke to him again.

“That moment in the life of Newman came only after many hours of prayer. It was not a small decision for someone of Newman’s standing, and it cost him dearly,” Father Cyprian LaPastina, pastor of St. Mary Church in Greenwich, said in his homily. “He lost many of his friends. His academic degree was taken away from him. And he had to leave Oxford after some 20 years. It was all very painful for him, but he was convinced that the Heart of Christ had drawn his heart to the one true Church.”

Father LaPastina was the principal celebrant at the choral Mass, joined by Monsignor Stephen DiGiovanni, pastor of the Basilica, along with Father Joseph Gill and Father Albert Audette Jr.

Nicholas Botkins, director of music, served as conductor for the U.S. premiere of the Mass in G Major, which employed a full orchestra, the Basilica choir and vocal soloists from the opera program at Yale University.

Father LaPastina said that when Newman was elevated to a cardinal in 1879, he chose the motto “Cor ad cor loquitor,” which means “Heart speaks to heart.” It was borrowed from the writings of St. Francis de Sales, who was known to inspire conversions “by his gentle personal- ity and his friendship with those he converted.”

When Newman became a Catholic priest in 1847, he could have entered a religious order such as the Jesuits or Dominicans; however, he chose parish life at the Oratory in Birmingham.

It was a different path for him. “Not to academic types that he was used to in Oxford, but rather to poor working-class people, whom he served as a simple parish priest,” Father LaPastina said. “He became part of their everyday lives and established friendships with them. There are countless letters from Cardinal Newman to his friends, asking about family situations, giving spiritual advice, promising his prayers and showing genuine concern.”

In our own age, Newman is one of the most widely read theologians. Father LaPastina said, “His works are studied by scholars, his homilies and meditations help feed our spiritual hunger, and the example of his life inspires so many of us to follow in his footsteps, inviting us to enter into the mystery of God by allowing Christ to penetrate our hearts, which are sometimes cold and sometimes self-centered, and allow him to find a place there. Cor ad cor loquitor—Heart speaks to heart. It is the message of St. Francis de Sales, of St. Philip Neri, of St. John Henry Newman, but more importantly, it is the message of Christ and of his Church.”

Botkins said the Great Mass was written when Stanford was at the height of his musical powers and calls for a wealth of musical forces.

“Stanford is one of the giants of British music and I can’t think of a better way for our Catholic community to honor the canonization of a giant figure in our Church, John Henry Cardinal Newman,” he said.

Stanford, who died in 1924, was a major composer, music teacher and conductor and the founding director of the Royal College of Music in London. During his career, he composed seven symphonies, nine operas, five Irish rhapsodies, chamber music and choral works for church performance.

The Great Mass in G Major, Opus 46, was written in 1892 at the request of Thomas Wingham, who was choirmaster of the London Oratory. It was performed only twice in Stanford’s lifetime (Wingham died before he could hear it) and again in 2014 by the Choir of Exeter College at Oxford.

Only in the past few months have the orchestral parts of the Mass been made available to the public, and Botkins was able to obtain them. “It is a great Mass, obviously under done in the form that you would normally hear it,” he said. “It is a very beautiful Mass so I wanted to give it the proper respect. The orchestra parts have been available to us, so we could do it as the composer intended.”

The orchestra parts had been locked away at the London Oratory, and Botkins had been trying to get them for about five years.

“It was all very providen- tial,” he added. “Monsignor DiGiovanni has ties with the London Oratory and knows the prefect for music there and I spent some time there and suddenly there was an announce- ment that Newman would be canonized. I had always wanted to do this Mass...and one thing led to another.”

After the Mass, Botkins expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to bring the work to the United States and for Monsignor DiGiovanni’s support. “Premieres are always signifi- cant in the professional life of a musician,” he said. “The orchestral premiere of Opus 46 was momentous more so by the supernatural nature of the occasion—the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the can- onization of John Henry Newman. I am humbled by the extraordi- nary leadership of Monsignor DiGiovanni, and I am thankful for his trust in our musicians for such an important event.”

Thank you
Ms. Jeanne Bisson
Director of Religious Formation
and entire team for sharing your faith with our children!
St. Emery Parish, Fairfield

Thank you and God Bless!
The Parish Family of St. Matthew and Rev. Msgr. Walter C. Orłowski, Dean and PastorSincerely ThankJanet MitchellCoordinator of Religious EducationLiz ReidConfirmation Coordinator and all our Catechistsfor your dedication to our Faith Formation Program and for sharing your faith with our children.
216 Scribner Avenue I Norwalk, CT 06854 I 203-838-3788 I STMatthewNorwalk.org

Thank you and God Bless!

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Sincerely Thank
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Bible Challenge from page 20
Leadership Institute

New Offerings and Upcoming Events

By DR. PATRICK DONOVAN

A quick visit to The Leadership Institute website is all you need to introduce yourself to some of the latest initiatives the Institute has to offer. A recent revamp of the website divides opportunities into four categories: personal formation, family formation, parish formation, and resources. Here’s a brief look at some of the new features.

Liturgical formation continues for those who wish to serve as a reader, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, or musician in their parish. More than 1,500 completed formation during the grandfathering phase and we have now opened formation to new ministers. All details are outlined on the formation page and new ministers may register for upcoming formation sessions, read about requirements, and check out the latest resources online.

Formation for catechists is in high gear. More than 1,500 catechist have participated in the face-to-face formation, which will continue through the first week of January when the online formation will begin. Catechists will have until the end of May to complete the online portion of formation.

Weekly Updates Online Institute provides recommendations for weekly movie nights. Each week, a new recommendation and explanation is available for your consideration.

The Catequizer is a new feature that launched October 1. Each week, a new quiz is posted online for you to grow in your faith. The quizzes are not only a fun way to learn the faith, but each answer includes catechetical material and links to online resources to help you learn more. Current topics include liturgical seasons, an introduction to the Old Testament, general Catholic knowledge, introduction to saints, the first followers, church history, and the sacraments. If funding can be obtained, the weekly quizzes will become a skill for your smart speaker at home. Just imagine standing in your living room saying, “Alexa, make me a smarter Catholic” and then participating in a short quiz to learn more about your faith.

Lifelong Lessons also launched in early October. From the immersion to the Paschal mystery and from friends and families to tough situations at home and school, these micro-learning sessions are meant to help you encounter the holy in the midst of your busy lives. The videos range from two to five minutes and feature Catholic artists, speakers, musicians, and catechists from around the country. Each video offers practical advice and inspiring stories. A new video is added each week.

New Projects

Alpha-bits is a project funded, in part, by the John Paul II Fund for religious education and youth ministry. The purpose of the project is to help parents understand their roles as “the first teachers in the ways of faith.” By 2025, which is the year when the youngest members of generation alpha will be born, Gen Alpha will account for 2 billion of the global population. These are the children of millennials and late Gen Xers who are very different than any generations before them. The millennials, once called the “nones” by the Pew Center for Research, often lack the language necessary to share their faith with their children. To help mom and dad grow in their faith, this section of the website allows users to see suggestions, separated by age from birth to 9 years. Alpha-bits strives to answer questions such as, “When should I be teaching my children the appropriate prayers?” “What role do godparents and grandparents play in the faith development of children?” “How can mom and dad work together to make sure the young person grows in appreciation for their Catholic faith?”

We will continue to update Alpha-bits with suggestions, tips and links to resources to help moms and dads both grow in their faith and raise faith-filled children.

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead, two great resources are launching in the first quarter of 2020. The first is an interactive website, Understanding the Mass. This resource will include an overview of every step of our Eucharistic celebration so parents and young people can grow in their understanding of why we do what we do when we celebrate the Mass.

In addition to the website, each family and parish will be invited to order a banner, measuring 2’ x 10’, that takes all the elements of the website and puts them in a visual form that can be used in a classroom or at home. Using your smart phone and the QR codes on the banner, participants will be able to link to educational videos, quizzes, and more resources to extend the learning.

Also coming in 2020 are specific resources for parents. As the catechist formation continues, I am hearing more and more about the need to help parents learn more about their faith so that they can, in turn, pass the faith on to their children. We have some great ideas about how we can make this happen.

Finally, in response to the request by many to host short pilgrimages, the Institute will host two pilgrimages in 2020. The first is to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC during May 2020 and a second to the Shrine of Mother Frances Cabrini in New York during November 2020.

To learn more about these or any other resources or learning opportunities from The Leadership Institute, please be sure to subscribe to the Institute newsletter. Just visit the Institute website at www.formationreimagined.org, and click the contact button.
Celebrating Adoption

Forming a ‘Forever Family’

By AMY ZAJAC

Since its inception as a licensed social service agency in 1915, Catholic Charities of Fairfield County has always offered services to women experiencing unplanned pregnancies and applicants wishing to adopt a child. When people hear the name “Catholic Charities,” adoption is the first service that comes to mind. Over the years, this program has remained a staple of the agency with thousands of families being formed; however how the services have been implemented has changed.

Gone are the days of the traditional domestic adoptions. They still occur to some extent, but families have to think outside of the box in order to form their families through adoption. This includes working with consultants, adopting outside of Connecticut and using online resources. Families have moved from adopting domestically, to internationally and now even international adoptions have changed.

Ronald and Liza Yeomans found an alternative option that worked for them. After marrying later in life, Ron and Liza wanted to start a family. Unfortunately, they struggled with infertility issues and doctors made it clear that they would not be able to conceive a child on their own. Adopting through the traditional means would have been problematic for them due to their ages. Adopting internationally could have been problematic because many countries have age restrictions and they would have only been eligible for an older child. This did not deter them because they held onto their faith that they were meant to be parents.

As fate would have it, things worked out for them to adopt internationally but not in the traditional way. Liza’s brother and his wife found out that they were going to have a baby. However, their child would face some minor medical complications and be born with a hole in his heart. In addition to the child’s medical issues, the parents were struggling financially and felt they could not appropriately care for him. The couple knew Ron and Liza wanted a child of their own and approached them to adopt this baby through an international kinship adoption.

“The entire process was overwhelming, but we contacted Catholic Charities’ Family Directions Program to help us because they are Hague Accredited and understood what needed to be done every step of the way,” stated Ronald Yeomans. “It was comforting to know there was someone local to help us.” International regulations require that adoption applicants work with a Hague Accredited agency. Catholic Charities is in fact one of two Hague Accredited agencies in the state, and the only Catholic agency.

Keane was born in the Philippines in 2013, but did not arrive in the United States until 2018. During that time he was cared for by family members residing in the Philippines. Ron and Liza visited with him as much as possible from then until he arrived in the United States in 2018. They also supported him financially, sending money to Liza’s relatives in the Philippines. Since his arrival, he has received medical care in the United States and is deemed healthy. He has adjusted to his new surroundings and is thriving in school.

In October, Keane, Ron and Liza visited the Darien Probate Court to finalize his adoption here in the United States. It was a quiet, private ceremony that the 6 year old boy fully understood. When the Judge asked him what the ceremony meant, Keane responded “This means that this is my Mommy and Daddy forever.”

(If you are interested in learning more about Catholic Charities’ Adoption Services visit www.ccfairfield.org/programs/family-directions.)

FROM OUR YOUNGEST CLIENTS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS, WE ALL AGREE, THAT WE COULD USE YOUR HELP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

For over 100 years, Catholic Charities has been providing services to our most vulnerable friends and neighbors of Fairfield County in their time of need. With your help, we are able to offer a variety of programs and services that:

Feed the Hungry and Shelter the Homeless | Strengthening Families in Need | Supporting the Physically and Emotionally Challenged | Protecting/Nurturing Children and Youth Welcoming and Integrating Immigrants

This Christmas season, as we pause to remember those who have special meaning in our lives, please consider making a difference in the lives of those around us who may need it the most.

Thank you for your compassionate generosity.

GIFT IDEAS

$250 covers the cost of 6 counseling sessions at our behavioral health clinic.
$500 assists a Dreamer with DACA renewal application fee.
$1,000 serves 500 lunches for five days (100 guests per lunch).
$2,500 pays for two months of preschool tuition for a child.

To make your GIFT ONLINE, please visit ccfairfield.org/event/appeal
or Send a check made payable to “Catholic Charities” to:
Catholic Charities of Fairfield County | 238 Jewett Avenue | Bridgeport, CT 06606

For more information about Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, please call Amy Zajac at 203-416-1336
Setenta feligreses hispanos

Se gradúan en curso de ‘Mariología’

By MARICARMEN GODOY

BRIDGEPORT—La parroquia de Saint Mary ubicada en el corazón de Bridgeport, hospedó por un año consecutivo a setenta feligreses hispanos que estudian en forma consecutiva en 33 sesiones el curso de Mariología denominado: “Teología y Espiritualidad Mariana”.

El P. Rolando Torres, párroco de Saint Mary, quien es “mariano” desde su niñez, desde su espacio radial Alfa y Omega transmitió vía Face Book Live, en sus inter-relaciones con sus oyentes se declaró un ferviente devoto de la Virgen María y al preguntarle por qué ofreció este curso tan singular desde septiembre del 2018, debido a que NO está dirigido al clero solo porque él es parte de la social parroquial.

EL libro está tan bien escrito por su Inmaculada Concepción y Madre de Dios y eso implica entender que María fue subida al cielo por los ángeles y al profeta Elías, en cambio, vino por él un carro de fuego.

Otra de las preguntas hechas al sacerdote se centró en torno a la devoción de rezar el Rosario y el aumento de los misterios Luminosos, frente a esto, el religioso respondió que fue el Papa Juan Pablo II que decidió colocarlos debido a que no se hablaba sobre algunos hechos de Jesús como el bautismo, la eucaristía y la multiplicación de los panes.

El próximo sábado 16 de noviembre la parroquia de Saint Mary se incorpora a las seis de la tarde se realizará la fiesta patronal en honor a la virgen de La Providencia, patrona de Puerto Rico, que será presidida por el obispo de Caguas, Monseñor Eusebio Ramos. Y posterior a la homilía habrá una fiesta borinqueña en el salón social parroquial.
**Catholic Academy, Bpt.**

**Fall dinner fundraiser**

By SUSAN CECERE

BRIDGEPORT—On October 2, Catholic Academy of Bridgeport Board Chair Brad Evans welcomed 60 guests to the school’s 10th Annual Fall Dinner celebration at Polpo Restaurant in Greenwich.

Sixty guests dined on Polpo’s upscale Italian fare. Those in attendance included eight of the Academy’s 12 board members, all of the principals from the Academy’s four Bridgeport campuses and many longtime and faithful supporters of the school.

Angela Pohlen, who took over as the Academy’s executive director in July when Sr. Joan Magnetti retired, thanked Ron and Dominque Rosa, owners of Polpo, for once again underwriting the food for this annual event. Past board chair Jim Bailey, who eceded the event, recognized Sr. Magnetti for her role in the Annual Fall Dinner since its inception in 2010 as well as for her committed and innovative leadership during the 10 years she served as the schools ED, a period during which the Academy transitioned from six schools to four and the budget went from seeing a deficit of $2.4 million to being completely balanced every year for the past six years.

Bailey also recognized alumnus Sergio Lara, who 10 years ago was a recent graduate of the Academy working toward a bachelor’s in Marketing at Fairfield University and the speaker at the initial Fall Dinner fundraiser.

“Since then, Sergio has gone on to spend six incredible years at PricewaterhouseCoopers and today is a Corporate Strategy Consultant at BDO. Sergio recently told me that it was only through financial assistance that he was able to attend our school, and that none of this would have been possible were it not for generous people like you sitting here tonight.”

Bailey said that the choice of dates for tonight’s dinner was intentional, for in the Catholic Church, October 2 is the Feast of the Guardian Angels. “One of the roles of Guardian Angels is to protect those entrusted to their care, and that certainly is true of all of you. Through the years we have asked you to partner with us so that we can educate those children entrusted to us in a safe, nurturing, Christ-centered environment; one where personal and moral character is being shaped, mutual respect and kindness are being taught, and students graduate with the confidence and ability to succeed in life; an environment that, in many instances, is not available in the public sector.”

Each guest received a crystal angel as a small token of the school’s gratitude for their kindness and generosity through the years. “When you hang it, I hope you will remember what a tremendous and powerful difference you have made in the lives of our students,” said Bailey.

A secondary theme of the evening was “unwritten,” and Jasmine Fuller, an alumna of the Academy’s St. Ann campus and a current junior at Kolbe, wowed the crowd with her singing of Unwritten by Natasha Bedingfield. Afterwards, Pohlen said, “If you read the statistics from the city of Bridgeport, they’re usually written with a period—as if it’s a foregone conclusion that the children of this city will continue in the perpetual cycle of underachievement because of their own deficits and not those of the system of which they are a part. This is a tragedy of monumental proportions. Our students are not statistics—they are individuals with the power and ability to overcome the obstacles that others have already deemed insurmountable. They will write their own stories, and it is our privilege to have a part in that authorship.”

Silver frames with personal quotes from many of the Academy’s 7th and 8th grade students adorned each table throughout the room. These quotes were written by the students after they reflected on the song Unwritten and the following statistics: Only 23 percent of students in the Bridgeport public school system are performing at grade level compared to more than 80 percent of Catholic Academy of Bridgeport students, and barely 60 percent of Bridgeport public school students graduate high school compared to 100 percent of the Academy students.

After the entree course, guests had the opportunity to hear from Roseangel Zayas, an 8th-grader on the Academy’s St. Augustine campus, whose favorite subject is English and who writes for the school’s newspaper and is a member of the yearbook staff. “Going to school here has given me a great education and the teachers always have the best interest of me in mind; they don’t just teach for the paycheck,” she said. “When I was in 5th grade, my family experienced an unexpected fire. My father got 3rd-degree burns and my mother 2nd-degree burns. All of our possessions were destroyed. The school worked to get my family a $1,200 security deposit.”

**DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT November 17—December 14**

**NOVEMBER**

9 Rev. Rocco D. Nadile

20 Rev. Francis J. Fulop

21 Rev. John F. Culliton

22 Rev. Hugh A. Coffey

23 Msgr. Edwin F. Burke

24 Rev. Stephen J. Panik

25 Msgr. Joseph N. Murphy

26 Rev. Carducci D’Amico

27 Rev. Robert G. Pohley

28 Deacon Joseph Lawrence Rowan

29 Deacon John Barton

30 Rev. Myron V. Miller

31 Deacon Wayne E. Malloy

**DECEMBER**

1 Deacon Robert W. Becker

2 Deacon Salvatore M. Clarizio

3 Rev. Michael E. Kearney

4 Msgr. Alfred J. Sienkiewicz

5 Rev. Thomas Gwоздz, OFM Conv.

6 Rev. Joseph A. Pisarkiew

7 Rev. Vincent J. O’Connor

8 Deacon George Saulnier

9 Rev. Rufin Kuveikis, OFM Cap.

10 Msgr. Bartholomeusz J. Skelly

11 Rev. Ambrose Walas, OFM Conv.

12 Rev. Paul M. Spodnik

13 Rev. Alfred E. Russo
**Sports**

**Domingos small in stature, large in productivity**

By DON HARRISON

Many exceptional athletes are small in stature. Think of Jose Altuve, the Houston Astros’ 5-foot-6 All-Star second baseman, a three-time batting champion and the dynamic field leader of baseball’s American League Championship team.

Much closer to home, there is a high school soccer player named Toni Domingos, who, despite her diminutive 5-foot-2 frame, is averaging two goals per match for Notre Dame of Fairfield. With 31 goals through the end of the regular season, Domingos was selected to the Connecticut Girls Soccer Coaches Association’s Class M All-State Team. And now, although just a junior and with another season at Notre Dame still ahead, she’s already committed to attending the University of Maryland in 2021.

Antonieta “Toni” Domingos was just two years old when her parents, Renata and Vander, immigrated to the U.S. from a small town in Brazil. She followed her older brother Gabriel into soccer at an early age.

“I used to watch him play, and then we played together,” she explains. “He forced me to work harder.”

As a freshman forward, Domingos quickly—the key word in her game—became the Lancers’ go-to player and topped the squad with 23 goals. And she was the team leader again as a sophomore with 19 goals, sparking Notre Dame to a quarter-final finish in the CIAC Class M state tournament. The 2019 Lancers will enter the South-West Conference tournament with an 11-2-3 won-lost-tied record.

“Freshman year, I used to get very frustrated,” she recalls. “I couldn’t do what I wanted to do; they (opponents) were bigger and stronger and bodied me off the ball.” And so she spent considerable time in the gym to build up her strength.

Domingos is committed to soccer the year-round. She develops her skills during the spring and summer playing for the Yankee United F.C., a program for girls and young women operated by Moses and Jack Noguiera, the head coach at St. Joseph High.

Moses has a rich soccer pedigree. At UConn, he played for one of the game’s legends, the late Joe Morrone. He served as the boys’ coach for a decade at the former Central Catholic High in Norwalk, as the men’s coach for 16 seasons at Western Connecticut State University, and now he’s in his sixth year as coach and guidance counselor at Notre Dame. The Lancers have shared two state titles (2015, 2016) during his tenure.

“When I doubt myself,” says Toni Domingos, “Coach Moses says, ‘You’ve got this.’ He’s really helped me.”
November – days on the edge of winter. The land begins to tuck itself in for winter. The trees are stripped; the leaves have colored and fallen. Storm windows go on. It is the time of the long nights, the first freeze, and the busy squirrels. November silence is upon the land. The loud voices of spring and summer have had their say. Now there’s the waiting for winter to take command. November is always tinged with sorrow. It is the time when we recall those who are dear to us and are gone from us. “Et omni- bus in Christo Quiescentibus,” and for all who rest in Christ. How much meaning these words gather. So many people I have loved and lost. There are no substitutes for them. They are the people with whom I identified myself. The world without them is incomplete; all those vanished faces and voices. Memories of those loved ones can fill my heart with distant music. There’s a longing for every one of them to be living, and to have it all over again. So many people I loved are gone. It’s almost two societies, the living and the dead, and I live with them both. When I put their deaths in the context of our Christian faith, I think of them as people whose trials have come to an end and the winter of their souls has passed forever. They are never to know sorrow again: “Never again will weeping and crying be heard among them” (Isaiah 65:19); Death can be a release.

Many writers point out that the whole process of dying takes place thoroughly the whole of life. There are the many experiences of death in life. The little deaths include such events as the death of one’s youth, the experiences of failure, the best friend moving away, the demise of other friendships, the humiliations we suffer, the disappointments, the injustices, sickness, the decline of our powers, a program to which we dedicated so much energy folding up, the; “yeses” we say close the door on other possibilities. So many experiences are a kind of death. Death comes by installments.

There are some interesting findings about people’s final moments. Doctors tell that patients who are desperately ill, suffering great pain, dying, often call out for their mothers. It is well-known that dying soldiers on battle fields often call out for their mothers (the movies often depict this, e.g., “Saving Private Ryan” and “Battleground”). It seems to be the call of the memory of being loved. According to the research of Mary Pipher, a large percentage of last words are: “I love you” or “thank you.”

The five last things which people most want or need at the end of their lives are: granting forgiveness, seeking forgiveness, expressing gratitude, demonstrating love, saying good-bye.

There have been so many deaths lately that I can feel the wind at my back. Eventually, I will have to fold up my tent (1Peter 1:13). And the film will be chattering in the empty projector.

I hope I don’t leave deeds undone and words left unsaid. Leaving one’s place at the table can be hard. I still love this world, its beauty, love, and self-giving. Death is a call to live. Let us kiss the earth and be joyful and make much of our time and be kindly to everyone, even those who do not deserve it.

As the Irish would say my wife up and died on me. There are still times when I catch myself looking for her, and even expect to see her. Like many others, I’ve come to know that the boundary between this life and the next is more permeable than many think. Those we have lost, for whom we weep, have not fully left us. I have no doubts my wife watches over me. There is that wonderful expression from the Song of Songs, “Love is as strong as death” (89:6). Indeed, our dead follow us, they are near to us in the beautiful delicacy of love, they watch with solicitude our every hour. I have no doubts that my wife watches over me from somewhere. Her affection, her attention, her interest has not died with her body. And as Paul tells us, “we shall see one another again.” We shall once again see the faces and hear the voices of our beloved dead. As one poet put it: “Oh, the rapture of that meeting; Oh, the joy to see you coming!” I believe that our joy will be still greater than if we had never been separated. We will be rejoined in an ever dearer union.

Though lovers be lost love shall not; And death shall have no dominion. (Dylan Thomas, “And Death Shall Have No Dominion”)

Finally, in one of Rod Serling’s dramas on the early TV series The Twilight Zone, an elderly woman living alone is afraid to die. She lives in a basement apartment where she is beset by anxiety, until a young man comes and befriends her. He becomes the recipient of her total trust and confidence. One day he asks her to leave her apartment and come with him. With trusting eyes she looks up at him and says, “Yes.” She puts her hand in his; he takes her arm and they leave. The final scene reverts to her apartment where she lies dead on her bed. The message is strikingly Christian.
The darkness is ending

by Joe Pisani

A favorite pastime of my friend Arthur is to email me stories about the latest “outrage” of the Catholic Church. He has a steady supply because the secular media has been relentless. He takes perverse satisfaction in sending articles about Cardinal George Pell’s conviction, the sex abuse scandal in the Philippines, attorneys general seeking diocesan records, and anything else he can uncover.

With each story, he includes a terse commentary like “Can you believe this?!” Or “When will it end?!” Or “They’re at it again!!!”

In the interests of full disclosure, I should say he’s not a Catholic and probably best described as a non-practicing Protestant. (Catholics aren’t the only ones who lapse from their faith.)

The subtext of this passive-aggressive behavior—his unspoken question—has always been: “When are you going to come to your senses and leave the Church?”

Even though I understand the game he’s playing, I always take the bait and get defensive. Nowadays it’s not easy being a proud Catholic, but what none of the detractors understands is that the Church isn’t an institution like the federal government, AARP, the Democratic Party or NBC. The Church is truly the Bride of Christ, and he is guiding her even though sometimes it’s difficult for us myopic humans to comprehend that.

One article Arthur sent me was written by a researcher who left a career at Yale to enter the priesthood after 50 years of decline, more important things like political causes, student loan forgiveness and climate change.

I tried to think of a response. Here it is.

Regardless of what the media or pollsters say, I’ve seen evidence that Jesus is leading us out of the darkness, which is something secular reporters may never understand.

If we alone were responsible for saving the Church, it would not be saved. Remember what Jesus said? He’s the vine. We’re just the branches. And without him, we can do nothing. You see, he’s turning things around right before our eyes—although I suspect it will take Pew and the New York Times another 10 years to realize it. So while they wait, listen to what I have to say.

I’ve witnessed the revival firsthand many, many times over the past several years while interviewing converts to Catholicism, young people discerning vocations, and lapsed Catholics returning to the Eucharist. I’ve also met people who did what the rich young man couldn’t do … and left everything to follow Jesus.

There was the religious sister who abandoned her promising career at the Chicago Symphony, the researcher who left a career at Yale to enter the priesthood and many more, including converts who were pagans, atheists, Baptists, Jews and, yes, those notorious “nones.” They had one thing in common. They all said, “Yes” when Jesus said to them, “Follow me.”

Never doubt for a moment that Jesus is at work in an amazing way, making all things new, purifying and reviving the Church. Regardless of what the media, the academics and the researchers say, a new time is upon us. Jesus is sending special graces to souls who are spiritually starving. There will be a renewal unlike any in history. All we have to do is pray and take our direction from him a day at a time.

The darkness is ending.

Sorry, Arthur.
HARTFORD—In its 12th annual State of Abortion in Connecticut report, the Connecticut Catholic Conference, which is the public policy office of the Catholic Bishops in Connecticut, revealed today that 75 percent of abortions performed in Connecticut during 2018 were paid for with taxpayer dollars.

In 2018, there were 9,294 abortions reported to the Department of Public Health as required by law. Of those abortions reported, 6,995 were performed on low-income women under the state’s Medicaid programs, most commonly known as HUSKY. Since the federal government does not reimburse the state for abortion expenses, the Connecticut taxpayers covered the expenses, which totaled $4.2 million. This information was provided to the Conference by the Connecticut Department of Social Services through a Freedom of Information request.

According to the Conference, it is conceivable that over the last 20 years Connecticut taxpayers have paid for approximately 140,000 abortions at a cost of $84 million. This is a conservative estimate, since the number of abortions performed in previous years was higher than the 9,294 total abortions reported in 2018. The number of abortions performed in Connecticut annually has declined by 32 percent over the last 10 years. This is reflective of a national trend.

“The large number of abortions performed on low-income women is reflective of Planned Parenthood’s financial dependency on this population group and the state income it generates to the organization. It is unfortunate that the political leaders in our state have never challenged the lower court’s ruling that is forcing many citizens to fund something that they find completely immoral and in direct conflict with their religious beliefs,” said Chris Healy, executive director of the Catholic Conference.

The report also directly refutes the claims made by pro-choice advocates that changes in federal funding requirements for Title X family planning funds will hurt low-income women. Abortion services, the primary focus of Planned Parenthood centers, is already covered 100 percent by the state’s taxpayers. The Conference also emphasized that these funds were not cut. Planned Parenthood chose to stop their participation in the Title X program because of two new requirements: 1) Operate a separate facility for abortion services and 2) not provide direct medical referrals for abortions. Both requirements were intended to ensure compliance with already existing federal law that prohibits using the funding for abortions.

Even without Title X funds, Planned Parenthood of Southern New England is in an extremely strong financial position according to its own publicly available financial reports.

In the report, the Conference also highlights the lack of medical services provided by Planned Parenthood centers. The primary services they offer are extremely limited and can be obtained at other health centers, especially if the patient is covered by HUSKY. The one unique service they offer is abortion. Only four Planned Parenthood centers in Connecticut offer limited primary care services.

“Pro-choice advocates constantly make it appear that Planned Parenthood centers are a critical part of the healthcare system in our state, especially for low-income women. This is simply not true,” stated Healy. “Most of their services, with the exception of abortion services, can be found at other medical facilities across our state, such as Federally Qualified Health Centers. Federal money would be better spent on medical clinics that truly do offer a wide range of medical services to low-income residents.”


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Catholic Academy
FROM PAGE 26

for a new house plus threw me a housewarming party. I’m so grateful that God put such kind-hearted people in my path. They are like family to me,” Zayas said.

Although she does not come from a family of graduates, Zayas said she wants to be the first one “to go on to a good high school where I will continue to become the me God planned me to be.”

Later in the night, “Hands Up for Scholarship” pushed proceeds of the fundraiser above $300,000. All money will go to support students in the Academy, which educates nearly 900 children on four campuses in grades preschool through 8th in the city of Bridgeport, 85 percent of whom cannot afford the annual tuition of $5,000 and most of whom live below the poverty level.

The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport must raise more than $2 million each year for scholarship.

(For more information, visit www.catholicacademybridgeport.org or call 203.362.2990.)
**Bits and Pieces**

**Credo Young Adult Ministry in South Norwalk** meets twice a month on **Wed. evenings from 7-9 pm** at St. Joseph in South Norwalk. Young adults ages 21-31 are welcome! For more info visit stjospehosono.org/credo.

**COME AND SEE** if you are being called to a vocation in the Secular Franciscan Order visit St. Anthony of Padua Church in Fairfield at **9:30 am on Sat., Nov. 16** with Fr. Larry Carew. After Mass, there will be a social and meeting held in the Parish Hall. All are welcome! For more info, call Fran Karpiej, OFS, at 203.452.7040 or paxjc@aol.com.

**ST. LUKE CHURCH IN WESTPORT** is hosting their annual Harvest Fair and Shabby Chic Boutique on **Nov. 16** from 10 am-4 pm and Sun., Nov. 17 from 10 am-3 pm. Admission is free and all proceeds will benefit charity.

**A Pulitzer Prize Winning Journalist and Author**—Paul Moses will deliver a talk on Mother Cabrini and her message on **Oct. 5**, following a Mass celebrated in Italian by Bishop Frank Caggiano at **10 am** at Sacred Heart Church in Stamford.

**Women, Wine and The Divine**—A new women’s group is starting in Stamford for all women (over 21) from 7:30-9:30 pm (Nov 18, and Dec 16) at the Shorehaven Golf Club from 7:30-9:30 am. Full details on the event, as well as registration for tickets and tables can be found at www.ccfairefield.org/event/2019-norwalk-celebrity-breakfast.

**Open Call for Singers**—The Westport Town Hall Christmas Benefit Concert for the Malta House of Bridgeport will be held on **Fri., Dec. 6** at St. John’s Episcopal Church, 628 Main Street, Stamford. Interested singers should contact the director, Marlane Tubridy via email at: artsforthecomunity@gmail.com.

**Join Us on** **Fri., Dec. 6 at 7:15 pm at St. Luke Church in Westport for “Advent: A Season for Holy Longing” with a reflection by Deacon Vincent Gauthier.**

**Diocesan and New Jersey**—Parish of St. John the Baptist in Vineland will be featuring. A reception will follow at 8 pm and on taking your faith to the next level on Sat., March 21 from 9 am-2 pm. This event is sponsored by the St. Francis Women’s Guild. For more info email: womensguildSFA@gmail.com.

**Christ the King**

**Catholic Church, Trumbull** will be having a 10-day pilgrimage to Italy from **May 18-27, 2020** led by spiritual director Father Walsh. For more info call the Parish Office at: 203.268.8695.

**Spiritual Pilgrimage to Holy Land, Italy and Medjugorje**—Sept., 14-28, 2020 leaving from New York, New York. Price: $4,399. For reservation and itinerary please contact Father Marcel Saint Jean at Christ the King Parish in Trumbull at 203.434.7208 or email: marcel-saintjean@gmail.com.

**25 Ways to Use Advent to Prepare for Christmas**

**To download this Advent resource provided by the Leadership Institute visit:** formationreimagined.org

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