

# FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

FEBRUARY 2016 | VOLUME 33, NUMBER 2 | LENT ISSUE

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# Synod: The Next Step

## Director of Leadership Institute appointed

BRIDGEPORT—Patrick J. Donovan, executive director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware, has agreed to serve as the inaugural director of the newly established Diocesan Leadership Institute, effective immediately.

Donovan, an author and online contributor to “Youth Ministry Access,” a national website, is also serving as the chair of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry strategic planning committee.

“Patrick has wide experience in leading strategic planning processes and managing large ministerial organizations. He brings great professional knowledge and pastoral experience in various fields of ministry, which will help him to guide the creation of the Institute,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

“I welcome him and his fam-

ily into our diocesan family and ask for your prayers for them as he begins this new chapter in his ministry,” the bishop said.

The Diocesan Leadership Institute is a key initiative flowing from the recently concluded Diocesan Synod. It will provide ongoing, systematic formation and support for all current Church leaders in the diocese, initially focusing on the laity but also ultimately including clergy and those in consecrated life.

Patrick Turner, director of Strategic and Pastoral Planning of the Diocese of Bridgeport, said that Donovan will be working in collaboration with local and diocesan pastoral leaders.

“The Institute will provide exemplary theological and spiritual education and pastoral leadership formation for every adult who wishes to grow in the knowledge of the Catholic faith and in their personal relationship with the



Lord,” said Turner, who believes the Institute will have an impact on the long-term spiritual and pastoral renewal of the diocese.

“Patrick comes to us ably equipped to realize these goals in collaboration with local and

diocesan pastoral leaders,” said Bishop Caggiano.

Donovan holds a bachelor’s degree in communications from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and an MA in theology from the University of

Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind. Prior to coming to the Diocese of Wilmington, he served as a parish youth minister and theology instructor in the Diocese of Knoxville, Tenn.

He is the co-author of *Reaching Teens through Film*, Volumes 9, 10 and 11 and is a regular contributor to “Youth Ministry Access,” an online ministry service provided by the Center for Ministry Development. His most recent book, *Using the Remote to Channel Jesus*, is available from St. Mary’s Press.

He has given presentations across the country on using technology in ministry, using modern media to spread the Gospel and creating effective ministry for young people.

Patrick and his wife, Maureen, have four children and live in Bear, Del. In the coming months, they will be permanently relocating to the diocese. ■

## Loaves & Fishes

Help Us Feed the Hungry this Lenten Season



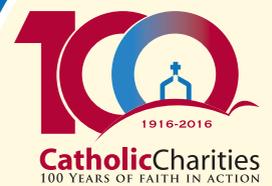
Your gift helps these soup kitchens and pantries serve over one million meals every year in Fairfield County:

- New Covenant Center, Stamford
- Senior Nutrition Programs, Southern Fairfield
- The Thomas Merton Center, Bridgeport
- Dorothy Day House of Hospitality, Danbury
- Morning Glory Breakfast Program, Danbury

100% of the proceeds of Loaves and Fishes goes directly to provide food for the neediest in our community. Any amount you can give will make a difference.

All parishes in the Diocese of Bridgeport will have envelopes available for donation during Lent.

To donate online go to: [www.ccfairfield.org/donate/](http://www.ccfairfield.org/donate/)



### ON THE COVER

**ASHES TO GO**—Sister Sally Norcross, C.N.D. distributed ashes at Norwalk Community College. In the spirit of Pope Francis and his proclamation of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, Father Walter Orlowski, pastor, and Sister Sally, coordinator of Pastoral Care at St. Matthew Parish took to the road to distribute ashes to people throughout the city. **ABOVE THE FOLD**: Students at St. Lawrence School in Huntington receive ashes. (PHOTOS BY MICHELLE BABYAK)

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## Local News

## Centers of Mercy chosen in diocese

BRIDGEPORT—During this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy Bishop Frank J. Caggiano has worked with diocesan pastors and priests to open Centers of Mercy throughout Fairfield County.

"I am delighted to confirm an initiative of great importance in the life of our diocese," said the bishop, "and I am most grateful to the pastors of these parishes for their generosity in making their churches available for this important initiative."

Two Centers of Mercy will be located in each Vicariate of the diocese, one for Tuesday evenings and one for Thursday evenings. The Centers of Mercy will be open, and a priest will be available to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation, each Tuesday or Thursday evening, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm beginning in Lent, and extending throughout the Year of Mercy.

"With the Centers of Mercy, no Catholic in our diocese will need to wait more than two or three days before there are regularly scheduled Confessions in his or her local area," the bishop said.

The Centers of Mercy in the Diocese of Bridgeport are open at the following locations:

**On TUESDAY evenings,  
from 7-8:30 pm:**

Vicariate I: Holy Spirit,  
Stamford

Vicariate II: St. Matthew,  
Norwalk

Vicariate III: Our Lady  
of the Assumption, Fairfield

Vicariate IV: St. Catherine  
of Siena, Trumbull

Vicariate V: St. Joseph,  
Brookfield

Vicariate VI: St. Augustine  
Cathedral, Bridgeport

**On THURSDAY evenings,  
from 7-8:30 pm:**

Vicariate I: St. Thomas More,  
Darien

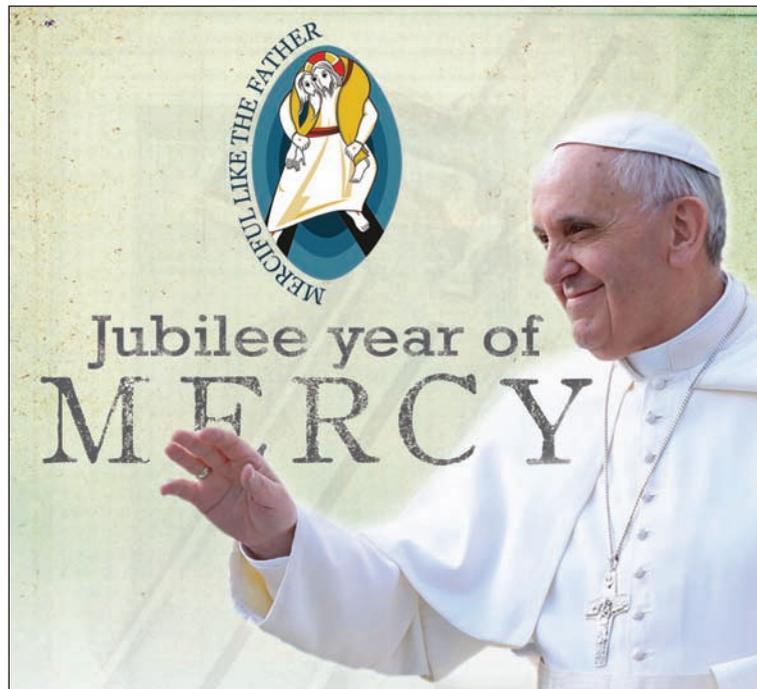
Vicariate II: Assumption,  
Westport

Vicariate III: St. Pius X,  
Fairfield

Vicariate IV: St. Theresa,  
Trumbull

Vicariate V: Sacred Heart,  
Danbury

Vicariate VI: St. Charles  
Borromeo, Bridgeport



The Centers of Mercy will continue throughout this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy:

- The Centers of Mercy for THURSDAYS began on February 11, the day after Ash Wednesday, and will continue each Thursday thereafter until November 17.

- The Centers of Mercy for TUESDAYS began on February 16, the Tuesday after Ash Wednesday, and will continue each Tuesday thereafter until November 15.

The bishop said the Centers of Mercy will replace the Lenten Confession Campaign in the

diocese and that he is strongly encouraging each parish to continue to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the season of Lent on a weekly basis

"There is no better or more consequential use of our time as priests than in being the instruments of God's love, healing, and mercy in this sacrament," said the bishop, who is planning to visit the different centers and hear confessions in the coming months.

The bishop said he is grateful that priests from surrounding parishes have volunteered their time to hear confessions at the Centers of Mercy.

"Please join me in praying that this initiative, with God's grace, will bear abundant fruit in the life of our diocese during this Year of Mercy," the bishop said in launching the effort.

For more on the Jubilee of Mercy, see page 8.

(For more info on the Centers of Mercy, contact Father Joseph Marcello, coordinator of diocesan observance of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy: 203.377.3133 or FrMarcello@diobpt.org.)

## White Mass talk to focus on 'Ethics of Genetics'

BRIDGEPORT—Sister Maureen McGuire, DC, executive vice president of Mission Integration of Ascension Health will be the featured speaker at the 23rd annual White Mass breakfast set for Sunday, March 6, at 9:30 am at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport.

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano will be the principal celebrant and homilist at the Mass, which honors healthcare professionals throughout the diocese. Breakfast will follow at Testo's Restaurant in Bridgeport.

"In her role, Sister Maureen provides leadership in creating strategy and initiatives in mission and values integration, workplace spirituality, ethics, leadership formation and spiritual care," said Bishop Caggiano. "Her work supports the efforts of the health ministry in continuing the healing mission of Jesus and we welcome her thoughts on the many challenges faced by Catholic health-



SISTER MAUREEN MCGUIRE, DC

care providers."

Ascension Health is the sponsor of St. Vincent's Health Services and St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport.

During the White Mass, two area healthcare professionals will be presented the Father Rufin Compassionate Care Award. The recipients, to be

announced on March 6, are traditionally drawn from the ranks of physicians, nurses, dentists, healthcare workers or healthcare volunteers in Fairfield County who exemplify the compassionate and loving care for the sick for which the late Father Rufin Kuveikis, a Capuchin Franciscan and chaplain at Norwalk Hospital for 18 years. He died in 2008 at age 86.

Immediately prior to joining the senior leadership team of Ascension Health in 2002, Sister Maureen McGuire served as vice president of Service Culture Development for the Catholic Health System (CHS) of Western New York in Buffalo, and concurrently as vice president of Mission Integration for Mount St. Mary's Hospital and Health Center in Lewiston, N.Y. She also had served as vice president of Mission Integration for Sisters of Charity Hospital in Buffalo, N.Y., and participated in the

early formation of CHS while in that role.

Before entering the healthcare ministry, Sister Maureen held various leadership and direct service roles in professional social work. She began as a caseworker and counselor in child welfare and mental health settings in Philadelphia, Penn. She served as a supervisor at the Family Life Bureau of the Diocese of Allentown in two large rural counties, where she initiated programs of lay formation in 84 parishes preparing married couples to serve as facilitators of programs for engaged couples.

She then assumed a leadership role as part of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, N.Y., serving as executive director of Catholic Family and Community Services in two counties. In this capacity she worked with an interfaith local board to develop a wide variety of community-based services. In 1992, she initiated the

Nazareth Residence for Mothers and Children in Roxbury, Mass., one of the first transitional housing programs in the nation for homeless women and children affected by HIV/AIDS.

Sister Maureen served for six years as seminary directress of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul, working with the new members of the community and developing the interprovincial formation program for the five U.S. provinces.

Sister Maureen earned her bachelor's degree, summa cum laude, from St. Joseph College in Emmitsburg, Md., and received her master's of social work from Temple University in Philadelphia in 1977.

(All healthcare workers and their guests are invited to attend the White Mass. The Mass is also open to the general public. To make a reservation for breakfast at Testo's (\$35/person), contact Janet Davis: 203.416.1636 or jdavis@diobpt.org.)

# Annual Catholic Appeal

## Faith Formation develops best practices for renewal

By PAT HENNESSY

The 2016 Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) "Renewed in Faith, Hope and Charity," assists in responding to the challenges of the Fourth Diocesan Synod. The synod listened to the voices of the faithful in the Diocese of Bridgeport, recognized the need to strengthen and support family life, to create energetic parish outreach to engage youth and to renew the ministry of faith formation throughout the diocese.

These goals are being actively pursued through the restructured Office of Faith Formation, supported by donations to the ACA. "Renewing the ministry of faith formation throughout our diocese was one of the global challenges of the synod," Bishop Frank J.

Caggiano said in announcing the new appointments for Faith Formation. "Leading each person to a deepening relationship with the Lord Jesus in and through his Church begins with a clear, authentic teaching of our Catholic faith."

The members of the Faith Formation Office have all been named to the Catechetical Task Force to explore a new generation of faith formation approaches. Evan Psencik is coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Formation, Rose Talbot-Babey manages the area of Childhood Formation and Kim Quatela is in charge of Family Formation.

"I spend a lot of my time going out, meeting with youth ministers in their parishes and asking, 'What is it you need?'" said Psencik. "They want train-

ing, they want formation. They want to meet together and explore ways to build up their youth groups."

In addition to his meetings at parishes, Psencik is involved in the formation of the Catholic Service Corps, enabling youth to express their faith in action, and in the spiritual preparation of the 250 young pilgrims headed for World Youth Day.

"Most of them are encountering the larger Church for the first time," he noted. "World Youth Day is just the beginning of their faith journey. The hope is that it will light a fire of faith in teens, so that they will want to be more involved when they come home. That can start a ripple effect, inspiring their friends and classmates to learn more about their faith."



SUPPORTED BY THE ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL, the Office of Faith Formation assists youth like these, along with programs for children, married couples and adult formation. (PHOTO BY AMY MORTENSEN)

Rose Talbot-Babey has also spent a large portion of her time in the field, meeting one-on-one with DREs, CREs, and pastors. She is also interfacing with Helen Burland, executive director of St. Catherine Special Needs Center in Fairfield, working to connect those services to parishes with special needs children in their religious education programs.

"As a former DRE myself, I

know that the central question for our catechetical programs is 'Are we producing real disciples of Christ in our parish religious education and Catholic school classes?'" Talbot-Babey said. "Parishes and schools are all doing wonderful things, but all doing different things. The ACA helps support initiatives to bring people together, including catechetical days, pro-

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

## Mom, do you know what I learned at school today?

*"Kids who can't afford Catholic schools get to go with a scholarship, and poor people are fed at soup kitchens and they can get a place to live if they have nowhere to go. We do all that, Mom, when we help the bishop in his Appeal. He asked for our help. Mom, let's make a gift today."*



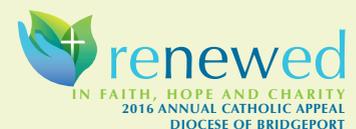
### 2016 Annual Catholic Appeal, Renewed in Faith, Hope and Charity Here's how your gift makes a difference:

- Catholic Charities serves more than 1 million nutritious meals in soup kitchens, food pantries and senior nutrition programs throughout lower Fairfield County.
- Safe, stable and permanent housing is provided for 200 individuals.
- More than 15,000 counseling sessions are conducted for individuals and families to address a variety of coping, mental health, marriage and parent-child issues.
- 38,000 children and young adults participate in religious education programs and, youth take part in a wide range of faith-based programs to mature as holy and active members.

- Education and training prepares 30 men for ordination to priesthood in our Diocese; and 15 men for ordination to the Permanent Diaconate program is fully funded by the Appeal.
- 74 senior priests are cared for at the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of the Clergy Residence in retirement.

**Make your gift today and see the remarkable stories of what your gift can do to provide for the spiritual and material needs in the Diocese of Bridgeport.**

[www.2016ACABridgeport.com](http://www.2016ACABridgeport.com)



# Local News

## Father Seraphim named mission director

BRIDGEPORT—"The whole Church is in mission," said Father Seraphim Ralph Rohlman, diocesan director of the Pontifical Mission Societies. "That's what Jesus told us before he ascended into heaven, to make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19).

The Pontifical Mission Societies include the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Missionary Childhood Association, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle and the Missionary Union of Priests and Religious. "These societies call us to mission," Father Seraphim said. "They give us an opportunity to remind ourselves of the missionary spirit of the Church. Missions, after all, are the mother of the Church. We wouldn't be here without them." Father Seraphim hopes people will come forward to assist the Missions Office in growing the participation and support of these societies in parishes. "We need 'Partners in Mission!'"

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano tapped Father Seraphim for the Missions Office because he had a "world vision," with a personal and wide-ranging background of missionary experience.

Born in Bridgeport, he graduated from Central High School in 1965. He was attending the University of Bridgeport on a full music scholarship when he heard a missionary bishop speak in his home parish of St. Dimitrie Romanian Orthodox Church (then located in Bridgeport, now in Easton).

"He talked about the poverty in the Alaskan missions, poverty so deep that many priests couldn't receive any salary. I thought, 'Wow!'"

That "Wow" led him to St. Herman Theological Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska. While completing his six years of study there he met his future wife, Catherine. Following Orthodox guidelines, they were married before his ordination. (In common with many Eastern Rite Catholic churches, married men may become priests but, once ordained, priests cannot marry.)

During his years in Alaska he traveled throughout the Aleutian island chain and along the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers, performing funerals and marriages, baptizing and celebrating the Divine



MISSIONS ARE the mother of the Church. We wouldn't be here without them," says Father Seraphim, diocesan director of Pontifical Mission Societies

Liturgy. He founded a hospice program in Anchorage and set

up the first chaplaincy program at the Bureau of Indian Affairs

hospital there. He served on the commission for the canonization of St. Yakov Netsvetov, an indigenous Orthodox saint and one of the greatest missionaries in the Church in America.

His next call was a complete change of pace—Hawaii. "Not the tourist Hawaii," he noted wryly, characterizing his tiny missionary parish. He would later be sent to Texas to teach at a seminary, and to New Mexico, Montana and Nebraska.

While he was in Nebraska he became friends with Bishop Fabian Broscowitz, then bishop of Lincoln, Nebraska—which was very much a mission diocese in its own right. "He encouraged me in a period of introspection," Father Seraphim recalled.

Bishop William E. Lori received him and his family into the Catholic Church, and he became a priest for the Diocese of Bridgeport. He celebrated his first public Mass in this diocese at St. Theresa Church, Trumbull, on

January 2, 2010.

"Bishop Caggiano has a missionary spirit," said Father Rohlman. "He hopes that our office will be able to revive a missionary spirit in areas of our diocese where it might be dormant."

The Mission Office receives countless requests for assistance from missionaries throughout the world, and the office welcomes missionaries to speak at parishes for Co-operative Mission Sunday in mid-July. In addition, stipends received from Mass cards assist mission priests in their ministries.

"We have the most precious thing in the world—the Body and Blood of Christ himself in the Eucharist," he said. "The Gospel and the sacraments give life. How can we not be compelled to spread that mission everywhere?"

*(Mass cards are available from the Mission Office for all intentions. The donations support missionaries throughout the world. Call Elaine Bissenden in the Mission Office: 203.416.1447.)*

## Museum displays Charities 100th

FAIRFIELD—About 50 friends of Catholic Charities turned out for a luncheon reception to celebrate the launch of the 100th Anniversary Catholic Charities exhibit, which was displayed at the Fairfield Museum and History Center.

The gathering included board members, CCFC leadership and

staff, along with clients who have been helped over the years.

Former Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch, who was adopted through Catholic Charities, joined the gathering to support Catholic Charities and its work throughout Fairfield County.

Catholic Charities sponsors more than 30 programs that feed the hungry and homebound,



FEEDING THE HUNGRY—In one of the many photos on display at the exhibit, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano visits the New Covenant Center in Stamford, sponsored and managed by Catholic Charities. It is one of the busiest soup kitchens in the state.



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS—Standing Center: Former Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch and Al Barber, President CEO of Catholic Charities are flanked by Catholic Charities staff at yesterday's reception to kick off the 100th Anniversary exhibit at the Fairfield Museum.

shelter the homeless, empower and counsel those in need, and strengthen individuals and families from all faiths and backgrounds across Fairfield County. In addition to its historic adoption program and

behavioral health offerings, Charities may be best known for its sponsorship of Merton Center in Bridgeport and New Covenant Center of Stamford, two of the state's largest soup kitchens.

Save the Date: **May 6, 2016**

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Foundations in Education

*A new initiative dedicated  
to strengthening our Catholic Schools*

*Wee Burn Country Club  
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Darien, CT 06820*

*For more information and to purchase tickets  
Contact the Bishop's Scholarship Fund office  
(203) 416-1629, or email: [bsf@diobpt.org](mailto:bsf@diobpt.org)*

*Proceeds from the evening will benefit the  
Bishop's Scholarship Fund*



# March for Life

## 'Stand up for what is right'

DANBURY—Despite the impending blizzard, 43 students and six chaperones from Immaculate High School in Danbury decided to go ahead with plans to travel to Washington, D.C. for the 2016 March for Life. The March is held every year, regardless of weather, on the anniversary of the 1973 landmark Supreme Court decision of Roe vs. Wade.

Due to the blizzard, the students and chaperones needed to head back home prior to the scheduled 1 pm walk. Thankfully, they had been able to attend the worship concert and kick-off rally at George Mason University the evening before. The rally included music by "I am They" and the "Josh Blakesley Band." Jackie Francois Angel was the guest

speaker and gave a heartfelt message combined with humor and music.

Students participated in the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of the rally, which concluded with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

"Both this year and last year when I attended the March for Life, I felt an overwhelming sense of joy in knowing that I am part of something so large," said senior Jenna Gasparrini. "I had the opportunity to fight for the right to life alongside thousands of other people coming from different backgrounds and from all over the country. Although we weren't able to march this year because of the snowstorm, the 'Life is Very Good' concert the night before was another great

experience because the speakers and singers, as well as the people in the crowd, were all there for the same purpose, creating a sense of unity.

"When I came back home from the March, I felt a boost to my faith life and an increased desire to stand up for what I believe in."

Sophomore A.J. Vitiello, found that "the March for Life is such a great opportunity for young people like me to make a difference in society. It feels like we're doing the world a favor by giving a voice to the voiceless. We gather to protest against such an awful thing, but it's comforting to be part of a community that understands the value of human life.

"It's important to be aware of



BRAVING A BLIZZARD, students from Immaculate High School attended the worship concert and kick-off rally before the March for Life in Washington, D.C. "It's important to be aware of what is really going on, no matter how disturbing it might be," said Immaculate sophomore A.J. Vitiello.

what is really going on, no matter how disturbing it might be. You have to stand up for what is right."

In his own reflection on the March for Life, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano added a strong grounding in faith to the teens' personal witness. "At the heart of the Catholic objection to abortion lies one basic spiritual insight," he said. "In the act of the Incarnation, when the Son of God took on human flesh, a

spiritual solidarity was created between God and every human person. More specifically, by taking on humanity, Christ blessed every human life. To put it bluntly, human life is not disposable, cheap or simply a 'choice,' because God would not take on something that is cheap, disposable or a 'choice.' As Christ's humanity has infinite value, so every human being born in God's image and likeness has priceless value in Christ." ■

# Catholic Art Rockwell Style

By JOSEPH PRONECHEN

Norman Rockwell was an artist whose work touched millions over the span of several decades, especially through the scores of *Saturday Evening Post* covers he illustrated.

His scenes captured moments from everyday life with humor, sentimentality, and even delightful eccentricity. Often they were idealized scenes capturing and telling stories in a way we pictured life to be, or hoped it would be, or actually was.

Was there a Catholic art like Rockwell's? Surely. The Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven proves it with a current main exhibit called "The Art of Illustration: Columbia's Cover Story."

From the 1930s to the 1980s, *Columbia* magazine, the largest circulation Catholic publication in North America and published by the Knights, had its own take on the *Saturday Evening Post* cover art style by Rockwell and other artists. Several of those other artists painted a number of *Columbia* covers too. But with one difference. Most of *Columbia's* wonderful scenes had a Catholic or religious perspective.

Whether they did or not, anyone could enjoy the scene, such as one with two Vincentian

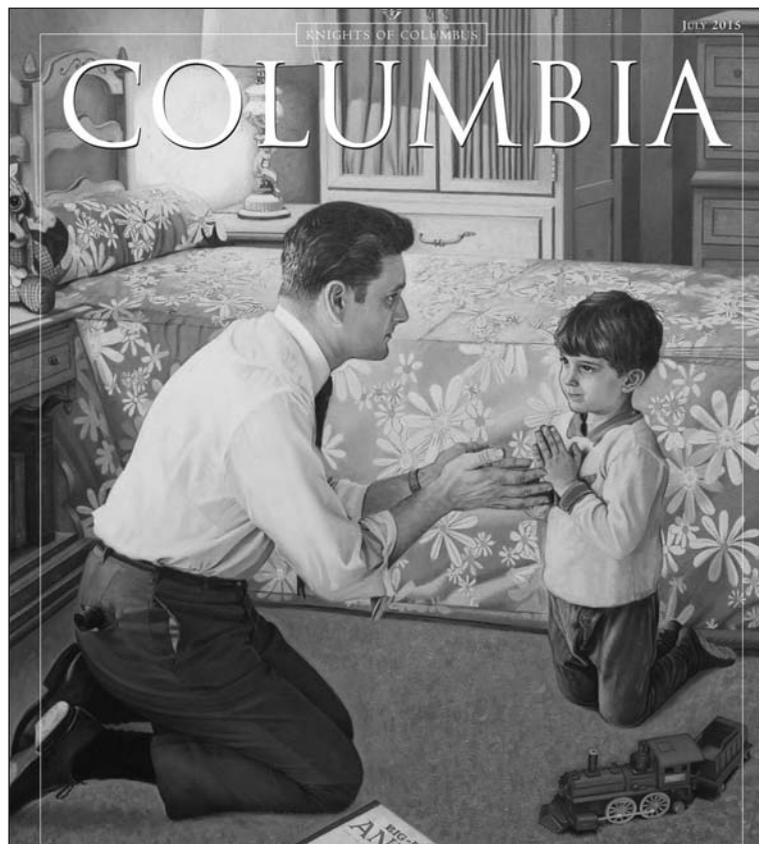
nuns in habits complete with those unforgettable huge white-winged veils seen at the old St. Vincent's Hospital decades ago. The nuns casually strolled past a shop as a disappointed florist placed a window sign for Easter corsages.

They had Rockwell-like humor too. In the "Tall Tale Fish Story" from 1970, a fisherman stretches his hands to illustrate to his parish priest the big fish he landed, but the priest is doubtful because behind the gent his young son truthfully demonstrates a quite different-sized small fish his father really caught.

Both of these are by William Luberoff, who illustrated over 60 *Columbia* covers. He painted the oldest cover in the show, dating to 1939. For Catholic Press Month he pictured a Knight representing Catholicism and wielding the sword of truth to strike and kill the dragons of ignorance and error.

In the bicentennial year of 1976 Luberoff, who lived in Rye, N.Y., also did a serious George Washington kneeling in prayer at Valley Forge, a familiar pose viewed by innumerable people over the decades.

Family plays a big role. And fathers as well as mothers play an important and equal part in these illustrations. In a Rockwell



"LEARNING TO PRAY" from *Columbia* magazine, 1968

look-a-like scene, "The Wild Sled Ride" captures a close-up of a father and his wide-eyed young son in the middle of a hair-raising ride down the slope.

In "Leaf-Raking," dad rakes while six youngsters jump and play in the piles. Mom is looking at the scene with an "Oh my

goodness!" expression.

The Spirit of Thanksgiving from 1955 captures another affecting scene in which a family of five stands in prayer around the table and its meager food. But the picture of the Last Supper on one side of the window and the crucifix on the other side tell us

where their hearts are, poor family as they are.

To add to the uplifting illustrations, "Thanksgiving Dinner Prayer" touches hearts as it looks lovingly at an elderly husband and wife, their family grown and gone, who are now alone at the dinner table. Over a small turkey, their heads are bowed reverently in prayer. The scene is quite poignant.

One more illustration gives us not only another Rockwell scene but sums up much about the show. In "Photo Album Memories," an older husband and wife, he with his arm around her, sit looking over a photo album. They're surrounded by photos of past family good times they're reminiscing over.

Their faces beam with these pleasant memories. Ours should, too, for all the scenes which can easily move our sensibilities and hearts. On display are nearly 70 of these rarely-seen examples from museum's permanent collection, including finished covers, studies and a few pencil sketches presented in more than more gallery. The show runs through mid-September.

(*The Knights of Columbus Museum, One State St., New Haven, is open daily Sun.-Sat. from 10 am-5 pm. For more info, call 203.865.0400 or visit www.kofcsmuseum.org.*) ■

## Local News

**Vietnamese: strong in faith, culture and tradition**By **NORMA K. DARRAGH**

From the rice fields of South Vietnam to Bridgeport, Father Augustine Nguyen traveled a long road to where he is today as the chaplain at Kolbe Cathedral High School and the spiritual leader of the Vietnamese community which is centered at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport. His parents sacrificed, selling their property for passage fees so that, at the age of ten, he and his older sister Cindy could flee South Vietnam in a boat to escape the tyranny of communism. In the safety of a refugee camp for eight months in Malaysia, he encountered a priest who "was there every moment of every day" and who proved an inspiration for his vocation in later years.

Father Augustine spent his first years in America in New Orleans. After attending Community College in Southern California, he traveled to

Bridgeport to reunite with his sister and her husband and earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Bridgeport.

While pursuing a career in the corporate sector, he realized that "something was missing" in his life. After taking a leave of absence from work to attend St. John Fisher Seminary, he "felt at peace" and was ordained in 2012.

The challenges facing the Vietnamese immigrant community, now 300 members strong and growing, include employment, cultural differences and language. Acknowledging the language barrier, Bishop Edward M. Egan facilitated Masses in Vietnamese over 20 years ago, with continued support from Bishop William E. Lori and now from Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, who actively participates as the celebrant on special occasions.

Father Augustine shared that the community is "grateful to the diocese for the opportunity to come together to worship in our

native language as we practice our faith at the Cathedral," with their appreciation expressed in tangible form by the raising of \$70,000 for a shrine in honor of Pope Francis' Year of Divine Mercy to be erected in the Cathedral courtyard.

The Diocese of Bridgeport serves as a beacon for Vietnamese throughout the state, with parishioners from as far away as Bristol and Hartford joining in the celebration of the feast of Our Lady of La Vang in August or the Feast of the Vietnamese Martyrs which coincides with the feast of Christ the King in November.

Hai Pham, an active member of the Vietnamese community, was reunited with her parents in 1997. She recalls that she "knew nothing about her new life and the foreign culture in America." With no car and language being a barrier, she embraced the challenges of coming "from the countryside of South Vietnam to the city of Bridgeport." Her lifeline



THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY at St. Augustine raised funds for a shrine in honor of Pope Francis' Year of Divine Mercy in the Cathedral courtyard. Bishop Caggiano is shown here at the groundbreaking with Father Augustine Nguyen, who ministers to the Vietnamese. The bishop will dedicate the shrine on April 3, Divine Mercy Sunday. (PHOTO BY PHUOC TRAN)

was her faith and the solidarity of the Vietnamese community centered at St. Augustine's.

Today, Hai works fourteen-hour days to support her husband and two sons, ages 13 and 10, who, with support from the Bishop's Scholarship Fund, are receiving the benefits of a Catholic education at St. Augustine Academy. Citing that a good education is integral to success, Hai has instilled the importance of "striving to do better and never giving up." Her older son, Steven, is

currently awaiting acceptances from Fairfield Prep and Notre Dame of Fairfield High Schools while Anthony, an altar server inspired by the Sisters of the Love of the Holy Cross, is considering a vocation in the priesthood.

Father Augustine says that, although Vietnamese parents are competitive in securing their children's futures, they work together to guarantee employment and their fellow countrymen's security.

Ministries in the Vietnamese community include a Children's and Young Adult Choir, which performs once a month, and an Adult Choir which provides music at all other Sunday services. Father Augustine notes that youth of all dominations have the opportunity to "learn the poetry of the Vietnamese language" on Sunday mornings.

The Youth Group that he founded has grown from 30 to more than 100. Donning brightly colored scarves, young people from 7 to 17 spend Sundays together as they enjoy lunch, celebrate their faith at Mass, study the Bible and bond together through games and liturgical dances. The Mother's Group, now 70 members strong, meets monthly in prayer while assuming the ministries of visiting nursing homes and cleaning the church and rectory.

*(The Vietnamese community welcomes the opportunity to share their culture and to interact with their American neighbors, inviting all to join in their Masses celebrated on Friday evenings and Sunday at 2:30 at St. Augustine Cathedral. For more info, contact Father Augustine: fraugustine@kolbecaths.org or 203.335.2554, ext. 25.)*

**Jubilee of Mercy observances**

In addition to establishing the Centers of Mercy throughout the diocese, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano has announced a list of dates on which he will lead the diocesan observances of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy:

**Diocesan celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday April 3, at 2 pm St. Augustine Cathedral, Bridgeport**

Bishop Caggiano will celebrate Mass and dedicate the new Divine Mercy Shrine on the Cathedral grounds. The Chaplet of the Divine Mercy will also be prayed. Special invitees include the diocesan WYD pilgrims and also those youth who are not going to WYD.

**Jubilee for Religious Tuesday, May 17, 4:30 pm St. Luke Parish, Westport**

The bishop will celebrate Mass with and for the women and men Religious throughout the diocese, particularly honoring jubilarians.

**Jubilee for the Disabled Sunday, June 5, 2 pm, McClinch Family Center, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Trumbull**

At this handicapped-accessible facility, Bishop Caggiano will especially welcome faithful from throughout the diocese who are developmentally or otherwise disabled.

**Jubilee for Workers and Volunteers of Mercy Sunday, September 4, 12 noon Location TBD**

In a bilingual Mass in conjunction with the feast day of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, the bishop will honor, thank and pray with the employees and volunteers of Catholic Charities, together with the volunteers in the Catholic

Service Corps and other workers and volunteers of mercy.

**Diocesan Pilgrimage for the Year of Mercy to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. Saturday, November 5**

At this Mass, to which the whole diocese is invited, Bishop Caggiano will consecrate the Diocese of Bridgeport to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Each parish will be asked to send a delegation. Organization has begun to prepare publicity and arrange for bus transportation. Cost for the day (not including meals) is estimated at \$75. The day will also include a visit to the St. John Paul II National Shrine, across the street from the Basilica.

**Jubilee for Prisoners Sunday, November 6, 7 pm Bishop Caggiano will**

celebrate Mass at the Garner Correctional Institution. This event will not be open to the public.

**Conclusion of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, Saturday, November 19, 4 pm St. Augustine Cathedral, Bridgeport**

At this Mass celebrated by Bishop Caggiano on the Vigil of the Solemnity of Christ the King, the last Sunday in the Church year, the bishop will close the Holy Door at the Cathedral.

As at the opening of the Holy Door at the beginning of the Jubilee of Mercy, special invitees will include the youth of the diocese together with members of the Neo-Catechumenal Way, with involvement from the Order of Malta. ■

# Soul moving toward God

## Dorothy Day's Long Loneliness

By **BARRY WALLACE**

When Pope Francis spoke before a joint session of congress this past summer, one of the Americans he praised was Dorothy Day. Her name probably came as a surprise to many Catholics, since it is likely that most had never heard of her. A good way to meet her is to read her frank and powerful autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. It is the stark and moving confession of a sinner in search of God.

*The Long Loneliness* was first published in 1952 when Day was in the midst of her work for the poor and the dispossessed. She was born in Brooklyn in 1897 and moved with her family to Oakland where she witnessed the San Francisco earthquake (and a community rising from the ashes with shared labor and collective acts of charity). Her newspaperman father was cold and distant, prompting the rebellious behavior that was so much a part of her character.

The Day family next moved to Chicago; there Dorothy fell under the spell of the muckraker writers and anarchist teaching. She came of age in New York City, a perfect location to follow her dream of becoming a writer and living a Bohemian lifestyle.

In the American press she was as infamous as she was famous. Her legendary *Catholic Worker* newspaper excoriated the injustices of American life and was adamantly anti-war. She was sympathetic to Communist organizers and was jailed in protests against the government.

As a young woman living in New York City, she had love affairs and a child out of wedlock. There were suicide attempts, an abortion, and nervous breakdowns. A powerful, sinful darkness had overcome her.

On the surface, this doesn't sound like the story of a saint, but when Dorothy's daughter Tamar was born, she felt unaccountably flooded with grace and the presence of God. Her dark journey led her to the open doors of the Church, and she began a process of conversion. It came at a high price. She had to leave her common-law husband whom she loved, but who spurned her newfound Catholic faith. She was

also ostracized by her Communist friends who believed that religion was the opiate of the people. Dorothy embraced Catholicism whole-heartedly and strengthened her faith with daily Mass, novenas, rosaries, meditation and constant prayer.

Her story would be interesting enough at this point. Christianity is rich with conversions of former sinners who followed the light to Christ. However, there was more growth and understanding ahead for Dorothy.

She was angered by the inequities of our society and felt a strong identification with the masses who worked in factories and shops or had no jobs at all. As she radiated in the glow of her conversion, she steeped herself in the New Testament, papal encyclicals and the lives of the saints.

In the words of Jesus she found a path that joined her new faith with her lifelong activism. The rest of her days were spent in service to God and man. She lived in voluntary poverty and created a Catholic community on lower East Side New York where she opened soup kitchens and fed the poor.

It was a hard life of relentless sacrifice, but it was in this selfless devotion that she found her sainthood.

Pope Francis's praise of Dorothy Day, an earthy chain-smoking woman who is nobody's plaster saint, was meant to bring attention to her abiding faith and witness to the Gospels. Francis is a pope of mercy and forgiveness, extending a wide embrace for sinners and strangers to the forgiveness of God.

In *The Long Loneliness* you will find a real woman who lost her way and then found a faith to move mountains. In praising Day, Pope Francis is reminding us that faith and works are independent of partisan ideologies. Dorothy Day's politics remain controversial, but her faith transcends party lines. The only doctrine she finally believed in was the teachings of Jesus.

Day accepted her own long loneliness as a condition of the soul moving towards God. In her autobiography as well as her dairies, we see her turmoil and her joy. Dorothy was relentless in

her self-scrutiny and driven to a perfection that only saints aspire to, although she never entertained the thought that she was anyone but a lowly sinner.

Her autobiography still has the power to disturb with grace and clarity. It is a Catholic classic and a story that will challenge you to examine your own life and faith. ■

DOROTHY DAY, head of Catholic Worker, inside the worker office at 175 Christie St. (PHOTO BY JUDD MEHLMAN/NY DAILY NEWS/GETTY)



## St. Thomas Aquinas Parish

Welcomes

FCJ Secondary School  
Traditional Band & Orchestra  
from County Wexford, Ireland  
to perform a Benefit Concert

Date: Saturday, March 19th

Time: 7:15p.m.

Place: St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church  
1719 Post Road Fairfield, CT

*Admission is free*

*Donations to support the FCJ may be made on the night of the performance and are always greatly appreciated!*



## Youth

It's time for  
CONVIVIO

Where can young people in the Diocese of Bridgeport come together to grow in their faith, discuss issues that are important to them and have fun at the same time? Convivio!

Since 2010, high school youth from this diocese have gathered each year at Sacred Heart University for Convivio, a worldwide high school congress. This year's event will begin Friday, March 4, at 5 pm and end Sunday afternoon, March 6, at 4 pm. All area high school youth are welcome to attend. In 2015, almost 300 young people took part in the weekend.

What makes Convivio so popular and fulfilling? As Mary Boyle, a former attendee and a speaker at the 2016 event recalls, "Six years ago I attended my first Convivio and I've been changed ever since. It gave me the opportunity to meet other high school students who remain some of my closest friends. I can't imagine a better event for the youth of our diocese to have fun, make friends, and grow in their faith!"

Pope Francis has proclaimed

2016 a Jubilee Year of Mercy. With the theme "Uplift the World with Mercy," Convivio will engage participants in a dialogue about problems facing the world and themselves, and the power of mercy in solving these problems.

Announcing Convivio, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said, "This beautiful gathering will aim to explore the power of mercy and rediscover its richness, as we strive to deepen our encounter with Jesus Christ in a festive and prayerful atmosphere."

Convivio opens with a welcoming address from Bishop Caggiano. Throughout the weekend, attendees listen to thoughtful presentations that explore the theme of mercy and how it personally relates to young people in today's world. Guided by trained peer-mentors, small breakout groups discuss these topics in depth with fellow students. There is also time for fun and social activities, including games and a Saturday evening concert. But most important, there is time for personal reflection, Mass and Confession. Convivio is a

**CONVIVIO**  
HIGH SCHOOL CONGRESS CONNECTICUT 2016

**UPLIFT  
THE WORLD**

**MARCH 4, 5, 6, 2016**

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY  
Friday 4pm-9pm, Saturday 9am-9pm, Sunday 9am-4pm  
203-416-1454  
connecticut@convivio.org

50  
convivioct

**WWW.CONVIVIO-US.ORG**

packed and uplifting weekend that enables young people to be with God and with friends, old and new.

(Teens—want to attend so that

you can strengthen your faith, engage in meaningful discussion with kids like yourself and have a great time? Parents—want to volunteer, lend your talents to a successful Convivio

and contribute to a faith-building experience? For more info, contact Maria Cerdana, coordinator of High School Apostles and Convivio: hsa@diobpt.org or 203.416.1454.) ■

Teens will fast 30 hours  
to fight world hunger

NORWALK—St. Philip Parish will again be participating in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine during the weekend of February 27-28. Over the past 13 years, more than 1,200 middle and high school students have raised in excess of \$298,000 to fight hunger both globally and locally.

The Famine welcomes youth from multiple local schools and many different religious communities around Fairfield County. In the hope of bringing an end to world hunger, the theme for this year's Famine is "Hunger Free." Participating teens will fast for 30 hours while raising money and awareness for the thousands of people who die every day from hunger and hunger-related illnesses.

These participants need your support in their fund-raising efforts. Among the many opportunities to contribute include a "Light the Night" luminaria event on Saturday night, February 27. The effort will benefit World Vision, an international relief organization that serves the world's



HELPING OTHERS while fasting themselves, teens participating in last year's 30 Hour Famine at St. Philip Parish gathered warm clothes for the homeless. This year's teens will be working on similar service projects.

poorest children, and Manna House, Norwalk's soup kitchen. Parishioners and the public at large are also asked to donate canned and packaged food for distribution locally.

The fast begins at 9 am on Saturday, February 27. The teens, adult volunteers, parents and members of the community meet at St. Jerome Church in Norwalk for a "Hunger Walk" from there to St. Philip's. Dr. Sohi Ashraf will be the keynote speaker at 10

am at St. Philip Church.

Dr. Ashraf is a Norwalk Hospital Resident who went on a humanitarian medical mission to Uganda. He will be speaking about his trip in Uganda and how his experiences as a child formed his desire to one day become a doctor and help those in the world's most destitute places. Dr. Ashraf was so moved by his time in Uganda that he is working on a new and

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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# Youth

## Preparing for World Youth Day 2016

By JANET S. DAVIS

A humble man, an open invitation—and the genesis of World Youth Day is created. The year was 1984, the Holy Year of Redemption, and Pope John Paul II invited the youth to a gathering on Palm Sunday. Little could JP II imagine that a simple invitation would gather 250,000 young people together!

The following year the United Nations proclaimed 1985 the International Year of the Youth. JP II (now a saint, but still popularly known by the moniker the youth gave him) once again invited the youth to an International Jubilee in St. Peter's square to celebrate Palm Sunday, and 300,000 gathered. It was the year that was to mark the beginning of World Youth Day.

In 2002 JP II attended his final World Youth Day in Toronto, Canada. While celebrating the vigil, he spoke to the 800,000 youth and young adults who had gathered. "When, back in 1985, I wanted to start World Youth Days, I imagined a powerful moment in which the young people of the world could meet Christ, who is eternally young, and could learn from him how to be bearers of the Gospel to other young people. This evening, together with you, I praise God and give thanks to him for the gift bestowed on the Church through the World Youth Days. Millions of young people have taken part, and as a result have become better and more committed Christian witnesses."

Thirteen International World Youth Day celebrations have

taken place since 1985. This year, over three decades later, 256 pilgrims from our diocese are preparing to make the journey to Krakow, Poland, to become stronger and more committed Christian witnesses. Our 12-day pilgrimage will take us by bus and plane across 4,204 miles to Poland.

Our first stop on the journey will be Warsaw, where we will spend two days with Bishop Frank J. Caggiano on retreat. It is here that we will continue to grow together in our faith as we have done throughout the year in preparation for this pilgrimage. From Warsaw we will travel to Czestochowa, to the monastery that is home to the Black Madonna, and then on to Krakow.

Krakow will be our home for the rest of our pilgrimage. While there we will visit Auschwitz, celebrate Mass at the Basilica of Divine Mercy, engage in daily catechesis and enjoy numerous evening cultural events. On Friday with Pope Francis and an estimated 2.5 million youth and young adults from around the world, we will walk the Stations of the Cross together as one in our faith and Christian belief. Following this event we will journey by foot five miles to the vigil site, where we will stay outside overnight in preparation for the closing Mass with the Holy Father.

Our pilgrims ask for your intercessions as we continue to prepare for World Youth Day. St. James the Apostle, patron of pilgrim travelers, offers us continued inspiration while we prepare for our pilgrimage and as we make



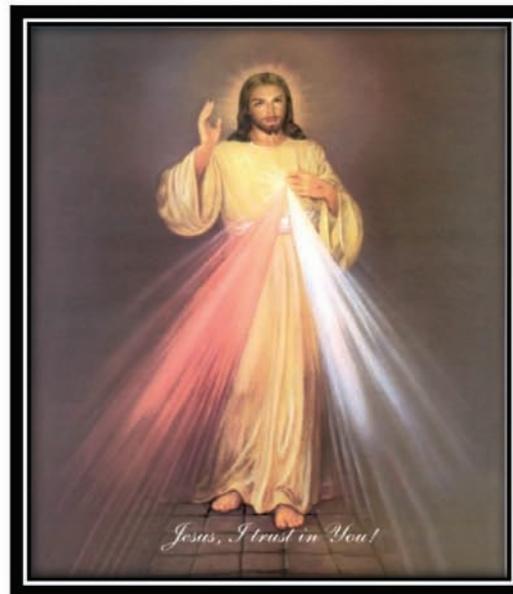
SHARING AND DEEPENING THEIR FAITH, young pilgrims prepare spiritually for the upcoming World Youth Day held recently at the Family Center of Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Nichols, Trumbull. (PHOTO BY AMY MORTENSEN)

our way to World Youth Day. We will be accompanied spiritually by St. John Paul II, the father and patron saint of World Youth

Day. Without his vision we would not be encouraged to make this journey. And we will depend on Our Blessed Mother, patron-

ess of the United States since 1846, whose maternal love for us brings us all together and points us to God.

### The Feast of the Divine Mercy



Please join the WCSU Newman Center to honor  
The Feast of The Divine Mercy.

- Holy Hour
- Sung Chant
- Confession (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese)
- Contemporary worship music featuring the Newman Center Worship Band
- A reception will follow afterward in the Parish Hall

**Date & Time** – April 3, 2016 from 3 to 4 pm.

**Location** – St. Peter's Church 104 Main St, Danbury, CT 06810

#### TEENS TO FAST FROM PAGE 10

inexpensive way to test the blood sugar of a patient—he found a way to make a difference in a place where it felt as if nothing would help.

A full day's program follows, including a blessing in the church, off-site activities, games, service projects (including Stop Hunger Now meal packing and Sole Hope shoe making), music and prayer, and ends at 9:30 pm with a vigil in the church.

Sunday begins with a group meeting, 10 am Mass and a breaking of the fast with Eucharist,

and closes with breakfast in the mansion. Msgr. Thomas Powers, vicar general of the Diocese of Bridgeport will celebrate the closing Mass and be with the teens as they break their fast.

(To make a donation, send a check payable to either "World Vision" or "Manna House" addressed to "Famine" at St. Philip Parish, Fr. Conlon Place, Norwalk, CT 06851. For more information, contact Kali DiMarco: 203.434.8407 or Claudette Quadrini 203.847.4286, or visit [www.stphilipnorwalk.weebly.com](http://www.stphilipnorwalk.weebly.com).)

## EDITORIAL

## Love is a verb

You give up chocolate. It's tough, but you manage. Or you're really into it this Lent, so you give up your favorite TV show for six weeks. That much dedication verges on the heroic. But chocolates and TV shows (yours, certainly) are good things. Why are you giving them up?

To get a handle on the answer, consider an entirely different scenario. New parents give up restful nights to care for their infant. As years go on, they forgo a fancy sports car, give up a favorite TV show for a Nativity play, spend Saturday afternoons at team matches—even if their kid isn't the star. A quiet night's sleep, a nice car, that TV show, a pleasant Saturday off: these are all good things. Parents give them up because they love their children.

And a funny thing happens. The more they attend school conferences and plays, the more hours they swelter on the sidelines at soccer, the more sleep they lose caring for a sick child... the deeper their love grows. The more they express their love through action, the more of it they have to give.

Christians are people who love and follow Jesus. Love is more than a warm fuzzy feeling; love is a verb—like parents doing things for their children. When people choose to do things for Jesus, freely giving up what they enjoy to show love for him, their love grows. The more they give, the more they love.

There are plenty of reasons for observing Lent. Growing in love is one of the best.

## Turning Ashes into Life

"The beginning of Lent is a penitential time for each of us to prepare for the celebration of the Lord's Paschal Mystery—his suffering, death and Resurrection. For the next 40 days, we will walk together, examine our conscience, face our faults and sins, turn to the Lord for his grace, seek conversion of mind and heart and be renewed in spirit. It is a privileged time that we should not squander or take for granted. This is the time for us to follow the Lenten disciplines of the Church so that we can grow in faith, hope and love.

The ashes that were distributed come from burnt palms that we used last year to welcome the Lord Jesus into the City of David commemorated on Palm Sunday. It was a welcome that by the end of the same week led Christ to the Cross, as he freely gave his life for our salvation. Such a welcome with palms was reserved for the emperor and his delegate as a sign of their power and might. In the case of Jesus, the palms ushered in the victory of love, not the victory of military might.

We receive ashes to remind us that every act of might, tyranny, power, selfishness and callous disregard of the poor will be consumed by the fire of God's life. So too will our earthly possessions, opinions, honors, accomplishments, ego and even our very bodies will eventually turn to dust. And what will remain? Only the cross of Jesus Christ, through which you and I will be saved.

Let us reflect on the words, "Remember that you are dust and unto dust you shall return." How great is the love of Christ that can make our ashes into something of eternal value." (This reflection first appeared on Bishop Caggiano's Facebook page)

## Winter: The door to Lent

Is this how it's going to be, winter compressed into two or three weeks? After a mild start, we've endured two snowstorms and a brutal stretch of cold as the season asserts itself. "Love winter when the plants say nothing," the Trappist Monk Thomas Merton wrote. Yet winter isn't easy to love. Perhaps snow is our compensation: the way it blankets a field, silences our distractions and invites us into its unifying whiteness. So here in New England we begin the 40 days of Lent, not through a desert, but a landscape seized by snow and ice. We enter through the portal of February and may find ourselves bereft; stuck in drifts of memory and a sense of our own inadequacy. Yet, the season is a gift we must accept. "Suffering is the wound where Christ gets in," said Father Peter John Cameron at an Ash Wednesday retreat for Catholic Center employees. There is plenty of time ahead for Easter joy, but in the meantime Lent is the season of the Cross: winter cold, winter wind, winter light—let them take us deeper into our preparations. Christ finds us when we let go of everything else that gets in the way. ■

## EDITOR'S CHOICE

## Scarves warm bodies and hearts

NORWALK—If you were driving around Norwalk on a cold Saturday in early February, you would have seen a curious sight. Twenty teens from St. Jerome's Youth Group, TOTAL, were going around town tying scarves to telephone poles and trees.

Each scarf had a tag pinned to it saying, "I am not lost! If you are stuck out in the cold, please take this to keep warm." It also said, "If you don't need me, please help those who are in need. Donate to the Open Door Shelter."

As the kids made their way around town many folks stopped to ask, "What are you doing?"

That was a question the teens of St. Jerome were eager to answer. "We are tying the scarves to raise awareness about the problem of homelessness here in Norwalk," said Ryan Williams, a junior at Norwalk High School.

Last year, St. Jerome's teens decided to focus their efforts the growing homeless population, and on raising money for the Open Door Shelter in Norwalk. Again this year the teens went

out in the winter cold with over 150 brightly colored scarves to help alert the community that homelessness is a huge problem and that they can all help.

Erin Vallerie, a senior, said, "We hope that by putting these scarves all over town, people will stop and think about the homeless and will give what they can to help those who are less fortunate."

As one of the team members was tying a scarf a man came up to her and asked "What are you doing?" She explained that they were trying to raise awareness about homelessness. The man pulled a cardboard sign from his coat that read "I am homeless. Please help" and said to the teen

"That's me!" She then held up two scarves and said, "Which one would you like?"

The man took a scarf and said "God bless you."

She replied, "God bless you too!" (Donations can be made to the Open Door Shelter, 4 Merritt Street, Norwalk, CT 06854.) ■



## CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

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



## PASTOR

REVEREND CARLOS RODRIGUES, Diocesan Director of Pastoral Care Services to Pastor of Saint Clement of Rome Parish, Stamford. Effective date is February 22.

## PAROCHIAL VICAR

REVEREND ROGERIO PERRI, Parochial Vicar of Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish, Norwalk to Parochial Vicar, Saint James Parish, Stratford. Effective date was February 15.

## PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL

REVEREND MONSIGNOR DARIUSZ J. ZIELONKA, Judicial Vicar is *ex officio* Member of the Presbyteral Council. Effective date was January 1.

Monsignor Thomas W. Powers, Vicar General, February, 2016

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## Editorial



## On Intimacy and Discerning Religious Life

## GUEST COLUMNIST

BY CARLENE JOAN DEMIANY

*Carlene Joan Demiany is a parishoner at St. Thomas More, the Catholic Chapel and Center at Yale University.*

Interesting responses no doubt follow my admittance that I am discerning religious life.

“What’s that?” some ask.

“It means I’m thinking of becoming a nun,” I answer.

“Oh.” Silence. “You mean like Whoopi Goldberg in Sister Act.”

Others more familiar with women religious ask about motivations and inquire why I would want this life in 2016.

I don’t mind the questions, but I do mind one grating response.

“I’m thinking about becoming a nun,” I say to a lapsed Catholic. He leans back in his chair and looks like he just took

a sip of sour milk. But then his expression changes. He now wears the expression of one who has figured something out, remembered a forgotten password.

“Oh no,” he says. “Don’t worry. You’re pretty. I’ll set you up with someone.”

At this point, I want to hand him Mother Dolores Hart’s memoir *Ear of the Heart: An Actresses Journey from Hollywood to Holy Vows* and share the story of this Hollywood siren, who left a flourishing movie career and fiancé to embrace religious life. I mention Mother Dolores, and we talk about how religious life is not an escape but a calling to a greater

love.

But at the end of our conversation, he asks again if he can set me up.

I recently received a response that gives me greater pause than the somewhat familiar “set you up with someone” comment. I was driving in the car with a friend. I told him about my discernment. His eyes reminded on the road, but his thumbs began tapping the steering wheel.

“Won’t you miss the intimate moments?” he asks.

I pause. Two thoughts come to my mind. Both relate to a more expansive view of intimacy than he no doubt has in mind. My first thought is to pick up my iPhone and ask Siri about the etymology of the word intimacy. Perhaps some Latin root will reveal a more expansive definition. But I decide to leave Siri out of our conversation. My second thought is a scene from “Dead Man Walking” where Sister Helen Prejean, played by Susan Sarandon, is asked a similar question.

What I remember from the scene informs my answer. “Well,

sometimes, I think we have too narrow a view of intimate moments.”

My friend takes his sky blue eyes off the road and looks at me. I am made uncomfortable by the slight pity I detect in his gaze.

His words remain with me, and I find myself thinking of them as I enter a small room smelling of Lysol. I see a frail woman resting under thin white sheets. It is a hospital room on the oncology floor. Part of my ministry includes hospital visits.

I walk across the floor, and my shoes sound loud. I sit in a chair by the hospital bed and gaze at the woman recently returned from surgery. A nearly baldhead, covered in thin blond hair that belongs on a baby, rests on a pillow. Suddenly, playful eyes pop open. Eyes so full of life seem out of place in her ash-colored face.

“There’s my little friend,” the woman greets me. “I was wondering if you were stopping by.”

“Of course,” I respond.

Everything is silent except for the purring IV behind me.

“Look at my new bags,” she says proudly. Bare legs emerge

from under the sheet to reveal thick plastic bags strapped to them. “Don’t my new kidneys look nice?” she asks with a smile.

Tears prick my eyes as I wonder how joy continues to gush from her nearly organ-less body. She runs her fingers over the bags, stroking them gently. With a grimace, she lifts her legs and places them back under the thin sheet. I ask if she needs a blanket. The answer no.

We talk for a while. She inquires about life at the church, the children’s program, and our future construction plan. As I answer her questions, she gazes at me intently with her forearm resting under her neck. Whenever she twists and turns under her sheet, I hear plastic crinkle.

The time comes for me to leave. I take her pale hand and am careful not to dislodge her IV. My warm fingers interlace with her icy ones. We will share a moment of prayer.

In my mind, I hear my friend ask, “Won’t you miss the intimate moments?”

“No,” I answer silently. “I will appreciate them more.” ■



## The Good Lord Made Them All

## A DAD’S VIEW

BY MATTHEW HENNESSEY

*Matthew Hennessey and his family are parishioners of St. Aloysius in New Canaan.*

“The geese understand me,” Paddy says unexpectedly one cold, sparkling February afternoon. We are taking a walk through the cemetery across from our house. We come here a lot.

“They do?” I ask, turning on my mental tape recorder. These conversations are too precious to let them go unrecorded.

“Yeah, they do, they can understand me,” he says. “And I can understand them, too.”

“I see,” I say. “And how did you discover that you had this

ability?”

“Well, the other day, one of the geese wanted to cross the path in front of me and in my head I said, ‘It’s okay. You can go.’ After he crossed, he looked back and smiled.”

“You’re sure he heard you and understood?” I say.

“Oh yeah,” Paddy says. “I talk to him all the time. We’re friends.”

How much running room should a father give a boy who says he can communicate telepathically with a goose? It’s not clear. Some guys would find a way to gently rein him in.

I’m not one of those guys. I have a column to write.

“What else do you talk about with the geese?” I ask, hoping that my little mentalist doesn’t intuit that I’m sketching out a first draft in my mind.

“Just stuff,” he says, shutting me down, shutting the whole thing down. We continue our walk in silence.

I continue in silence, that is. For all I know he’s still talking to the geese.

I had a dog when I was growing up. He and I had a fine relationship. Looking back, I can see he was a bit of a mope. Honestly, I’ve always felt most at home among members of my own species. That’s just how I’m built.

My daughter Clara is built differently. She’s almost twelve, so of course she’s planning to become a veterinarian. And why not? Some twelve year-old boy will grow up to play center field for the Yankees; some twelve year-old girl will grow up to become a world-famous country vet. Let it

be our Clara.

All of God’s creatures have a place in the choir. That’s my view. It’s straight out of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “Animals are God’s creatures. He surrounds them with his providential care. By their mere existence they bless him and give him glory.”

The danger, of course, is that our affection and respect for the beasts of the field can easily get out of hand. We are tempted to grant them human personalities. We are tempted to affix upon them human emotions.

Animals have their place—but I draw the line at buying them seats on airplanes and pushing them around in baby strollers. “One can love animals; one should not direct to them the affection due only to persons,” says the *Catechism*.

We visit the cemetery so often it feels like our own private park. Usually it’s just us and a gaggle of Canadian geese. Sometimes we get lucky and a new goose crew

comes crashing out of the sky for a splashdown.

If you’ve never seen a squadron of honkers coming in low over a pond, wings akimbo, you need to find a way to check it out. It’s a hoot—one of nature’s treats.

There’s a goose in the cemetery that has a bad wing. The kids call him George. No matter the season, he’s always around. When the rest of his paddling pals pick up sticks and head south, George stays put. Poor George can’t fly.

“Geese are friends with no one,” wrote the essayist and animal lover E.B. White. “But they are companionable once you get used to their ingratitude and their false accusations.”

George seems different. He trails behind us sometimes when we’re walking, almost as if he’s trying to get our attention. I’ve always supposed he’s waiting for us to toss him a bit of bread.

Lately, though, I wonder if maybe he’s trying to tell us something. ■

# Papal Visit: Mexico

## Pope emphasizes dignity

During his visit to Mexico in February, Pope Francis has addressed the importance of recognizing the values of indigenous cultures, worshipped at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, spoken of the challenges of immigration issues, and celebrated outdoor Mass in an area notorious for its violence, fueled by poverty and the country's drug cartels. He met with Mexico's President Enrique Peña Nieto and with government representatives and the diplomatic

corps. As is his custom, he visited a hospital, celebrated Mass with priests, seminarians, religious men and women, and visited Cereso Prison in Ciudad Juarez, near the U.S./Mexico border.

His most notable activities were his Mass in the settlement of Ecatepec on the northern edge of Mexico City and another in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas, where he denounced the exploitation and oppression of indigenous peoples

Pope Francis celebrated Mass

in Ecatepec on February 14 in a vast open field with some 300,000 people. More than 1.7 million people live in Ecatepec, which Vatican Radio described as "a lawless neighborhood where organized crime, pollution and poverty reign and where most people fear to tread." Ecatepec has become famous as a place where it is particularly dangerous to be a woman because of murders, kidnappings and human trafficking.

The Pope urged the people



to step up and work together to "make this blessed land of Mexico a land of opportunities." It should be a land where, he said, there is "no need to emigrate in order to dream, no need to be exploited in order to work, no need to make the despair and poverty of many the opportunism of a few, a land that will not have to mourn men and women, young people and children who are destroyed at the hands of the dealers of death."

The following day the Pope was in Chiapas, a state in southern Mexico heavily populated by Native American tribes, principally Mayan, who have often fought with outsiders over development of the region's rich natural resources.

During a Mass at which prayers were said in several different native languages, Pope Francis observed that indigenous peoples had been excluded from power "in a systematic and organized way" for generations. Some developers, he added, "intoxicat-

ed by power, money, and market trends, have stolen your lands or contaminated them."

The Pope told the congregation at a soccer stadium in San Cristobal de las Casas that we are facing "one of the greatest environmental crises in world history." The Western world, in response to this crisis, should recognize the wisdom of indigenous cultures that revere the earth. "In this regard, you have much to teach us."

Huge crowds attended every papal celebration, including his meeting in Morelia with young people at the José Maria Morelos Pavon Stadium and Mass at the fairgrounds of Ciudad Juarez. ■

ACA

FROM PAGE 4

fessional days and sharing of best practices."

Kim Quatella, coordinator of Family Formation, is working on a number of programs to assist and enrich families. The Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) process had more than 200 catechumens and candidates from 32 parishes join in the Rite of Election on February 14. Quatella is meeting now with volunteer couples for the renewed Marriage Preparation days, which will be held monthly beginning March 19. "We have a lot of ministries that haven't been tapped into yet—for singles, for separated and divorced Catholics, for family to grow in faith together, for personal renewal of faith," she said.

Through the Annual Catholic Appeal, Catholics at every stage of life can share in the energy and realistic optimism facilitated by the Office of Faith Formation. "There is so much hope in these ministries," said Quatella. "Where a lot of people see darkness in our culture, the Church should see opportunity and growth. I see a lot of hope for enrichment and renewal."

(For more info on the Annual Catholic Appeal or to give online, go to [www.2016ACAbridgeport.com](http://www.2016ACAbridgeport.com) or phone 203.416.1470.) ■

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Deacon Stephan A. Genovese

In Residence: Rev. Paul N. Check, ext. 109; Courage Office: 203.803.1564

### MASSES:

#### Daily Masses:

Monday-Friday 8:00 am, 12:10 pm;  
Wednesday 6:00 pm Extraordinary Form;  
Saturday 9:00 am Extraordinary Form

#### Saturday Anticipatory Mass:

4:00 pm, 7:00 pm (Spanish)

#### Sunday: 8:00 am, 9:30 am Latin High Mass,

11:30 am English High Mass,  
1:15 pm (Spanish)

### CONFESSION SCHEDULE:

Monday-Friday: 11:30 am-12:00 pm;

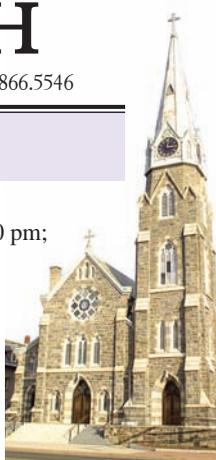
Wednesday: 5:30-5:50 pm;

Saturday: 3:00-4:30 pm

### ADORATION:

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## Saint James Parish

† LENT 2016 †

"Come back to the Lord with all your heart. Leave the past in ashes and turn to God with tears and fasting, for He is slow to anger and ready to forgive." Joel 2:13

### A Day for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Tuesday, March 15 – 9:00 am-10:00 pm

Fr. Tom and other clergy will be available for Confession and healing prayer.

### COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE

FOR ADULTS, YOUTH AND CHILDREN

Tuesday, March 22, 7:00 pm

### DEVOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

#### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

All parishioners are invited to participate in personal stations at anytime.

#### Stations of the Cross:

Fridays at 7:30 pm in the Church on February 12, 19, 26, March 4, 18, 25

#### "The Living Stations of the Cross":

with the children of St. James School, Friday, March 11, 12:30 and 7:30 pm

### PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES

#### FOR MEN

#### Beloved Sons' Gatherings

Saturday, February 20 and March 19 at 6:15 am

Thursday, March 3 at 7:30 pm

#### Men's Communion Breakfast - Leap of Faith

Sunday, February 28 - Marriott Courtyard

- Shelton

Directly following 7:30 am Eucharist

#### FOR WOMEN

#### Lenten Retreat - Come Back To Me

With All Your Heart

Saturday, March 5 8:00 am – 1:00 pm

- Parish Center

#### Breaking Bread - Saturday, March 19– 8:00 am -

Parish Center

### FOR TEENS

#### Youth/Teen Holy Hour

and Fellowship Gatherings - Every Monday from 6:00-8:00 pm in the Chapel and Parish Center

#### Last Supper Meal - March 14 – 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

#### "The Passion of the Christ" movie -

March 7 – 5:30-9:00 pm

#### Teen Stations of the Cross - March 21 – 6:00-8:00 pm

#### • Taize Prayer Services

Spend an hour before the Eucharist in silent prayer

and the contemplative chanting of the monastic community

of Taize, France. Wednesdays- 6:00-7:00 pm -

Parish Center Chapel - February 17-March 23

## Lent

## Ignatian Spirituality ‘Co-workers in the Vineyard’

By BETH LONGWARE DUFF

Fairfield University’s Center for Ignatian Spirituality has successfully completed its first year of service in the Diocese of Bridgeport, and is contemplating growth in the new year, according to its director.

“It’s been a blessed year,” reports Father James Bowler, SJ. “We have about 100 people a year who go through one form of the spiritual exercises or another. We just finished a major project at St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield, and we’re going to start at St. Anthony Parish in Fairfield this Lent. Other parishes are interested, but we can only do so much!”

Father Bowler defines Ignatian Spirituality as an encounter with the living God that makes it possible to develop a personal relationship with him and to find him in all things. It is based on the teachings of St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, whom he conceived as “contemplatives in action.” After experiencing his own conversion, Ignatius became an expert in the art of spiritual direction and compiled his insights, prayers and suggestions in the *Spiritual*

*Exercises*, considered to be one of the most influential books on spiritual life ever written.

The Center for Ignatian Spirituality was launched at Fairfield University in late 2014 with the stated mission of keeping the Ignatian charism alive, both at the university and affiliated Fairfield Prep, and in the Christian community of Fairfield County. It currently offers four distinct programs designed to meet the needs of the greatest number of people possible:

1. A one-week directed prayer retreat focused on listening with the heart to God and recognizing one’s feelings and emotional responses to him.

2. A 10-week introduction to Ignatian Spirituality called the Ignatian Encounter that involves a team of 15 spiritual directors who meet with directees for one hour each week.

3. A retreat in daily life that offers a programmed series of prayer experiences requiring a five-month commitment to spend an hour a day in prayer and reflection as well as a weekly meeting with a spiritual director.

4. Spiritual direction training, a new two-year certificate

program that starts this month for adults with a theological and ministerial background who feel called to serve in this ministry.

When the center was first launched, Father Bowler stated, “We are co-workers in the vineyard.” He elaborates “God desires a personal relationship with each one of us, and continually desires to deepen that relationship. So it follows that spiritual directors are co-workers with God.”

Last spring, St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield became the first congregation in the diocese to participate in the program. “When they got a chance just to talk about their experience with God, it was like a match had been thrown on gasoline—it kind of erupted in the room,” recalls Father Bowler. “I think it signifies what people need and what they’re crying out for is a deepening awareness of God in their live.”

Peggy Ceponis, a St. Mary’s parishioner who completed the initial series of meetings, is now a group facilitator in Ridgefield. She says that the program has made a tangible difference in her everyday life. “The St. Ignatius way is teaching you a message



ST. MARY CHURCH, RIDGEFIELD



ST. ANTHONY CHURCH, FAIRFIELD

that you can incorporate into your daily life and make your own,” she says. “The week of spiritual direction was phenomenal! The course introduced us to all the principles, but then you have to go home and do it—and that requires discipline. I found that I could get to a place of a more connectedness with God.”

In addition to the existing pro-

grams, the center also offers periodic lectures and symposiums. In March it will host *New York Times* bestselling author Father Jim Martin, SJ, for a discussion of his new book *The Seven Last Words: An Invitation to a Deeper Friendship with Jesus*. And throughout 2016 it will collaborate with the diocese to identify possible roles it

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

## ST MARGARET SHRINE

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**During Lent Weekday Masses**  
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# Catholic Academy

## Building academic and faith foundation

By SALLY SISSON

For nearly 150 years the schools that comprise the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport have educated students throughout the greater Bridgeport area. The four Catholic Academy campuses (St. Raphael, St. Augustine, St. Ann and St. Andrew) provide a comprehensive academic curriculum and something more: a well-rounded approach that educates the whole child—mind, body and spirit.

Today these diverse schools shine brighter than ever, with cutting-edge technology, vibrant arts programs and after-school sports and enrichment activities. Students are prepared for leadership and success in high school, college and beyond.

Why a Catholic school? In surveys, parents continually reinforce the importance of religious values and the development of faith in their children, even if they are not all Roman Catholic.



ACTIVELY INVOLVED in Leaders of Tomorrow, Dennis Boyd is proud to sponsor a Catholic Academy student, currently in the third grade. “We’re working hard to grow this valuable program,” he explains. “It’s rewarding for all involved.”

An active prayer life with opportunities for worship together fuels not only character formation for life, but also impels them to serve others in need. The social gospel is alive in the hearts of the children as they live Gospel values in a very divided world.

What makes the Catholic Academy schools so special? Many say it’s the profound impact they continue to make in

students’ lives—and in the lives around them.

Take Tom Gaudett, for instance. After graduating from St. Augustine Academy a decade ago, Tom went on to the elite Fairfield Prep and then Harvard University, where he graduated magna cum laude in 2014. From there he applied to Teach for America and landed a job as a fifth-grade public school teacher back in Bridgeport. He felt an impulse to teach, he said, to give back to the community, to pay it forward and provide others with the type of education that shaped him most.

When asked which institution made the biggest impact, he named St. Augustine’s, where he spent his elementary and middle school years, as the most formative by far.

“Through Fairfield Prep and Harvard I got a world class education. They helped me to excel academically, without any doubt,” he says. “But who I am and what I believe and what I will do in my life is all attributable to St. Augustine’s.”

At St. Augustine’s, the teachers gave him the inner tools, the belief and confidence to move forward productively in his life, he says. “They laid a great foundation academically and in character formation, preparing me for college and for whatever else I’ll achieve in the years to come.”

The four Catholic Academy campuses are a welcome destination for families looking for something above and beyond the standard offerings, with many parents feeling the strong draw of the school community. Dennis Boyd, a former Catholic Academy board member, keeps

on giving back, even though his own children are now grown.

About 10 years ago, he began serving on St. Andrew Academy’s finance committee, where he became actively involved in Leaders of Tomorrow, a program that gives donors the opportunity to sponsor a student for an academic year—or, in the case of Boyd, for several academic years.

Boyd is proud to sponsor a young girl named Maria, currently in the third grade. “We’re working hard to grow this valuable program,” he explains. “It’s rewarding for all involved.”

Indeed, the entire community that comprises the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport—school

and Church leaders, board members, teachers, parents and alumni—have been working hard to grow the rich offerings at all four schools and to make this exceptional education affordable and accessible to as many students as possible.

The outcomes speak for themselves: Test results that are at or above the national average; graduating students who are moving on to the finest high schools and colleges; students from all walks of life who are eager and prepared to learn, lead, and make a positive impact in the world.

*(To learn more about the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, visit [catholicacademybridgeport.org](http://catholicacademybridgeport.org).)*

## State & national winners honored

NORWALK—The Catholic Daughters, Court St. Matthew, is proud to announce the winners from the National Education Contest for 2015. The themes for the year were “Love Your Neighbor as Yourself” and “Be a Good Neighbor.” Entries were accepted in the categories of Essay, Poetry, Art and Computer Art.

Several students from Our Lady of Fatima School in Wilton and All Saints School in Norwalk won First Place in their chosen categories. All first place winners went on to the National Competition, where two students achieved national honors. As luck would have it, both schools were represented among the national winners, both in different categories.

All Saints School state level winners: Poetry (Division 1), Kara Fitzgerald; Essay (Division 1), Isabella Gaiakootis; and Computer Art, Jamie Brown.

Our Lady of Fatima state winners: Art (Division 1), Madison Bartek; Art (Division 2) Ryan Wauthier; and Essay (Division 2), Anastasia Pshyk.

At the National Competition, Kara Fitzgerald from All Saints received Second Place nationally in Poetry, while Madison Bartek from Our Lady of Fatima took Third Place in Art.

The students received the certificates and awards at a Mass in the chapel of Notre Dame Convalescent Center in Norwalk. “We are so proud of all our contestants, and happy for the recognition of our state and national winners,” said Marie Crispi, education chair for the Court St. Matthew.



NATIONAL WINNERS in poetry and art, (l-r) Kara Fitzgerald from All Saints and Madison Bartek from Our Lady of Fatima with Marie Crispi, education chair from the Court St. Matthew Catholic Daughters.

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# St. Jude, Monroe

## Programs engage students beyond the classroom

By **HOLLY ROBINSON**

It was a busy day for St. Jude School students recently, as they hunkered down to test the applications of Newton's Laws by using a collision car and physics cannons in the laboratories of Fairfield University.

Before heading home, the students studied polymers with an electron microscope and then toured the engineering machine shop to examine lathes and 3D printers as they discussed how engineers are working around the world to solve problems like sustainable farming and providing clean water.

All U.S. schools introduce topics like biology, chemistry, meteorology, physics and even robotics in the classroom, but at St. Jude, students can now grasp the true relevance of what they're learning through dynamic new partnerships with universities and secondary schools.

"We recognize that learning isn't bound by classroom walls, education levels or national boundaries," says Dr. Patrick Higgins, the school's principal.

"Ours is a school that nurtures each student's innate sense of curiosity and inquiry, and encourages exploration and innovation."

Located in Monroe, St. Jude is the area's first diocesan Pre-K-8 school to develop external STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) partnerships. In addition to working with Fairfield University, St. Jude is partnering with Sacred Heart University, where students can study advanced topics in biology, human anatomy, and physiological sciences.

St. Jude has also established an innovative eight-week Junior Meteorology Program with Western Connecticut State University's Bridge Program. Using the university's physical science buildings and studio production facilities, St. Jude's students explore weather patterns with university professors, learn how data feeds are compiled to create weather prediction models, and even get a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to produce local news and weather reports with a trip to Charter Communications in Newtown, a

WTNH News Channel 8 affiliate station.

"We've been very impressed with the students' level of participation, knowledge and effort," says Bridge Program coordinator Melissa Carlo.

St. Jude's new partnerships encompass expanded learning opportunities in the humanities as well. The first such partnership with St. Joseph High School allows students in grades 2-8 to study Mandarin. St. Jude students can even Skype with their peers at the Furen Middle School in Wuxi, China, an activity which not only strengthens language skills, but also provides a broader world perspective.

"As an adjunct college professor, I recognize the value of providing students with exposure to higher education at a young age," says Christine Peterson, whose daughter, Olivia, is an eighth-grade student at St. Jude. "This initiative demonstrates the ability of the school's faculty and administration to think outside the box when it comes to education," she adds.

"The lessons are not limited



ST. JUDE SCHOOL STUDENTS CONDUCT experiments in engineering at Fairfield University.

to the classroom, just as real life learning is not an isolated experience," says Peterson. "Because of St. Jude School's strong focus on learning, compassion and faith, my daughter is well prepared to transition to St. Joseph High School this coming year."

Students also recognize the wide-ranging benefits of these unique learning opportunities. "The knowledge that I have learned over the years will stick with me for life," says eighth-grader Emily McGovern. "St. Jude School has not just prepared me for high school, but for the world beyond it."

"Since its founding in 1962, St. Jude has become widely recognized for providing challenging academics in a learning environment that is integrated, personalized and informed by Gospel values," Dr. Higgins says. The school, which was recently named a National Blue Ribbon

School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education, offers the area's only elementary school science lab, and the faculty integrates technology into all aspects of learning. The new partnerships with highly regarded institutions, locally as well as across the world, are designed to engage students beyond the classroom with unique hands-on learning experiences and resources.

"We're proud to be able to offer these new opportunities to stimulate the curiosity of young minds, and to foster a deeper understanding and meaning in what our students are learning," Higgins says, adding that St. Jude graduates gain admission to top private and diocesan secondary schools. "When students graduate from St. Jude, we want them to be ready for success in high school and beyond and eager to make a positive impact in the world." ■

## St. Lawrence welcomes new friends from Korea

SHELTON—The concept of a global, interconnected world suddenly became real for St. Lawrence School students as they welcomed fifteen Korean students into their community for the month of January. These young travelers arrived in the United States on Sunday, January 10, and moved into their host family homes in Shelton. With smiles and enthusiasm, but limited English, the Korean youngsters began to navigate American culture.

St. Lawrence teachers used books about Korean folktales and culture and Google Earth maps to prepare their classes to welcome the visitors. Most of the teachers uploaded a translation app to their phones in case communication came to a standstill.

The Korean students, ranging from third grade through eighth grade, followed their St. Lawrence buddies through a reg-



FOR A CLOSING DINNER, some of the Korean visitors to St. Lawrence School wore their traditional dress and encouraged host students to join them. The Korean children had spent the month of January in an exchange program at St. Lawrence.

ular school day. In some classes it was easier to engage the students than others. During gym class, the older boys impressed the middle school students with their basketball skill but weren't too sure about the floor hockey.

"Our guests tended to be more complimentary of the school lunches than those who have been eating these same lunches already for 100+ days," noted Principal Beth Hamilton with a laugh. "The fourth-graders were intrigued when one creative visitor turned his plastic fork and spoon into chopsticks in order to best enjoy his meal!"

Marcel Proust, French novelist, noted "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new lands but in seeing with new eyes." Although the St. Lawrence students didn't physically travel like their Korean counterparts, they are all on a

"voyage" and seeing aspects of their school days with new eyes. Following the first period of outdoor play with the visiting students, St. Lawrence preschoolers returned to their classrooms with smiles, waves good-bye, and the spontaneous, "Goodbye, new friend."

As the weeks passed, deeper connections were formed. "The Korean students departed for the airport on Saturday morning at the end of January with many teary goodbyes by both the students and the host families," says Principal Hamilton. "During the first few days, our students were focused on the differences between them and their guests. About mid-way through the visit, the focus shifted to all that we had in common despite language barriers. This experience was transformational for some of our students and positive for all." ■

## Schools

Kolbe students 'wowed'  
by enrichment program

BRIDGEPORT—Kolbe Cathedral High School students have been on the move and expanding their experiences in the arts and history. Through the sponsorship and planning efforts of board member Brian O' Connor, many students have attended the New Haven Symphony and chamber concerts at Yale's Woolsey Hall, heard a presentation from the Puccini Foundation

Gallery of Rising Opera Stars at Carnegie Hall, N.Y., toured the Wadsworth Atheneum, went to the Connecticut Supreme Court building and talked to one of the justices, and went through the CT Historical Society Museum, getting a first-hand look at the diary of Nathan Hale and the State Charter, signed by King Charles II.

"We are surrounded by so many wonderful opportunities within the Tri-State area, but

we're often hampered by the cost of transportation and ticket prices to make the trips affordable to students," said President Jo-Anne Jakab.

O'Connor, a partner in Deserio Martin O'Connor & Castiglioni, LLP, in Stamford, decided to "make it happen" for KCHS. The trips are offered to students at no cost and O'Connor and his wife, Maura, chaperoned, scheduled docents and tour guides and added their own extensive personal knowledge to the events.

"We raised our kids and took them to museums and concerts," said Brian O'Connor. "We wanted the kids at Kolbe to have the same opportunities."

The school events coordinator is guidance counselor Sarah Menard, a graduate of KCHS, who accompanied every group.

"They were so welcoming at Yale," O'Connor said. "We were even invited to have lunch with the freshman. These kids are really broadening their horizons."

"Being at a concert at Carnegie Hall was a dream come



PERFORMERS from the New Haven Symphony describe their technique to Kolbe students.

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true. I have always wanted to go there," said Onye Nnodum, a junior. The experience, normally beyond her reach, meant a lot to this young woman who is an active member of both the school and diocesan choirs.

Students have been "wowed" by the music they have experienced and impressed by the artists who took the time to meet and greet after their performances.

"We never really thought about attending a symphony or listening to opera," said sisters Amber and Alyssa Paz. "It was an awesome experience and opened our eyes to the many places to go to appreciate the arts. The galleries were interesting and the docents and tour guides were extremely helpful. We will definitely want to take advantage of other opportunities in the future."

## St. Cecilia, Stamford

NECA Chess  
Player of the Year

STAMFORD—On December 18, the National Educational Chess Association announced its 2015 Scholastic Chess Player of the Year: Vikram Sarkar of St. Cecilia School.

Vikram is a second-grader at St. Cecilia and started his scholastic chess career in May of this year, earning an initial rating of 649 at the 24th NECA tournament. He played nine tournaments over the course of 2015, earning first place in the primary division of the National Scholastic Chess Foundation tournament at Greenwich Academy on November 15, first place in the primary open division of the 27th NECA tournament at King School on December 6, and first place again in the primary division at the Ward Scholastic December 12.

Vikram finished the year with a rating of 948 with 24 wins, nine losses and three draws after 36 games at nine tournaments.

"Vikram has had a tremendous start to his tournament experience, and we congratulate him and his family for being recognized as NECA Scholastic Player of the Year for 2015," said NECA President Alex Eydelman. "We wish him the best of luck in 2016 and we look forward to seeing him at our next event."

The NECA Scholastic Player of the Year recognition distinguishes a player who has enjoyed a successful season within their experience and age level, and who in the judgment of the NECA shows exceptional promise for the future of their chess development.

# Book Review

## *Angels in the Bible* tells stories of God's messengers

"Angels do more than deliver messages. A holy man named Elijah found out that they make great bread, too." In *Angels in the Bible Storybook* by Allia Zobel Nolan, with illustrations by Alida Massari, children will delight to find out that Elijah, in spite of his troubles, gained courage to go back to doing God's work.

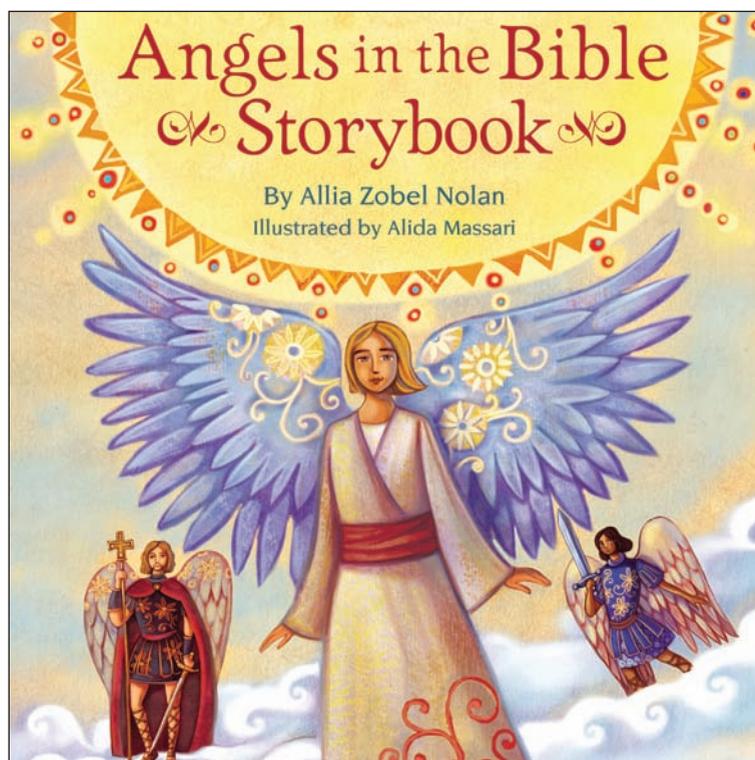
In these stories, angels shout for joy as the world is created. They're often sent to tell a woman a surprise baby is on the way. They warn people when danger lurks nearby. When times call for it, they'll even talk to a donkey.

In these thirty stories, 15 from the Old Testament and 15 from the New Testament, young children—and the parents who read to them—will learn the ways these powerful, mysterious creatures come to bring good news and help people when times

get tough. As the story of Elijah shows, angels are God's messengers, helping people, telling them in many different ways about a new gift God is sending or what God wants them to do for him.

Each story, taken directly from the Bible, includes its Scriptural reference, anchoring them in reality. The account of Elijah, the idolatrous Queen Jezebel and the worship of the false god Baal, and Elijah's courage to speak God's word is found in 1 Kings 18:16-39; 19:1-15. Although the storybook is directed at children, Catholic parents who grew up with little knowledge of the Bible will be fascinated by the accounts of Balaam and his donkey, the three Hebrew children and the angel who walked with them in the fire and Daniel sleeping in the lion's den.

Even the more familiar New Testament description of the



angel Gabriel's visit to Mary and the angel's lighting up the sky with joy at our Savior's birth take on new life in these vibrant accounts. The final story, based on the Book of Revelation, makes glorious sense out of an extremely complex book in the Bible.

Italian artist Alida Massari's illustrations give angels (who are, after all, pure spirit without bodies) an aura of strength and wonder. They enhance the stories and help young children see something of the majesty angels bring to their tasks.

"The Lord will command his angels to take good care of you. They will lift you up in their hands" (Psalm 91:11-12).

(Allia Zobel Nolan is a member of St. Jerome Parish in Norwalk. *Angels in the Bible Storybook*, published by Zonderkidz, is available online and through local bookstores.) ■



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# Obituaries

## Sister Mary Jane Card, 94

Sister Mary Jane Card, RSM, 94, of the Sisters of Mercy died peacefully on November 28, 2015, at Notre Dame Convalescent Home, Norwalk. Born in Wilton on August 19, 1921, she was the fourth of 11 children.

An alumna of Our Lady of Mercy Academy, Luralton Hall, she was drawn to a religious vocation by the devotion of the Sisters there, and entered the Sisters of Mercy on July 1, 1939. She professed her vows on January 2, 1942, taking the religious name of Sister Maria Germaine. She earned a bachelor's degree from St. Joseph College, now the University of St. Joseph, and a master's degree from Fairfield University. She also did advanced study in gerontology at University of Colorado.

Sister Mary Jane taught for 30 years in parish elementary schools throughout the three Connecticut dioceses. A little-known ministry, to which she was wholly devoted, was St. Benedict Interracial Center in the north end of Hartford, where she taught religious education and made home visits to the sick, elderly and poor with compassionate service and care.

In later life, she explored a variety of ministries. Gifted with keen intelligence and boundless energy, Sister Mary Jane became a published writer, water colorist, successful administrator, retreat house director, therapeutic recreation director and served numerous non-profit organizations as organizer, enthusiastic leader and volunteer continuing through retirement.

After joining Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Wilton in 1988, she established a program to assist the elderly and homebound, and continued to serve parishioners at home, as well as those at Ogden House, Wilton Meadows and The Greens and Brookdale during her 25 years of service at the parish.

On June 29, 2014, the parish celebrated her 75 years of consecrated life with a restatement of her commitment vows during the noon Mass. In her own words, "I have had a beautiful, fulfilling Mercy life; I loved every one of the ministries that called to me."

A Mass of Resurrection was celebrated for Sister Mary Jane on December 4 at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Wilton. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery in West Hartford. ■

## Sister Clare Keleher, SND, 96

On January 25, at age 96, Sister Clare Keleher was called home to the Lord. Born in Massachusetts in 1920, she entered the Waltham Province of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur on August 7, 1938.

When the number of foundations of the Sisters in Connecticut began to increase, Sister Clare was among the number of native Massachusetts Sisters who were transferred to the Connecticut Province.

In 1963, Sister Clare moved to the Diocese of Bridgeport as a member of the Community of the Sisters of Notre Dame she was among the Sisters living in the Provincial House in Fairfield until it was sold to the Jesuits in 1989.

For many years, Sister Clare was involved in ministry at Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield. In a surprising and unusual assignment, she also worked with the Fairfield Public School System as a counselor and tutor in the Homebound Program.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Sister Clare on January 27 at the Notre Dame du Lac Chapel in Worcester, Mass. Burial followed in the Notre Dame du Lac Cemetery. ■

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### DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT: FEBRUARY 21—MARCH 19

#### FEBRUARY

22	Msgr. George B. Curtiss .....	1982
23	Msgr. Miroslav J. Myschshyn.....	1980
24	Rev. Joseph E. Russo .....	1998
	Rev. Walter J. Seekamp .....	2012
26	Msgr. Henry E. Flanagan .....	1966
28	Rev. Stanley Koziol.....	2013

#### MARCH

1	Rev. Leonard M. Conlon .....	1976
	Deacon Timothy Sullivan.....	2015
5	Msgr. John J. Pitonak .....	1990
8	Rev. Boleslaus Rarus .....	2005
10	Rev. Raymond H. Stephenson.....	1990
12	Rev. Martin Hitchcock .....	2014
	Rev. Leo Suwinski .....	2005
13	Deacon Joseph L. Cross .....	2003
14	Rev. Vincent P. Cleary .....	1989
15	Msgr. Francis J. Sugrue.....	1977
	Msgr. Edward G. Zibell.....	1978
	Rev. William J. Galya.....	1994
16	Deacon Joseph Farley .....	2013
17	Rev. Daniel F. Golden .....	1955
	Msgr. John F. Murcko .....	1975
	Msgr. Francis X. McGuire .....	1993
18	Msgr. Donald M. Paolucci .....	1990
	Rev. John Fay.....	2006
19	Rev. Bartholomew J. O'Shea.....	1959

# Rescuing the Poor in Uncertain Times

*American Catholics are embracing God's economy as they help the poor in Latin America*

Sandra Maria goes to work each day even though she knows it is slowly killing her.

Maria, a mother of five and a grandmother, spends each day scavenging in a city garbage dump in northern Nicaragua for recyclables, which she later sells for money to buy food. The work is hard — toxic fumes rising up from the mounds of putrid garbage sting her eyes and burn her throat as hordes of mosquitoes buzz around her body — but not having food for her family is harder.

"The smoke is killing us and we bathe in dirty water," says Maria, who lives in the shanty town inside the garbage dump with her family. "We would do anything to get away from the dump, but right now it is the only way for us to make money to survive."

Maria's family is one of hundreds who scrape out a living each day in Chinandega's 20-acre garbage dump. In many Latin American countries, the poor flock to city garbage dumps because it is often the only steady work they can find and they can at least earn enough to guarantee their children a meal. Still, the pay is meager — the equivalent of between \$2 and \$10 U.S. dollars a week.

The dire situation in Chinandega is just one example of the intense poverty plaguing Latin America. A 2011 World Bank study found over 13 percent of Latin America's population living on less than \$2.50 a day, while 26 percent lacked access to basic sanitation. The fact that families are turning to garbage dumps for survival, shows the severity of the need.

"Garbage dumps and dirty streets are terrible playgrounds for children to be growing up in," says Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, whose ministry supports several aid programs across Latin America for families struggling to survive intense poverty. "If we don't do something to break the vicious cycle of poverty these children are trapped in, they are doomed to become adults still living in the same deadly environment."

Despite the dismal statistics and fear over the future of an uncertain economy, dozens of local outreach ministries run by strong Catholic missionaries are tapping into God's economy to help the poor in Latin America. And, already, they've seen great returns as lives are being restored.

One such life is that of Maria Elena. The mother of four used to work in the horrific 42-acre garbage dump in Managua, Nicaragua. She barely made enough money to feed her children, let alone send them to school. They often came to work with her in the dump, which she hated because it made them sick.

Maria Elena is now part of a jewelry-making program run by a local Catholic ministry where she earns enough money making necklaces and bracelets from



recycled material to help support her family — even send her children to school.

"This program has been a great help," she says. "I don't know what we would have done without it."

The simple program that changed Maria Elena's life is one of several projects in Latin America supported by Cross Catholic Outreach. Thanks to contributions provided by its U.S. donors, Cross Catholic Outreach is able to partner with Catholic ministries in the field who are running great programs but don't have the funds to sustain them. Support from American Catholics keeps these important projects up and running.

"We're amazed by the unwavering compassion and generosity of these donors. Even at a time when people are hurting here in the U.S. because of the economy, they are still giving to help the poor around the world," says Cavnar. "They show great faith, and we are seeing the positive returns of that faith in the lives of the poor."

Those positive returns are especially visible in the fight against world hunger. For example, monthly financial support from Cross Catholic Outreach allows Las Mercedes Nutrition Center in Honduras to feed more than a hundred poor, malnourished children who they find abandoned in garbage dumps and in the streets. Cross Catholic Outreach also feeds thousands of poor children through the support of school feeding programs and food shipments to countries such as Ecuador,

Peru, and Bolivia.

"It is amazing what God can do when you trust him," said John Bland, executive director of Amigos for Christ, a Nicaraguan ministry serving the rural poor and people living in Chinandega's city garbage dump.

With help from Cross Catholic Outreach, his ministry built homes for families living in the dump — families who have spent much of their lives wondering if they'd be able to collect enough plastic bottles to buy food.

"The poor have unbelievable faith, as do these Catholic ministries serving in the field, helping them each day," Cavnar says. "We count it a privilege to help them and, in doing so, live out our faith."

To make a tax-deductible contribution to Cross Catholic Outreach and its work with Catholic ministries overseas, either use the enclosed postage-paid brochure or send donations to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC01235, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168.



*Sandra Maria (above) is one of many dump scavengers in a poor community aided by Cross Catholic Outreach. She fears for the children who work on the smoky, dangerous site and prays they'll have a better future.*

## How to Help:

**Your help is needed for Cross Catholic Outreach to bring Christ's mercy to the poorest of the poor. To make a donation, use the enclosed postage-paid brochure or mail a gift to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC01235, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168.**



## Sports

## Matakevich: From All-State to All-American linebacker

By DON HARRISON

Tyler Matakevich is living his dream. Complementing his innate talent with determination and enthusiasm, he made the quantum leap from St. Joseph High, Trumbull, football star to college All-American.

Consider: In his senior season at Temple University, the former Cadets' two-time All-State linebacker (2009-10) was voted a consensus First-Team All-American and won both major prizes as the nation's defensive player of the year—the Bronko Nagurski Trophy and the Chuck Bednarik Award.

Since their founding in the early 1990s, Matakevich is the first collegiate player with Connecticut ties to win these coveted awards.

"I didn't know that," he said in a telephone interview earlier this month. "Football has always been a dream. I never thought I'd get this far. It's been surreal."

As team captain, the 6-foot, 232-pound Matakevich pro-

vided the leadership and grit that propelled Temple from an also-ran to a 10-4 record and the Eastern Division championship of the American Athletic Conference. Coach Matt Rhule's Owls clinched the 2015 division title with a 27-3 victory over Connecticut on November 28.

He concluded his Temple career with a school-record 481 tackles, and became just the seventh NCAA player in the nation to record 100-plus tackles in each of four seasons. Rhule thought it appropriate that Matakevich beat out two other All-Americans, Reggie Ragland of Alabama and Carl Nassib of Penn State, for the Bednarik Award.

"He showed that somebody from Temple can stand next to a kid from Alabama and a kid from Penn State and win," Rhule said. "And he deserved it. He's the kind of guy people can root for. Every time we asked him to do something, he answered. He gave of himself. Whatever it is, he has it."

Tylers parents, Dave and

Kim Matakevich, who live in Stratford, reveled in their son's triumphs by attending virtually all of his Temple games across four seasons.

"My husband missed only one game and I missed two in four years," said Kim, who describes her son as "a small-town boy" whose successes on and off the field are "a dream come true."

In December, Matakevich completed his degree in adult and organizational development from Temple's College of Education, so now—when not attending awards dinners—he is training for a playing career in the National Football League. The NFL draft is scheduled for April 28-30.

"I rooted for the Jets growing up," he says, "but I'll play for any team that picks me."

Matakevich's attachment to St. Joseph High is seemingly lifelong, perhaps because his dad was an assistant to football coach Joe Della Vecchia for 13 years. So there was little doubt Tyler would become a Cadet.

"I've been going up to St. Joe's for as long as I can remember," he says. "Coach Dell and I are close. He was at the Walter Camp (All-American Awards) Dinner with my family in New



TEMPLE'S TYLER MATAKEVICH, a former St. Joe's Cadets' two-time All-State linebacker, was presented the Bronko Nagurski Award as the nation's defensive player of the year at a banquet December 8 in Charlotte, N.C.

Haven on January 16."

With Matakevich at linebacker and running back, St. Joseph won back-to-back CIAC state championships in 2009 and 2010. A broken foot prevented him from playing in the first five games of his senior season, but he returned to power the Cadets to their second straight state title. He capped his scholastic career with an exclamation point-worthy

performance in the championship against Ansonia, scoring four touchdowns as St. Joe's broke open a close game to prevail, 49-28, at UConn's Rentschler Field.

The foot injury was said to discourage many of Matakevich's would-be football suitors, but not Temple. "I never thought any of this was possible," he says. "It's been great." ■

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# Sports

## Bike joins Lilly as National Player of Year

By **DON HARRISON**

When soccer is the subject, is it time to place Jenna Bike and Kristine Lilly in the same declarative sentence?

The answer is an emphatic “yes.” Bike, St. Joseph High of Trumbull’s 2014 Gatorade Player

(NSCAA). She joins three other recipients from Connecticut: Lilly (1986), the former Wilton High star who became a household name when the U.S. National Team won the 1999 World Cup championship; Vanessa Pruzinsky (Trumbull, 1998), and Kia McNeill (Avon, 2003).

was mentioned. “Her niece,” she noted, “plays on the same team with my youngest sister (Julia).”

St. Joe’s coach Jack Nogueira wasn’t surprised in the least by Bike’s latest honor. “Jenna is the most talented player I’ve coached here. She has the talent, the drive and determination to succeed,” he says. “She’s a great teammate and very humble.”

Winning this prestigious national award, he adds, “is a combination of what she’s done here at St. Joe’s, her club team and the national team.”

Indeed, Bike also plays the game with skill and resolve for the Connecticut Football Club and the U.S. Under-18 Women’s National Team. In mid-December, she was among 24 national team players who competed at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, Calif. On December 5, Jenna played for the East squad—coached by Nogueira—in the annual High School All-American game in Raleigh, N.C.

Why did she choose to embrace soccer instead of another sport? “I’m so competitive and soccer is such a competitive sport,” she explains. “I also love the traveling. I’ve already played soccer in seven countries.”

Beyond U.S. borders, the oldest of Stan and Beth Bike’s three daughters has played the game in Russia—“I was in Russia when they invaded Ukraine,” she says, matter-of-factly—Turkey, Croatia, Italy, Mexico and Costa Rica.

The Cadets’ 5-foot-6 senior forward completed the scholastic portion of her career in nearly

seamless fashion this past fall, leading St. Joseph to a 22-1 record and its second state title in the past three seasons. She contributed a goal and assist in St. Joe’s 2-0 victory over Suffield in the Class L championship match.

Overall, she registered a career-high 25 goals as a senior, and will depart with two St. Joseph career records, 77 goals and 43 assists.

“Jenna Bike is remarkably fast with or without the ball,” says Dan Uhrlass, Trumbull’s head coach. “She is dangerous because she can go by defenders with ease. Other players simply are not used to how quick she is on the ball.”

The only glitch in the Cadets’

2015 season was the 2-0 loss to Ridgefield in the FCIAC title match. Nogueira: “Give all the credit to Ridgefield.” St. Joe’s won back-to-back FCIAC championships in 2012 and ’13.

Nogueira is pleased that all four of the Cadets’ 2015 captains will be playing at the collegiate level next fall—Marissa Grasso at Bryant, Leah Lewis at Colgate, Samantha Lello at Endicott (Mass.), and Bike at BC.

“I think Jenna will be a star on the college level,” he says. “Boston College plays in the Atlantic Coast Conference, the No. 1 conference for women’s soccer. It wouldn’t surprise me if she was the rookie of the year in the ACC.”



of the Year, two-time American and four-time All-State forward, was chosen as the 2015 National High School Player of the Year by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America

“When I got the call, I was completely caught off guard,” says Bike, who has committed to attending Boston College. “I had no idea I was even nominated.”

She chuckled when Lilly’s name

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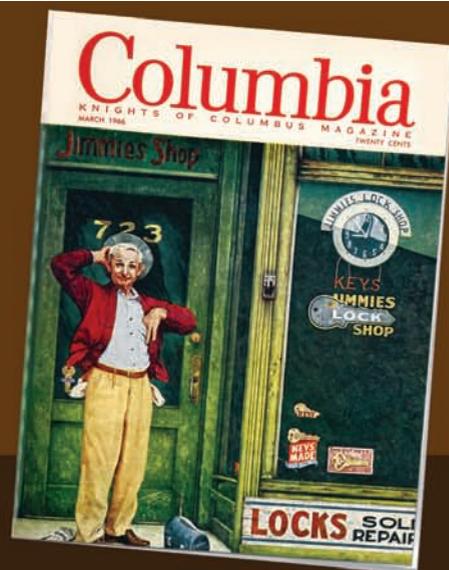
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# Column: Thomas Hicks



## Night

### POTPOURRI

BY THOMAS H. HICKS

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

**N**ights and days, bless the Lord.  
Light and darkness, bless the Lord.  
(Liturgy of the Hours, Morning Prayer, Sundays)

I enjoy being outdoors at the time of day when the sky is beginning to be gradually emptied of its color as the gathering dark thickens. Shadows disappear before the conquering dark, and all that is hard and sharp is

softened.

I tend to find a peace watching a day end, even though it is the close of another day of my small segment of time. Shelly spoke of being “cradled within the embrace of night” (*The Sensitive Plant*).

Night makes an end of the noise and bustle of the day. It can be gentle and soothing. I find the night companionable.

Night was a time which Jesus loved. He habitually “went out into the hills to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God” (Lk.6:12).

It’s true that night is a time when we are most vulnerable to the demons of worry and fear. But

night can comfort. It can, to some degree, wash out the day’s distress. There is the kindness of night.

The night has different faces. There is the thick black night that holds no stars. Darkness rules everywhere. There’s that special blackness of night over water that one sees, for example, from a cruise ship.

There’s the night of moonlight and stars in a soft purple sky. The sky is serene and silently resplendent with stars. It’s a gentle, magic night, flooded by the soft light of the moon. Few things in this world are so beautiful as the light of the moon shining on breaking waves along the shore. Humans have seen the same moon for millions of years.

And those stars in a night sky! As John Updike wrote: “the numbers are so grand they seem fabrications ... a hundred billion stars in our own galaxy ... and a hundred billion galaxies beyond. Such numbers numb us.... What or Who placed the stars and galaxies, quasars and black holes out there?” (*Toward the End of Time*, p.327).

Isaiah wrote: “Lift up your eyes and look at the sky. Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power not one of them is ever missing” (40:26).

The earliest civilizations, the first navigators, the astrologers of old, all looked up at these same stars. Somehow there is the soothing reassurance of stars. When I’m home at night, it pleases me to think that the stars were there, just outside the window.

Night has long been recognized as a sacred time. It is the time of silence. Sometimes the silence seems palpable. “My soul longs for you in the night, my spirit within me seeks You” (Isa.26:9). St. John of the Cross speaks of the soul going forth to seek the Beloved under cover of darkness.

The night is a holy time. God can be experienced in the silent darkness in a unique way. It’s been said that silence is God’s first language. As the Psalmist put it, “Be silent and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). The mystic, Johann Tauler, said: “You must be silent. Then God will be born in you, will utter His word in you, and you shall hear it” (*Spiritual Conferences*, p.27).

“The Lord is not in noise” (3Kings 19:1).

Thomas Merton told how “I get out of bed in the middle of the night because it is imperative that I hear the silence of the night alone and, kneeling on the floor, I say psalms in the silence of the night.”

A night silence can be so distinct that it is almost a sound unto itself, a silence so deep that you can hear it. There is the silence that speaks and makes itself heard if you listen to it.

Night—that comes between a day gone and a day to come. And a person remembers by night; night is never alone, it remembers. At night “they” return to us.

*We praise your name with joy this night:*

*Please watch and guide us till the light.*

(Liturgy of the Hours, Evening Prayer, Tuesday, Ordinary Time) ■

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## POSITION AVAILABLE

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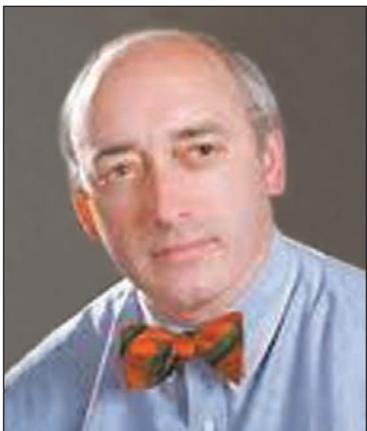
Malta House in Norwalk, CT is looking for a Development Director, who will report directly to the Chairs of the Development Committee while working very closely with the Executive Director and Business Manager. The Development Director oversees fundraising planning and implementation, including researching funding sources, submitting proposals, establishing strategies to approach potential donors and administering fundraising records and documentation.

Malta House offers a competitive compensation package with benefits.

Qualified applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to:

Tom Heckel, theckel51@gmail.com by March 15th, 2016.

## Column: Joe Pisani



## A night at the movies

## SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

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

A few Saturdays ago, my wife and I spent the evening at the movies. Not exactly in the traditional sense. No multiplex, no malls, no over-priced Milk Duds and no excessively large tub of hot buttered popcorn that can clog an artery or two before the final credits roll. Sandy has an addiction to that stuff, and just once I'd like to see the nutritional value, not to mention a Surgeon General's warning about the chemically enhanced substance that tastes like butter.

Our night at the movies is always a bit eccentric. I rent a movie from the iTunes store, and we lie in bed with the dog curled up between us and watch the film on an iPad screen smaller than a personal pizza.

We have popcorn, which I make myself in our hot-air popcorn maker, but there's no butter and no salt. The nutritional value is probably zero, but there's no danger of coronary complications.

It all sounds so simple, so homey and so 21st century

≡ **IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY**  
FROM PAGE 15 ≡

could play in implementing the ongoing vision of the recently-completed Diocesan Synod.

Additionally, the center is branching out into the area of communal decision making at the parish level. "Christ died as an individual and rose as a community," notes Father Bowler. "So whenever a community gathers together in his name, the Holy Spirit is present. The challenge is to let the Spirit live. There are tools for communal discernment, and people find that when they use those tools and allow the Spirit room to breathe, the result is better decision making." ■

Norman Rockwell-like, doesn't it? Except for one thing. The movie. You see, I can never find a movie worth watching, especially since my list of all-time favorites includes *The Bells of St. Mary's*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *St. Ralph*, and *Narnia*, along with *Mission Impossible* and a romantic comedy or two or 32 that my wife has forced me to watch over the years. I like movies that have a spiritual dimension and elevate humanity rather than constantly tear it down.

The other night, I found an old Bing Crosby flick titled *Little Boy Lost* about a news correspondent in Paris who returns to France after the war to find his orphaned son, who was lost during a bombing raid. There were a few laughs, a few tears and a few songs. Nowadays, the problem is that, as my mother would often say, "They don't make movies like that anymore."

Very often, when I look for a film to rent, I can never find

anything worth watching among recent releases, even though Hollywood spends mega-millions producing and marketing what I consider (word deleted).

Most films are saturated with cursing, profanity, drug use, sex and violence, and what they call "full frontal nudity" and "graphic bloodshed." None of this can be good for our families.

The more you watch, the more desensitized you become. It's unfortunate that the debate about violence in America never holds the entertainment industry accountable, even though several hundred studies have found a direct correlation between violence in TV and film and aggressive, anti-social behavior.

It's also no secret that Hollywood deplores traditional values and exalts what was once considered sinful by society. Good men and women with integrity are hard to find in the movies, and characters are motivated more by base instincts, evil intentions and corrupt agendas. And in recent years, the Catholic Church is always targeted, so don't expect to see a character like Father O'Malley anymore.

As a result, we usually end up watching fare like *The Little Mermaid*, *Hotel Transylvania* and *Mary Poppins*, not to mention the classic films from another era when good was still good and bad was still bad.

Consider the alternatives. Here

are some descriptions of the most popular movies in America:

An adventure "rated R for brutal violence, language throughout, some sexual references and drug use."

A thriller "rated R for strong violence, grisly images and language."

A Golden Globe winner "rated R for strong bloody violence, a scene of violent sexual content, language and some graphic nudity."

An Academy Award nominee "rated R for frequent explicit violence with blood and brutal detail.... Depictions of beating, shooting, stabbing, dismemberment, mauling and/or burning; Frequent portrayals of gun, weapons, and hand-to-hand violence,

some involving animals and some in the context of war and survival. Scene of sexual violence. Gory and grotesque images."

It makes you wonder why a society that deplores bloodshed, gun violence, killing and sexual assault has the hypocrisy to condone and praise those activities in its entertainment?

There's only one solution. And it has to start in your own home, especially if you want to protect your children and grandchildren. Turn off the TV and stop watching films with profanity, graphic violence and sex. You may never get to the red carpet at the Oscars and you may not be trendy, but Christians were never supposed to be trendy. ■

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# Bits and Pieces

**THE SICK, THE FRAIL, THE HANDICAPPED**, and all who want to participate in the World Day of Prayer for the Sick are invited to Blessed Sacrament Parish, 275 Union Ave., Bridgeport, on Sun., **Feb. 21**. Welcome: 2:30 pm; Mass: 3 pm. Sponsored by the Order of Malta. For more info, contact Kelly Weldon: 203.834.5029 or [klweldon@optonline.net](mailto:klweldon@optonline.net).

**LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY** celebration sponsored by the Knights of Lithuania at St. George Parish, Bridgeport, on Sun., **Feb. 21**, with a noon Mass and program at 1 pm. For more info, call 203.878.0519.

**CATHOLIC YOUNG ADULTS** of Greater Danbury (ages 18-35) meets at the Newman Center (off the campus of Western CT State University) #7 8th Ave., Danbury and other nearby locations. Tues., **Feb. 23**, 6:30-8:30 pm, Lenten Talk on "Mercy" with Fr. Jeff Couture. Tues., **March 8**, 6:30-8:30, Movie Night: come

for the "Luck of the Irish" and enjoy snacks and fellowship. Palm Sunday Vigil Mass, Sat., **March 20**, 5 pm at Sacred Heart Parish, Danbury; trip out for dinner following. For more info, email [catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com](mailto:catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com).

**GREAT SHEEHAN TRIVIA CONTEST** to benefit the Shehan Center, Tues., **Feb. 23**, at the Holiday Inn, 1070 Main St., Bridgeport. Time: 5:30 pm registration & cocktails; 6:15 dinner; 7 Trivia Contest. For more info and for tickets, call 203.336.4468 or email Terry: [tjo@shehancenter.org](mailto:tjo@shehancenter.org).

**MARIAN LADIES** at St. George Parish, Bridgeport, Lenten Retreat on Wed., **Feb. 24**. The day will begin with Mass in the chapel at 9 am. All are invited. For more info, call 203.261.8020.

**EMMAUS 78 TEEN RETREAT** for grades 8-12, the weekend of **Feb. 26-28** at the Seton Newman Center in Danbury. Faith, Friends, Fun, and PLENTY of delicious Food.

For more info, contact Catherine or Don Kallberg: 203.730.2069 or [www.danburyemmaus.org](http://www.danburyemmaus.org).

**NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING (NFP)** starts at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Danbury, Tues., **Feb. 26**, and continues on Sat., **April 1** and Fri., **April 29**, 7-9:30 pm. It takes all three classes to learn the method. For more info, contact Adrienne and Al Keogler: [a.keogler@att.net](mailto:a.keogler@att.net). To register or for more info about NFP, visit the Couple to Couple League International: [www.ccli.org](http://www.ccli.org).

**CASINO NIGHT** to benefit the Shehan Center Sat., **Feb. 27**, at The Inn at Longshore, 260 Compo Road S., Westport, from 7-11 pm. For more info and for tickets, call 203.336.4468 or email Terry: [tjo@shehancenter.org](mailto:tjo@shehancenter.org).

**LENTEN RETREAT**: "Mercy Abounds" at St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Riverside, Sun.-Tues., **Feb. 28-March 1**, from 7:30-9 pm. Talks and music, with a Reconciliation Worship Service Tues. For more info, contact Janis Pataky, director of faith formation: [j.pataky@stcath.org](mailto:j.pataky@stcath.org) or 203.637.3661, ext. 329.

**LECTURE SERIES** at St. Luke Parish, Westport, Fri., **March 4**, with Dr. Christopher Kelly, associate professor of religious studies at SHU. Topic: "Reading Genesis?" Wine and cheese reception, 7 pm; lecture 7:30 pm. For more info call the parish: 203.227.7245.

**ST. CATHERINE'S PLAYERS** presents Peter Pan at St. Catherine Parish, Riverside, on two weekends: **March 4-6** and **March 11-13**. Curtain times: Fri., 8 pm; Sat., 7:30 pm; Sun., 2 pm both weekends. On **March 4**, enjoy complimentary opening night reception. Tickets available at [www.stcatherinesplayers.com](http://www.stcatherinesplayers.com), at the parish office or by calling 203.637.3661, ext. 327. Tickets: \$21 in advance; \$25 at the door. For more info, contact Cindy Busani: [cindybusani@gmail.com](mailto:cindybusani@gmail.com) or 203.637.3661, ext. 327.

**ST. PATRICK'S DAY CONCERT** at St. Jude Parish, Monroe, sponsored by the Monroe K of C on Sat., **March 5**, at 7:30 pm. The event will be cabaret style and feature the songs and humor of the Keltic Kick Band. Food and soft drinks available for purchase, BYOB. Tickets: \$20/person. Seating by reservation only. For more info and for tickets, call Bill Davoren: 203.445.8857 or Dave Feola: 203.268.4072.



## Connecticut State Council 3rd Annual Stations of the Cross and Benediction

March 20, 2016  
Palm Sunday at 2:00 pm

Shrine of St. Margaret, 2523 Park Avenue, Bridgeport

**Main Celebrants**  
Bishop Frank J. Caggiano  
Msgr. J. Peter Cullen, *State Chaplain*

**LENTEN CONCERT** by the St. Cecilia Consort, a Fairfield County-based sacred music ensemble, in five parishes: Sun., **March 6**, 2 pm, Holy Family Parish, Fairfield; Sun., **March 13**, 2:30 pm, St. Rose of Lima Parish, Newtown; Fri., **March 18**, 7 pm, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Danbury; Mon., **March 21**, 7 pm, St. Pius X Parish, Fairfield; and Fri., **March 25**, 7 pm, Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Fairfield. For more info or to hear audio samples, visit [stceciliaconsort.wordpress.com](http://stceciliaconsort.wordpress.com).

**MASS OF HEALING AND HOPE** celebrated on Mon., **March 7**, at 6:30 pm by Fr. Larry Carew at Sacred Heart Parish, Greenwich, as part of the parish Lenten services. For more info, call the parish: 203.531.8730 or

the Charismatic Renewal Office: 203.268.8253.

**LANCER LEGACY GALA** takes place on Sat., **March 12**, at 6 pm at Sacred Heart University, Fairfield. Awards will be presented to Armand Fabbri, James Barquinero and Dianne June Auger, along with inductions into the Athletic Hall of Fame. Tickets: \$125/person. For more info or for tickets, contact Theresa Marzik: [tmarzik@notredame.org](mailto:tmarzik@notredame.org) or 203.372.6521.

**GOSPEL OF LIFE SOCIETY** meets at St. Mary Parish, Norwalk, the second Sat. of each month (**March 12**) from 10 am-12 noon, after the 9 am Pro-life Mass. This month's speaker will be Tom Heckel, co-chair of the development committee of Malta House for women in crisis

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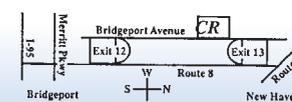
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pregnancies. For more info, call Eileen Bianchini: 203.847.727 or stmarygols@aol.com.

**ST. CASIMIR FEAST DAY** will be honored by the Knights of Lithuania at St. George Parish, Bridgeport, on Sun., **March 13**, with a noon Mass and luncheon at 1 pm. For more info and for reservations, call 203.878.0519.

**TENEBRAE SERVICE** presented at St. Gregory the Great Parish, Danbury, Sun., **March 13**, at 3 pm, with a concert by the parish choir. For more info, contact the parish: 203.797.0222.

**MASS OF HEALING AND HOPE** will be celebrated Mon., **March 14**, at 7:30 pm, at St. Lawrence Parish, Shelton, with Fr. Charles Allen, SJ. For more info, contact the Charismatic Renewal Office: 203.268.8253.

**SWIM ACROSS THE SOUND** registration opens. The SWIM Marathon will be held on Sat., **July 30**, at Captain's Cove, Bridgeport. Early bird registrations received by Tues., **March 15**, will receive a \$100 discount. To register, visit: [www.SwimAcrossTheSound.org/marathon2016](http://www.SwimAcrossTheSound.org/marathon2016).

**CHILDREN'S EASTER PARTY**, sponsored by Sacred Heart Academy Alumnae, held Sat., **March 19**, 10 am-12 noon at the SHA campus, 265 Benham St., Hamden. Face painting,

games, raffles, a gigantic Bounce House, and "coffee and..." for parents. Cost: \$10 children; free for adults and babies one and under. Reservations needed by Mon., **March 14**, at [www.sacred-hearthamden.org/easterparty](http://www.sacred-hearthamden.org/easterparty). For more info, call Sr. Mariette Moan: 203.288.2309, ext. 313 or [alumnae@sacredhearthamden.org](mailto:alumnae@sacredhearthamden.org).

**ENCOURAGE** apostolate for friends and family of loved ones with same sex attractions or gender ID issues, meets the third Sat. of the month (**March 19**) at 10:30 am and is strictly confidential. For more info contact the Norwalk Chapter: [EncourageNorwalk@gmail.com](mailto:EncourageNorwalk@gmail.com).

**"AFTER SHOCK: Setting Your Soul and Parish on Fire,"** a lecture by "Jesus Shock" author Dr. Peter Kreeft, professor at Boston College, at St. Mary Parish, Ridgefield, Sat., **March 19**, at 1 pm. Free admission; donations accepted. For more info, email [patty.linnon@gmail.com](mailto:patty.linnon@gmail.com).

**WOMENS' RETREAT:** "What's weighing you down spiritually?" St. Rose of Lima Parish, Newtown, Sat., **March 19**, 8 am-4 pm (Mass). Suggested registration: \$25. For more info, contact Pam Arsenault: 203.426.2333, ext. 1, or [dre@strosechurch.com](mailto:dre@strosechurch.com), or Mary Roos: 203.363.0184.

**LENTEN REFLECTION** with the CantiamoCHOIR, St.

Francis of Assisi Parish, Weston, Sat., **March 19**, at 7 pm. Lenten music with the choir, Scripture readings with Dr. Thomas Hicks, and Stations of the Cross video "Jesus: Walk to Calvary." No admission charge; call to reserve seating. For more info and to reserve a seat, contact Marlane Tubridy: 203.454.9023.

**WOMEN'S GROUP** at Christ the King Parish, Trumbull, will meet Mon., **March 21**, to enjoy St. Patrick's Day bingo. All are invited. For more info, call 203.261.8020.

**STARY NIGHT GALA** to benefit Caroline House will be held Fri., **April 1**, from 6:30-11 pm at The Inn at Longshore, 260 Compo Road South, Westport. Cocktails, live & silent auctions, dinner, music & dancing with Voo Doo Carnival. Fairfield and Sacred Heart universities will be honored. For more info, contact Christine Paine: [cpaine@thecarolinehouse.org](mailto:cpaine@thecarolinehouse.org) or 203.334.0640.

**GOLDEN GALA** dinner

dance for Immaculate High School's 50th anniversary, Sat., **April 2**, at the Amber Room Colonnade, 1 Stacey Rd., Danbury. Cocktails start at 6:30 pm. Live and silent auction, raffles, dinner and dancing. For ticket info, visit the Gala website: [www.immaculatehs.org/golden-gala](http://www.immaculatehs.org/golden-gala) or contact Michele Brooks: [galarsvp@myimmaculatehs.org](mailto:galarsvp@myimmaculatehs.org).

**JOIN THE BUILD** of the Pope Francis House, a joint project between the Diocese of Bridgeport and Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield

County. Groups of 12-15 people are welcome to work any day Tues. thru Sat. from 8:15 am-3 pm. Help get the family in before Easter! For more info, email Donna Spigarolo: [donabahr@optonline.net](mailto:donabahr@optonline.net) or check out the Habitat website: [Habitatcfc.org](http://Habitatcfc.org).

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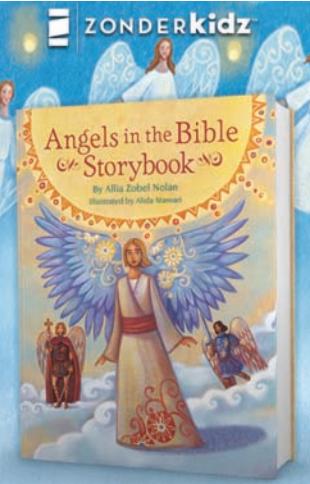
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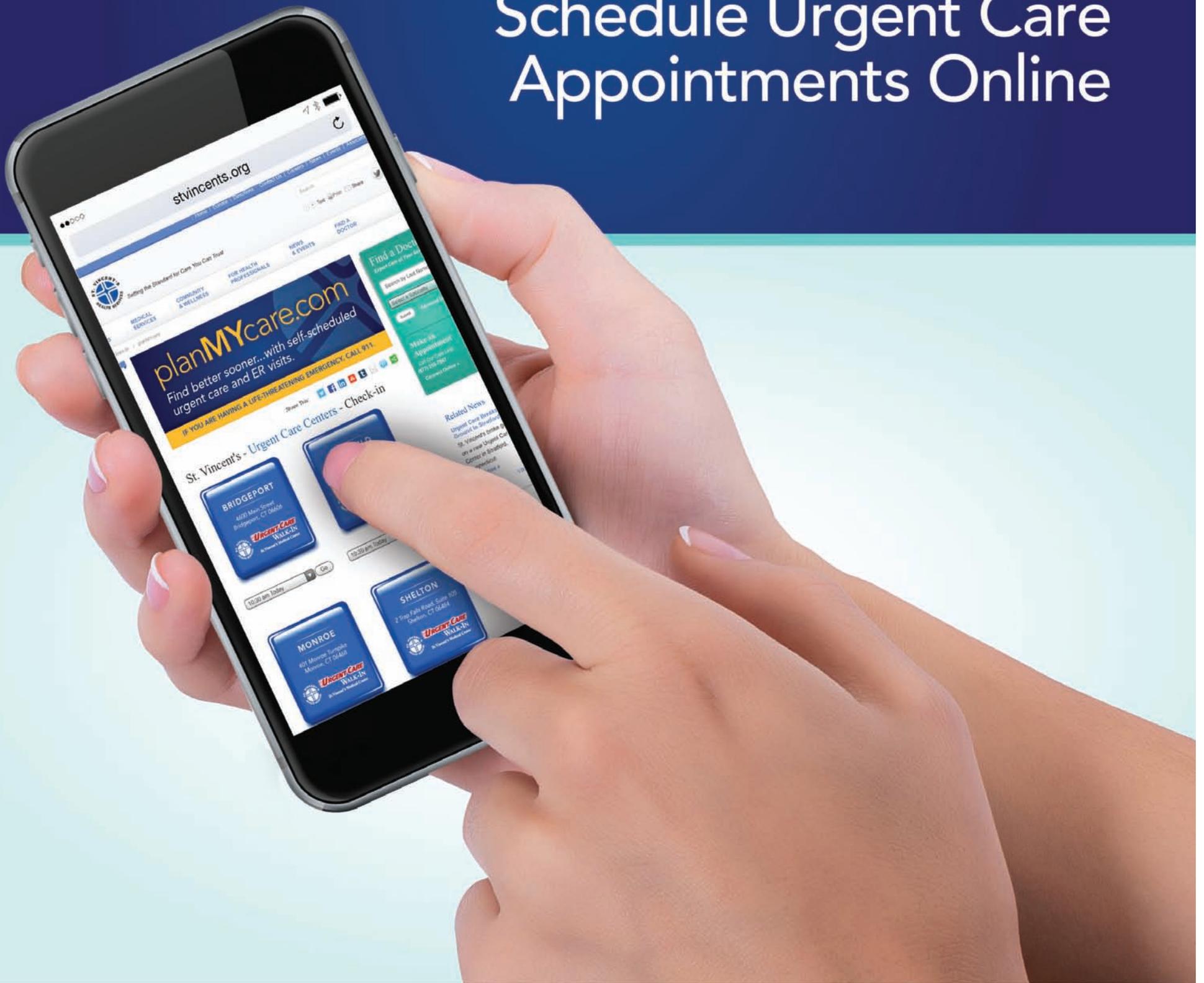
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