



# FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



**6** *Catholic Scouting builds character and faith*



**12** *Farewell for Sister Pat Rickis, DHS*

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# Synod: The Next Step

## Pilot program launches Catholic Service Corps

By ALEXANDRIA FAIZ

The momentum from the 2014 Synod continues as new programs are launched around the Bridgeport Diocese including plans for the new Catholic Service Corps (CSC).

Patrick Turner, director of Strategic and Pastoral Planning for the diocese, says that 15 chapters are participating in the 2016-2017 pilot year involving universities, high schools and parish groups throughout the diocese.

They will get together for the first time on Saturday, September 24, with a day of service that will include projects across the diocese, concluding with a Mass at the Chapel at Sacred Heart University and a homily from Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

Students involved in the Catholic Service Corps will discover that participation will be a different experience than most other volunteer clubs. Students will be asked to make an intentional commitment to service as a way of life.

Turner said that “students will not only do good works but learn why we do them, within the context of our Catholic faith.”

Each chapter will have two advisers: one to coordinate the community projects and the other to provide spiritual reflection and guidance. “Before serving their communities, students will engage in a theological discussion or participate in a retreat. The work of their hands will then help them reach a deeper faith together,” Turner said.

A pilot project took place in April when students from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield joined the St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bridgeport, Youth Group



**SERVING IN FAITH**—The Catholic Service Corps will be formally launched on Sunday, September 24 with a day of service and spiritual reflection. A pilot program is already underway in 15 parishes and schools throughout the diocese.

to clean the grounds of Columbus School in Bridgeport. This event, organized with the City of Bridgeport’s Neighborhood Revitalization/Anti-Blight Office, gave the program a strong start, according to Andrea Caneal, assistant director of SHU’s Office of Volunteer Programs & Service Learning. “The focus of the Catholic Service Corps is action-oriented projects that will occur throughout the diocese. Sacred Heart University is honored to be a partner in Bishop Caggiano’s call to engage the area’s youth,” Caneal said.

That April project not only cleared trash and made the school yard safer for its students but also taught important lessons. “It was an eye-opening experience,” shared Geissy Bitencourt, one of the student leaders at Sacred Heart University. “When we pass a neglected park, we often think someone else will take care of it. To actually have our own hands help fix a problem affecting a community was inspirational.”

In turn, members of the youth group had time to learn about

college life from their fellow volunteers. Bitencourt, an active parishioner at St. Charles, was the link for involving its youth group in that inaugural event in April. Sacred Heart is also partnering with St. Andrew Catholic Church in Bridgeport. Bitencourt is now working alongside Andrea Caneal in SHU’s Office of Volunteer Programs and Service Learning.

Schools and parishes that will be participating in the Catholic Services Corps pilot program include Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University, and Western Connecticut State University; Trinity Catholic High School, Immaculate High School, St. Joseph High School, Kolbe Cathedral High School, Notre Dame High School, Fairfield College Preparatory School and the Convent of the Sacred Heart; St. Charles Borromeo Parish, St. Andrew Parish, St. Rose of Lima Parish, St. Aloysius Parish and St. Raphael Academy.

A dedication to youth is core to Bishop Caggiano’s ministry. In addition to leading the diocesan

delegation to World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, this summer, the bishop acted as the 2016 World Youth Day liaison for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“The young people I’ve dealt with, and I’ve dealt with hundreds of them in these listening sessions for the synod, are tremendous,” Bishop Caggiano noted. “But for everyone that’s involved in the Church, there are perhaps eight or nine who are not involved.”

This is why he has identified finding creative ways to welcome back Catholics as the single great-

est need. Building a sense of community among Catholic youth is an important step to fulfilling it.

In a recent video message for World Youth Day, Bishop Caggiano asked young Catholics to “renew the face of the earth. We may not be able to solve someone’s problem, but the Holy Spirit has given us the power to see others as our brothers and sisters.”

(A coordinator for the program will be named this summer. For more information, contact Patrick Turner: [pturner@diobpt.org](mailto:pturner@diobpt.org), or Evan Pscencik, coordinator of Youth and Young Adult programs: [epsencik@diobpt.org](mailto:epsencik@diobpt.org).)

**DIOCESAN BLUE MASS**  
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**Sunday, September 11, 2016 • 9:00 A.M.**  
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The Diocesan Blue Mass is co-sponsored by the Diocese of Bridgeport, and Fairfield County Councils and Assemblies of the Knights of Columbus. For more information, contact Janet Davis, 203-416-1638.

### ON THE COVER

**VACATION BIBLE CAMP**—Msgr. Walter Orlowski speaks with young campers from St. Matthew Parish in Norwalk at this year’s summer Vacation Bible School. Many parishes throughout the diocese host Bible camps that give children an opportunity to learn about their faith while enjoying Summer activities. For more information, turn to page 13.

**ABOVE THE FOLD**—CAMPERS at St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull learn to reverence the Eucharist and practice virtue.

### CONTENTS

- |    |   |    |  |
|----|---|----|--|
| 5  | <b>WORLD YOUTH DAY</b><br><i>A pilgrimage in faith</i>          | 12 | <b>NEW PRESIDENT FOR ST. V'S</b><br><i>Vince Caponi</i>    |
| 8  | <b>A BEACON OF LIGHT</b><br><i>Ministry in the Inner City</i>   | 14 | <b>SHU 'JOURNEY'</b><br><i>Empowering young Catholics</i>  |
| 9  | <b>MAGNIFICAT MINISTRY</b><br><i>A day of renewal for women</i> | 17 | <b>TRINITY'S MIKE WALSH</b><br><i>Set for Hall of Fame</i> |
| 11 | <b>FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION</b><br><i>Dr. Frank DeStefano</i>    | 23 | <b>MOTHER TERESA</b><br><i>September Canonization</i>      |



# Latest News

## ‘Become a living Gospel,’ bishop tells priests

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

“The very reason you were created was to come to this moment to be one with Christ,” Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said to the two men about to be ordained at St. Augustine Cathedral on June 25.

More than 750 people filled the cathedral, some sitting on fold-up chairs, to witness the ordination of Philip Lành Phan, a native of Vietnam, and Eric William Silva, a Trumbull resident, to the priesthood.

The back doors of the historic downtown cathedral were thrown open for the joyous celebration with music and readings delivered in Vietnamese and English.

Vincent Vu, O. Carm., brother of Father Phan, proclaimed the first reading from the Book of Jeremiah in Vietnamese, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations, I appointed you.”

John Silva, brother of Father Silva, delivered the English readings, while Virginia Silva, their mother, and Xuan ThiTran Phan, mother of Father Phan, brought up the offertory gifts. Father Phan had served his deacon internship at St. John’s, and in a gesture of appreciation the parishioners had collected funds to bring his



FIRST BLESSING (l-r) Father Philip Lành Phan and Father Eric Silva gave their first blessings to friends and families after being ordained by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano on June 25, at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport. Hundreds lined up for the First Blessing in a day of joy and grace for the newly ordained priests.

mother from Vietnam for the ordination.

The two men were ordained following the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word.

They received prolonged applause from the gathering as the bishop called them forward.

After they made their promises, the men knelt before the bishop for the Laying on of Hands and Prayer of Ordination. All priests present then processed forward and imposed their hands on the ordained as a sign of brotherhood.

Bishop Caggiano told the two men that priests are first and

foremost “shepherds of God’s people.”

“You must shepherd as a brother, servant and friend. Your ministry is not about the observance of the law alone but the power of love,” the bishop said.

The bishop told the newly-ordained that they will have the awesome power to preach, to forgive sins and to consecrate the “bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ,” but in order to lead others, they must “stir the embers of faith” in their own hearts.

“In a world where words are

of season, whether your hearers like it or not.”

Father Francisco Gomez-Franco, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bridgeport, served as master of ceremonies. Thomas Marino served as music director and organist for the ordination, and Marjorie Donalds as cantor. The ordination program also featured the Diocesan Youth Choir (C4Y) under the direction of Mary Bozzuti Higgins, the Diocesan Festival Choir, and the Choir of the Vietnamese Community of the Cathedral Parish.

After Mass the bishop thanked

many and cheap, you must become a living Gospel, preaching the Gospel with the integrity of your life. I pray for you that God’s people will see you as a living Gospel.”

The bishop told Father Phan and Father Silva that when they preach, it must be “as men not afraid to tell the truth in and out

all present, including the families and priests who helped to nurture the vocation of the newly ordained.

“What a beautiful and joyous celebration we’ve had together this day. We will remember this as a moment of grace for two young priests and for this diocese,” he said.

Hundreds then gathered on the green outside of the cathedral where a large tent was set up for the new priests to give their first blessings.

Father Phan celebrated his first English Mass that evening at St. John Church in Darien at 4:30 pm. Father Frank Hoffmann, St. John’s pastor, gave the homily. Father Phan celebrated his first Vietnamese Mass on June 26 at St. Augustine Cathedral at 2:30 pm. Father Justin Le from San Jose, Calif., delivered the homily.

Father Silva celebrated his first Mass on June 26 at 12 noon at St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull. Father Joseph Marcello, pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Trumbull, gave the homily.

The two priests have already received their first assignments as parochial vicars. Father Phan will serve at St. Mary Parish in Bethel; Father Silva heads for St. Joseph Parish in Brookfield. Both assignments were effective as of June 25. ■

## Lisa Ferrara named Chief HR Officer

BRIDGEPORT—“I am happy to announce that Lisa Ferrara has been named the Chief Human Resource Officer for the Diocese of Bridgeport,” said Msgr. Thomas Powers, vicar general for the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Ferrara took her position on June 15, and is already actively involved in restructuring the HR department in the light of the diocesan Strategic Plan.

She comes to the diocese with more than 25 years of experience in the Human Resource field, most recently as vice president of human resources for TransAct Technologies, Inc., an international organization based in Hamden, where she was responsible for all HR strategies and initiatives, as well as on-go-

ing “hands-on” management of compensation, benefit plan administration, payroll, workers compensation, employee relations and employee training.

Ferrara earned a BS in communications from Southern Connecticut State University and an MBA in human resource management from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield.

Born in Danbury as the fifth of six siblings, Ferrara grew up in St. Mary Parish in Bethel. She and her husband, Keith, are active parishioners at St. James Parish in Stratford. They are the parents of two sons, one a sophomore at West Point Military Academy and one headed to UMAINE this fall. “Both were Eagle Scouts with Troop 72 in



LISA FERRARA

Stratford,” she added with justifiable pride.

Ferrara has been a catechist at St. James since 2004 and has

taught various grades, as well as being involved with the parish sacramental program. She is also active with the Sterling House Community Center in Stratford as a Board of Directors member and a participant on the HR/Legal Committee.

As part of her new position, Ferrara has already met with Patrick Turner, director of Strategic Planning for the Diocese of Bridgeport, Father Michael Dogali, episcopal vicar for Strategic Planning, and other members of the Planning Committee. “The Diocesan Synod helped clarify what was really needed in human resources, and the core of that is better communication and building an HR team to better serve the entire

diocese,” she said.

A stronger human resources team will eliminate duplication of services and help identify the areas that need improvement. “The needs of the schools are different from the parishes, and those are different from the needs of the clergy,” she observed. “The bishop’s vision is to have better service to all our employees on a global basis. We want people to be comfortable with the human resources department and trust HR to make this a great place to work.”

She added with a quick smile, “This is already a great place to work. Where else can I have the support of my faith and do what I love to do—use my human resources skill to help people!” ■

# Parish News

## Father Mollenhauer installed as pastor of St. Roch

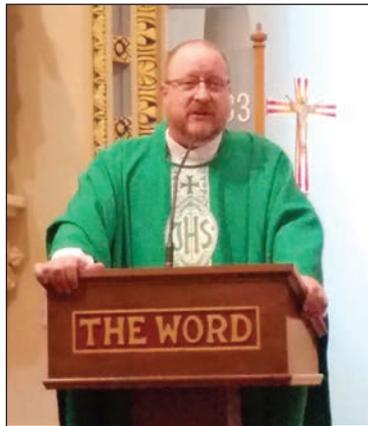
GREENWICH—Father Arthur Mollenhauer was installed as the ninth pastor of St. Roch Parish in Greenwich by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano on July 9, at the 5 pm Mass. It was a festive and joyous moment for the parish located in the “Chickahominy” neighborhood near the downtown.

Father Mollenhauer said he is grateful for the “warm and friendly” reception he has received from parishioners and people in the neighborhood who have gone out of their way to say hello.

“Pope Francis has insisted that we pastors be ‘Shepherds with the smell of the sheep.’ He asks us to ‘go out of ourselves: and serve the needs of our faithful.’ He wants us to ‘put our own skin and our own heart on the line’ for parishioners,” said Father Mollenhauer of his new assignment. “I have my work cut out for me as I strive to fulfill this mission and reach out to the people of Greenwich. As

I begin my ministry among you, I ask for your prayers that I may always heed these words.”

Father Mollenhauer was named pastor of St. Mary Parish



in Stamford in 2009 and also served as Administrator of St. Benedict/Our Lady of Montserrat during that time. On September 14, he was assigned by Bishop Caggiano to begin studies on a Licentiate Degree and Masters



FATHER ARTHUR MOLLENHAUER IS GRATEFUL for the warm and friendly reception he has received from parishioners and neighbors at St. Roch's in Greenwich. He was recently named ninth pastor of the parish, founded in 1938.

Degree in Canon Law at St. Paul University in Ottawa, Canada. He completed studies in June 2016, and will now also hold an appointment as Adjutant Judicial Vicar for the Diocesan Tribunal.

St. Roch Parish, with its Romanesque Revival stone church, was formally established

in 1938, after it served as a mission church. Most of its early parishioners came from a small village in Southern Italy and their village protector was San Rocco.

Father Mollenhauer, who served as a missionary in Chile for ten years and also studied in Rome, is fluent in both Spanish

and Italian.

Father Mollenhauer will have an opportunity to meet more of the Greenwich community during this year's St. Roch Feast that will be held August 10-13. The festival concludes on August 14 with a procession through the streets of Greenwich and a noontime Mass. ■

## THE ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL NEVER TAKES A VACATION!



**This Summer the programs and services supported by the Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) are at work every day, reaching out to the hungry, homeless, and to entire diocesan families in so many ways:**

- Two young men were ordained priests and are now at work in their first assignments: Fr. Eric Silva is ministering at St. Joseph Parish in Brookfield, and Fr. Philip Lanh Phan has begun his priestly ministry at St. Mary Parish in Bethel
- Catholic Charities soup kitchens are a refuge from the heat in Danbury, Bridgeport, and Stamford — offering a cool, safe space and a nutritious meal for the poor and hungry
- 231 young people and chaperones have traveled to Krakow, Poland for World Youth Day, a pilgrimage that will deepen their faith and stay with them for a lifetime
- Hundreds of parents throughout the diocese are breathing a little easier knowing that their sons and daughters are enrolled in Catholic schools this Fall because of financial assistance available through the Bishop's Scholarship Fund
- 18 retired priests who have given a lifetime of service to the diocese are looking forward to moving into the newly expanded Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of Clergy Residence

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# World Youth Day

*A pilgrimage of prayer and encounter*

**231 pilgrims aged 16-35, including 11 seminarians, from the Diocese of Bridgeport traveled to Poland for World Youth Day (WYD).**

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy,” one of the eight Beatitudes, is the theme of this year’s World Youth Day gathering, held July 27-31.



**Thursday July 21**  
Pilgrims depart from the Catholic Center for JFK International Airport. They travel on two flights.

**Friday, July 22**  
After arrival in Warsaw, Poland, groups are met by guide and board private motor coaches for a brief city tour of Warsaw and a welcome dinner. Pilgrims stay at the Mazurkas Hotel & Conference Center.



**Tuesday, July 26**  
This morning is free for exploring the city or to go to the Sanctuary for Divine Mercy or the JPPII Center. The afternoon is the time for the Opening Mass in Blonia Park which is near the hostel.

The patroness of WYD 2016 is St. Faustina.

Faustina, who was a nun of the Congregation of Our Lady of Mercy, proclaimed Jesus’ message of Divine Mercy to the world, particularly through her Chaplet of Divine Mercy.



**Saturday, July 23**  
Retreat Day to spiritually prepare pilgrims for the coming week. “WYD Welcome Party” at the hotel for many of our groups with a Polish BBQ, prayer, concert, Eucharistic adoration, games and keynote by Chris Stefanick.



**Sunday, July 24**  
After breakfast, pilgrims depart for Czestochowa and visit Jasna Gora, the monastery that is home to the Black Madonna icon. Mass is at 2 pm and then they continue to Krakow after a walk in Jordana Park and check into the Oleandry hostel.



**Wednesday, July 27**  
Catechesis in the morning is followed by evening cultural events.



**Thursday, July 28**  
Pilgrims have catechesis in the morning and officially welcome the Holy Father to Krakow this evening.



**Monday, July 25**  
Pilgrims depart for Auschwitz, the German concentration camp where millions lost their lives, including Saints Maximilian Kolbe and Edith Stein. In the afternoon the group travels to the Divine Mercy Shrine and says the Divine Mercy Chaplet in five languages!



**Friday July 29**  
After catechesis, pilgrims participate in evening cultural events including the Stations of the Cross with the Holy Father.



**Saturday, July 30**  
Pilgrims join all other American pilgrims for Mass followed by a vigil.

**Sunday, July 31**  
Today is the Closing Mass with the Holy Father. Tonight is the pilgrims’ Group Farewell Dinner.

**Monday August 1**  
Pilgrims travel from Warsaw, Poland, back to Connecticut. Welcome home!

# Fostering Faith

## Catholic Scouting

By **REBECCA VODOLA**

Bishop Frank Caggiano presented young scouts with faith-based awards at the June 18 Catholic Scouting Awards Ceremony. Members of the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and American Heritage Girls, a faith-based scouting organization, received Catholic Scouting Emblems for completing faith-based scouting programs.

It is possible to earn four emblems. Girl scouts can earn “Family of God,” “I Live My Faith,” “Mary the First Disciple” and “The Spirit Alive” awards. Boy scouts may earn the “Light of Christ,” “Parvuli Dei,” “Ad Altare Dei,” and “Pope Pius XII.”

The award programs assist Scouts in developing a personal relationship with Jesus, discovering the presence of God in daily life, experiencing personal growth

through the seven sacraments, exploring God’s call to vocations and ministries, developing self-awareness and understanding, modeling the Virgin Mary in obedience to and love of God and discovering how the Holy Spirit moves in their lives.

Scouts who have been awarded all four Catholic Scouting Emblems receive the “Pillars of Faith” award. This year’s recipients were Grace Anne Herrick, Victoria Kirkman, Marina Renzi and Katerina Ringes, all of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown.

Kirkman has been a Girl Scout for 12 years. She said that earning the awards helped her to grow in faith and knowledge of the Church, the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit.

“My troop leaders encouraged me to earn the first religious award in second grade, but the other awards were self-motivat-



CATHOLIC SCOUTS who earned faith-based awards were honored in a June ceremony.

ed,” Kirkman recalled. “As I grew older, I decided to follow through with the religious awards because they allowed me to gain a new perspective on my faith that wasn’t necessarily covered in Catholic school.”

A 2016 graduate of

Immaculate High School in Danbury, Kirkman will pursue a degree in nursing at Catholic University in the fall.

Adult scouting leader Katherine Anne Gombos of St. Catherine of Siena in Trumbull earned the “Bronze Pelican”

award for significant contributions to Catholic scouting. St. Rose of Lima’s Cub Scout Pack 570 was awarded the “National Catholic Quality Unit Award—Pope Paul VI” for outstanding commitment to the Catholic faith from troop leaders and scouts. ■



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## Let It Grow!

By **ELLEN MCGINNESS**

Talk about getting your hands dirty! The Girl Scouts

up with the idea that the Girl Scouts, as part of a project to give back to the community, could build an organic garden for New



MORE THAN JUST COOKIES—Girl Scouts planted a community garden at New Covenant Center in Stamford to provide fresh vegetables to families in need.

of Connecticut planted the very first organic garden at New Covenant Center, a soup kitchen and pantry program in Stamford run by Catholic Charities of Fairfield County.

The endeavor sprouted from a chance meeting between troop leader Michele Emond-Breen and Jim McPartlan, a Catholic Charities of Fairfield County board member. After some brainstorming, they came

Covenant Center (NCC). The vegetables and herbs would be offered in the pantry to families in need.

Easy to say—but how to do? David Lovegreen, the volunteer coordinator for NCC, knew just what to do: he called Maxon Keating of Fairgate Farms in Stamford. Keating arranged for three yards of discounted organic soil to be spread into concrete containers in the back of the cen-

ter. Keating himself donated all the seeds and seedlings for tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, radishes, basil, parsley and sunflowers—and taught the group some tricks and tips of the farming trade.

“I really wanted to build a garden so that we could grow something to help families and feed children,” explained Meghan Burke, a Girl Scout who has been in Emond-Breen’s troop since kindergarten. Burke has spent many hours volunteering for NCC, serving in the kitchen and running food drives for the pantry. But where did that passion to help others come from?

The rising sophomore at Notre Dame Catholic High School in Fairfield put it this way: “Part of it is growing up in Catholic schools—helping others is part of the culture. But I also love it because I can see the difference I’m making. I love being able to see who I’m helping.”

Edmond-Breen agrees. She hopes that the Girl Scouts will start a trend and build more gardens across the state, growing healthy food for healthier living:

“People think we’re all about the cookies. And yes that’s a big part of the Girl Scouts. But these girls really are making the world a better place.” ■

# Fielding a Sports Ministry

## Hidden Rock Sports spreads the Good News

By REBECCA VODOLA

Six years ago, John Moulder of Newtown stood on the sidelines of his daughter's cross-country meet and, noticing runners wearing T-shirts with motivational slogans, thought to himself, "Boy, that would be a great way to evangelize." His initial idea for a Christian T-shirt transformed into a faith-in-sports ministry called Hidden Rock Sports.

Today, Hidden Rock Sports (HRS) is a ministry of John's and his wife, Laura, parishioners at St. Rose of Lima in Newtown. The couple operates a website, [hiddenrocksports.com](http://hiddenrocksports.com), with an interactive blog for parents of young athletes and an online store where patrons may purchase, among other merchandise, Hidden Rock Sports T-shirts. Last year, John and Laura published

the guidebook to their ministry, *Good News for Young Athletes: Winning Strategies for Sports and Life*.

Hidden Rock Sports was named, Laura said, for the "hidden Rock" within the heart of each person: God.

Through HRS, John and Laura "introduce kids and their parents to a relationship with God through their sporting experiences. We hope that the parent and child will work on that relationship together," said John. "Sports can be very important to kids, so they are a great entry point to build that relationship with God."

Over the last decade, John and Laura watched their three children, Brianne, Jack and Aidan, struggle to keep a larger perspective while playing sports. Realizing that it can be overwhelming for both parents and



JOHN AND LAURA MOULDER turned an initial idea for a Christian T-shirt into a faith-in-sports ministry called Hidden Rock Sports.

children to navigate the world of youth sports, John and Laura said the Holy Spirit compelled them to begin their ministry. An idea for an evangelizing T-shirt turned into their book and then HRS.

"We want kids to understand that, whether you're the best or worst player on the team, it's from God and through God and for his glory that you play sports. Our kids responded to that and weren't so stressed out, worrying that every play is going to make or break them," said John. He and Laura want to share that broader perspective with other families.

"In so many communities, sports are a major feature of family life," said John. One of HRS's primary goals is to be a platform

for "dinner-table" discussion among family members. In Hidden Rock's ministry, he said, "The challenge is to get family members to take the message and transform their family's attitude toward sports."

HRS hinges on the cooperation of both parents and their children. "It's a dual effort," said Laura, because parents must foster a connection between God and sports as an example for their children. Importantly, the Moulders note, parents must prioritize Sunday Mass.

"You take your kids to sporting clinics to improve upon their performance. Mass is the greatest clinic you can ever attend, and it's free and it goes on every week," said John.

The HRS guidebook outlines

strategies for young athletes to persevere in sports and faith, with chapter topics including joy and contentment, key characteristics in a faith-filled life. "We have to let our hearts be quiet in a world that's very noisy. Keep practicing silence and keep practicing sports," said Laura.

The Moulders expect the guidebook to be the first in a series, hoping to write similar books for teenagers, parents and coaches. Eventually, they want to have a Hidden Rock Sports facility where kids could come to practice sports and take part in faith-based activities like Bible studies.

In April, Hidden Rock Sports held a Faith and Sports family workshop at St. Rose. The workshop offered interactive games and lessons based on the link between sports and faith. John and Laura hope to bring similar workshops to parishes and communities across the diocese and around New England.

"We're going to spread the Good News, going out and delivering the message ourselves, even though that wasn't the original plan. We're following the Holy Spirit's guidance and we're open to what people may ask or need of us," said John.

At the core of the Hidden Rock Sports message is the idea that "sports and life connect and can be symbiotic," said Laura. "Both sports and faith should be parts of your game plan."

(For more information, visit [www.hiddenrocksports.com](http://www.hiddenrocksports.com).)

## Baseball with the Bishop



The Diocese of Bridgeport invites all young adults ages 18-35 to attend Baseball with the Bishop, to be held Saturday, September 3.

Bishop Frank Caggiano, a longtime New York Mets fan, will travel to the Mets' Citi Field with young adults to see the Mets take on the Washington Nationals. Evan Psencik, coordinator of youth and young adult formation for the Diocese of Bridgeport, said that the event "Will be a great opportunity for young adults to enjoy America's past time with our shepherd."

Psencik is working with Father Jeff Couture, chaplain at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, to organize the event.

The cost is \$50 per person, which will cover one ticket to the game and round-trip bus transportation to and from the game. There are 30 spots available.

(To purchase tickets or for more information, contact Evan Psencik: 203.416.1649 or [epsencik@diobpt.org](mailto:epsencik@diobpt.org).)

## SAINT MARY'S CHURCH

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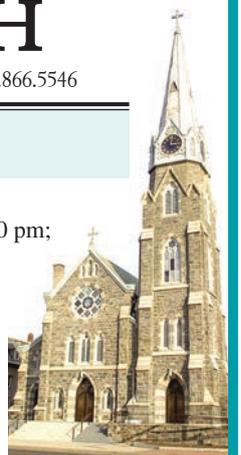
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# Reflections of an Inner-City Pastor

## 'Beacon of Light in the City of Bridgeport'

By **BETH LONGWARE DUFF**

Born and raised in Puebla, Mexico, Father Frank Gomez came to the United States in 1996 to enter the Novitiate and College of Humanities of the Legionaries of Christ in Cheshire, Conn., where he spent three years. He attended St. John Fisher Seminary in Stamford before completing his theological studies at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Maryland, and was ordained in the Diocese of Bridgeport in 2009.

Father Gomez was appointed pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in April 2015. He also serves as Bishop Frank J. Caggiano's secretary and Episcopal Master of Ceremonies. He recently spoke with the Fairfield County Catholic about his dual roles in the diocese.

*FCC: Let's talk first about your life as a pastor, a position you've held for just over a year. What were you anticipating, and how has it turned out?*

**Father Gomez:** When I was a parochial vicar at St. John's in Darien, the pastor, Msgr. Frank McGrath, made it look easy. He was very supportive and he taught me a lot. One of the things that I was very grateful to him for was that even though I was the parochial vicar, he got me involved in the life of the parish. He allowed me to sit on the Pastoral Council and the Finance

Council, and he allowed me to see how the budget process took place. He helped me to understand that sooner or later I was to become a pastor and therefore there was no reason for me not to become involved in some of the jobs that a pastor does.

*FCC: It sounds like you thought you were pretty well prepared to become a pastor.*

**Father Gomez:** I knew what I was getting into, but it was really my job as secretary to the bishop that allowed me to see how difficult the job of pastor is. In the year and a half that I was 100 percent in the office of the bishop I was able to see fully all the different parishes in the diocese, so I saw from a different perspective what all the pastors do. That experience allowed me to have more tools to use once I became a pastor.

*FCC: St. Charles Borromeo is the largest parish in Bridgeport. How do you manage to meet the many challenges it presents?*

**Father Gomez:** We have 2,185 registered families; when we count those who are not registered, we double that number. Every Sunday we have about 5,000 people who come through our doors. Fortunately, I have two parochial vicars to help me. Father Ivanildo Santos takes care of the Brazilian community and Father Churchill Penn takes care



IMMERSED IN THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE—Father Frank Gomez, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Parish on the East Side of Bridgeport. (PHOTO BY BRIAN A. POUNDS, HEARST CONNECTICUT MEDIA)

of the Haitian community.

*FCC: What makes the parish special?*

**Father Gomez:** It's unique in the sense that there are four different communities operating in the one parish. We have a small American community, which is basically the people who founded the parish and have worshipped here for many years. Hispanics represent the largest population of the parish right now, with nine different nationalities that all speak Spanish, each with its own cultural traditions and devotions to Our Blessed Mother. We also have one of the largest Brazilian communities in our diocese that speaks Portuguese, and then there's our Haitian community that speaks Creole. I say Mass in

all four languages, and the parishioners love that.

*FCC: You have called the parish's different cultures and traditions "a great opportunity to become a beacon of light in the City of Bridgeport." How do you capitalize on that?*

**Father Gomez:** We have to be able to unite all of these communities into one. For example, when I got here there was a very small youth group that met in the rectory basement. We now meet at the McGivney Center every Sunday evening from 6:30 until 8:30 and we have about 55 members. To be able to have a safe place in the City of Bridgeport where the kids can come, relax and socialize without having to worry about being bullied or harassed is critical. And it's helping us to build up a stronger community in the life of the parish. Through the youth, we're able to bring the parents together, and then they get to interact with one another and they come to realize

there's no reason why they have to be afraid of one another.

*FCC: I noticed on your parish website that you have several projects underway and that you have requested the assistance of parishioners with specific construction-related skills. Have you had a good response?*

**Father Gomez:** Actually, we have! I want parishioners to realize that the parish is not mine, because I'm only here for six years. The reality is once I leave, they're the ones that stay, so we want to build that sense of community and ownership with them.

*FCC: Any final thoughts you'd like to share?*

**Father Gomez:** I'm very pleased to be here at St. Charles. What makes the parish is the people, and the people here at St. Charles are people of faith, people of joy, and people who know how to love the Lord. That's what motivates us to fulfill the mission that we have. ■

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# 24

SEPTEMBER

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# Women's Spirituality

## Magnificat ministry holds Day of Renewal

By REBECCA VODOLA

"Women need one another in a unique way, and need to share with one another," said Fran Hood, coordinator of the Diocese of Bridgeport's chapter of Magnificat, a ministry to Catholic women. The chapter, named the Triumphant Heart of Mary Immaculate Chapter of Magnificat, held a Day of Renewal on June 25.

"We intend for this one day to be the first step toward growth for the participants, whom we hope will examine their lives to change," said Pat Paniccia, chapter treasurer.

Entitled "Living in the Power of the Holy Spirit," the Day of Renewal was presented by Fran Karpeij, OFS, at St. Stephen Parish in Trumbull. The day included presentations, songs, prayer, discussion, reflection, a personal testimony by the chapter's assistant coordinator Roxane Angotta, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and an empowerment prayer service. Topics covered included God's love and salvation and receiving

God's gifts.

Recognizing a need for relational ministry, the Magnificat chapter's team strives to include personal testimonies like Angotta's at their events because "women respond to testimony more than talks," said Angotta, referencing Pope Paul VI.

Retreat attendee Pam Rittman said, "The day was refreshing. Magnificat draws women from all walks of life, and we see each other at the core as sisters in Christ. Fran Karpeij has a special gift of tying in life and its challenges to God, helping women to understand the journey of faith more fully."

According to Hood, "This retreat offered a day of peace, a break from everyday life, and a way to praise God and learn different ways to pray, including asking Mary to be our intercessor."

Marian intercession plays an important role in Magnificat's ministry, which is modeled on the Virgin Mary's Visitation to Elizabeth. In that spirit, Magnificat is characterized by woman-to-woman personal min-



"LIVING IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT," a women's Day of Renewal, was presented by Fran Karpeij, OFS. The Magnificat diocesan ministry to Catholic women sponsored the day and organizes women's events throughout the year. (PHOTO BY JANET MOORE)

istry and openness to the Holy Spirit.

A key feature of Magnificat's ministry is its Magnificat Meal outreach model. A Magnificat Meal is a shared meal incorporating fellowship, praise, personal testimony, and intercessory prayer. Table hostesses minister to smaller groups of women. In the Triumphant Heart chapter,

the Magnificat Meal comes in the form of biannual breakfasts.

Founded in the Archdiocese of New Orleans in 1981, Magnificat is now an international organization with over 90 chapters worldwide. The Triumphant Heart of Mary Immaculate Chapter was founded by Karpeij in 2000. It took three years from that time to train volunteers and set a foundation for the chapter before it held

its inaugural Magnificat Meal in 2003.

The Triumphant Heart chapter is a fellowship of women from around the diocese. Its leadership team consists of Hood, Angotta, Paniccia, historian Janet Moore, and secretary Barb Travis.

In addition to its prayer breakfasts, the chapter holds bimonthly prayer cenacles and will begin a 20-week Bible study on biblical women in September. Father Larry Carew, the chapter's spiritual adviser and liaison to the Charismatic Renewal of the Diocese of Bridgeport, offers healing Masses once a month.

"Magnificat should be a constant, not a one-time retreat," Angotta said. "Women are continually transformed through this ministry."

(The next breakfast will be held on October 1, at Ethan Allen Inn in Danbury with guest speaker Susan Brinkman from EWTN. To register, contact Fran Hood: 203.744.1856 or s.m.hood@sbcgloabal.net. Cost: \$25/person. For more information about Magnificat in this diocese, visit [www.bridgeportdiocese.org/womens-ministries/welcome](http://www.bridgeportdiocese.org/womens-ministries/welcome).)

## Room to Grow and Roll!

By ELLEN MCGINNESS

Twelve brand-new yellow tricycles, eighteen shiny red hel-



TRICYCLE AND HELMETS—The kids from "Room to Grow" pre-school in Norwalk have some pretty fancy new wheels to ride thanks to employees from the Wilton office of Epsilon, a global marketing firm.

mets, hundreds of yards of decorative tape, horns, light-up baskets, streamers, stickers—and five creative volunteers—all added up to one amazing community service project at Room to Grow Preschool (RTG) in Norwalk.

During an engagement meet-

ing this past spring between Catholic Charities of Fairfield County and Epsilon (a global marketing firm), an idea was

hatched: what if Epsilon donated new tricycles for the preschool, which is operated by Catholic Charities?

Taking it up a notch, what if the Epsilon folks do what they do best ... create something extraordinary out of something ordinary?

And that's just what happened. As part of their "Summer of Service" project, Epsilon employees from the Wilton office submitted an internal application for a \$2,500 grant to pursue the RTG project idea. Once the application was approved, it was game on, and a cadre of Epsilon employees showed up at RTG in mid-July ready to bedazzle and bedeck the tricycles and helmets into the stuff that pre-school dreams are made of.

For over three hours the volunteers affixed horns and baskets to handle bars, rolled yards and yards of colorful duct tape around tricycle frames, attached license plates to seats and emblazoned helmets with glitzy stickers.

And then, the Epsilon crew rolled its festive fleet out onto the playground, where a dozen squealing students skipped over to the trikes, jumped on, and rolled away with glee.

(To learn more about Epsilon or Room to Grow, go to [www.epsilon.com](http://www.epsilon.com) and [www.ccfairfield.org](http://www.ccfairfield.org).)

## Merton needs emergency supplies

The Thomas Merton Center (TMC) needs your help! This soup kitchen and pantry provides not only food but necessary items for those in need. TMC's supplies are very low. Can you help by



donating the following? Men's underwear of any size, t-shirts, and trial size toiletries. TMC also needs pantry supplies like: rice, coffee, peanut butter and jelly, pasta, jar tomato sauce, and boxed cereal. All supplies are too low for comfort so please help! You can drop your donations off at TMC, 43 Madison Avenue in Bridgeport or make arrangements with Brian Jenkins [bjenkins@ccfc-ct.org](mailto:bjenkins@ccfc-ct.org).

## EDITORIAL

## A Summer Pilgrimage

It was a very special moment as young people gathered on the lawn of the Catholic Center last week to board buses to the airport for World Youth Day in Poland. Nervousness, anticipation and hope were in air as they prepared to venture out into the world. Their faces told the whole story: open, idealistic, excited to be with friends, and eager to find all that life has to offer.

Parents and family members waved from the parking lot as the buses began to roll as the young people and their chaperones set out for a 12-day pilgrimage that will end on July 31. For many it's their first time out of the country, perhaps the first time away from their families, and they are rooting this important life journey in their faith.

This is no ordinary trip. These will be very special days of travel, prayer that will culminate in Mass with Pope Francis and over a million young people across the globe on July 27.

"It will be a moment of tremendous grace for the young," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, who is leading the diocesan pilgrimage. "Every pilgrim will be invited to walk with the Lord Jesus during the days ahead. Each pilgrim will have the opportunity to come to know the Lord Jesus more deeply. My hope is that these days will give every pilgrim a deeper love of our Savior and a renewed commitment to become missionary disciples of God's mercy in the world."

Special thanks to John Grosso, diocesan social media leader, and Janet Davis, administrative assistant to the Chancellor, who have spent more than a year planning and handling logistics for this ambitious undertaking. Along with the rest of the leadership team and the chaperones, they have worked to make it a safe, successful and reverent pilgrimage.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of those who have to the Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA), which made scholarship money available to youth throughout the diocese who are now attending the event.

The Bishop has frequently emphasized that the youth are not only our future, they are here now and have gifts to share with the Church. In addition to listening to their concerns he has invited their leadership. Their enthusiastic response to World Youth Day is a hopeful sign in their own lives and the life of our Church.

## Coming Soon

*In between vacations, much planning and preparation is underway concerning these some important events this fall. Please review and save the date:*

**Diocesan Blue Mass:** The Annual Diocesan Blue Mass, commemorating the 15th anniversary of 9/11, will be held on Sunday, September 11, 12 noon at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Fairfield. This special Mass, celebrated by Bishop Caggiano, honors Law Enforcement, Fire and First Responders. It's open to all.

**Catholic Service Corps:** A day of service concluding with Mass with Bishop Caggiano at the beautiful Chapel of the Holy Spirit at Sacred Heart University will formally launch the new Catholic Service Corps on Saturday, September 24. Fifteen chapters are now at work in the pilot program involving young people from parishes, schools and other institutions.

**Catholic Charities 100th Anniversary Gala:** Catholic Charities will complete its Centennial Celebration on Saturday, September 24 with a Gala at Stamford Marriott Hotel. For sponsorship and ticket information contact, visit [www.100thgala.eventbrite.com](http://www.100thgala.eventbrite.com).

**Diocesan Pilgrimage:** Join this local "pilgrimage" to consecrate the Diocese of Bridgeport to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary on Saturday, November 5, 1-6 at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport. The afternoon will include Rosary, Confessions, Litany to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and a Vigil Mass. Registration information will be sent to all parishes.

**Catholic Leadership Institute:** Look for a November launch of the Catholic Leadership Institute, which provides formation for all those who serve in ministry in our parishes and schools and all who wish to learn more about the faith through a combination of online learning, workshops, and independent study, it will offer creative opportunities for Catholics to learn more about the faith and discover new ways to shape the next generation of disciples. To learn more contact the Institute's director, Patrick Donovan at: [pdonovan@diobpt.org](mailto:pdonovan@diobpt.org), or 203.416.1657. ■

## EDITOR'S CHOICE

## Dee Maggiori, my patient mentor

I was brought back to a time earlier in my life when I heard recently about the passing of the writer and editor, Dee Maggiori. With her vast journalistic experience, Dee served as one of my earliest mentors.

Although I had always secretly wanted to become a reporter, life took me in other directions both professional and personal. But when my beloved aunt, who had been single all her life, met the man of her dreams at one of the diocesan Renew groups, Dee, who served as assistant editor of the *Fairfield County Catholic*, gave this green reporter the chance to tell this beautiful story for the paper. Armed with a tape recorder and a lot of enthusiasm, I set off to a meeting at a restaurant and must have interviewed every individual until their eyes glazed

over, extracting enough material on each one for a Ken Burns mini-series!

With Dee's tremendous help in editing, my article was published and I went on to write other articles for the newspaper and other area publications. I am happy to report the early start Dee provided has led to a rewarding career in communications, public relations and now mission services at St. Vincent's Medical Center.

Although I am sure she was very amused by the documentary technique I used and the amount of time I spent on a simple human interest story, Dee never laughed or condescended to me and she made me feel like a true reporter. She treated me like a professional and a colleague as we went over assignments and

she patiently explained why she had made certain edits. I learned so much from her about what makes a good story, how to connect with readers and story structure, as well as a reinforcement of the rules of grammar. I enjoyed her columns for the way they wove in her faith, making the topic personal rather than dogmatic.

Dee will be missed by area readers, especially Catholics who came to love her ability to make her faith come alive. She would be pleased to know her legacy continues through the insightful and talented leadership and staff of the FCC.

*Sincerely,  
Lucinda I. Ames  
St. Joseph Parish, Shelton*



## CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

*The Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano,  
Bishop of Bridgeport,*

*has made the following clergy appointments in the Diocese of Bridgeport:*

## PAROCHIAL VICAR

REVEREND AUGUSTINE NGUYEN, to part-time Parochial Vicar, Church of the Assumption, Westport. Father Nguyen will continue to serve as Episcopal Chaplain at Kolbe Cathedral High School, Bridgeport on a part-time basis and as Episcopal Vicar for Vietnamese Catholics. Effective date is July 1.

REVEREND PHILIP LÁNH PHAN, newly ordained, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Mary Parish, Bethel. Effective date was June 25.

REVEREND ERIC WILLIAM SILVA, newly ordained, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Joseph Parish, Brookfield. Effective date was June 25.

## RESIDENCE

REVEREND MATTHEW KRANKALL, Main Street, Trumbull, to 46 Stone Street, Danbury. Effective date was June 20.

REVEREND LUKE SUAREZ, Saint Ann Parish, Bridgeport, to Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Trumbull. Father Suarez will

remain Episcopal Chaplain, Notre Dame High School, Fairfield. Effective date was July 1.

## ACADEMIC DEAN/THEOLOGICAL ADVISOR

REVEREND MONSIGNOR CHRISTOPHER WALSH, Pastor, Saint Joseph Parish, Shelton, to Academic Dean of Saint John Fisher Seminary and Theological Advisor to the Bishop. Effective date is September 3.

*Monsignor Thomas W. Powers,  
Vicar General, July/August, 2016*

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# Editorial



## Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

### GUEST COLUMNIST

BY FRANK DEStEFANO

*Dr. Frank DeStefano is a retired Professor of History at Sacred Heart University.*

**R**eading 1—Revelation 11: 19a; 12: 1-6a, 10ab  
Reading II—1 Corinthians 15: 20-27  
Gospel—Luke 1: 39-56  
(Visitation)

In 1950, when the world was still recovering from the ravages of the Second World War, Pope Pius XII promulgated the doctrine which we celebrate on August 15, the Assumption of Mary into Heaven.

Now, Catholics didn't start believing in the Assumption only in 1950. Think of how many churches were constructed before 1950 dedicated to Our Lady of

the Assumption. Belief in Mary's Assumption can be found in the writings of the early Church Fathers, and for centuries artists have delighted in rendering the scene of Mary being taken up into Heaven.

Of course, Catholics have always loved images of Mary. In the day's first reading we have the famous image from the Book of Revelation of "the woman clothed with the sun" who was about to give birth to a son, "destined to rule all the nations." In the Gospel we have St. Luke's famous account of the Visitation. Almost immediately after the

Annunciation Mary embarks on a journey to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, who is herself expecting. Artists have loved to portray this tender scene of the meeting of the two women. The young Mary, barely pregnant, greets her elder cousin whose pregnancy is well advanced.

St. Luke is the only evangelist to describe this meeting but, of course, he wasn't present. How did he get his information? It's possible that he was merely relating an earlier oral tradition and giving us an account of what the early Church believed Mary would have said on this occasion. Perhaps he talked with the Blessed Mother herself after the death and resurrection of her Son. In that event, this passage would represent her profound recollection of the Visitation in the light of everything that came after.

Nevertheless, what image does St. Luke give us of Mary? We certainly can't take from his account that Mary was a bewildered, frightened teenager. The very name, Mary or Miriam,

means "the exalted one."

Scholars tell us that the expression "leaped for joy" is only used in the Bible when one is in the presence of the Almighty, such as the time King David danced in front of the Ark of the Covenant. Elizabeth's greeting,

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb...

which we repeat every day in the "Hail Mary," proclaims that from Mary will come the Savior of the world.

The beautiful prayer of Mary which we call the Magnificat is a collection of verses from many sources in the Hebrew scriptures, especially the Psalms, those beautiful hymns of praise. We all know the beginning,

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior  
for he has looked upon his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations

will call me blessed:

This is the song of a great Queen who has accepted a great mission.

In artistic renderings of the Immaculate Conception, Mary is portrayed as the woman clothed with the sun, with the moon at her feet, and stars in her crown. Ordinarily, she is pictured with a red dress covered with the blue mantle. Now "red" is the symbol of earth or humanity but "blue" is the symbol of divinity. The artists follow the teaching of the Church. Mary is human but she has been cloaked with immortality. In the vigil Mass for today's feast, the words of St. Paul apply not only to Mary but to any who put on the mantle of her Son.

When that which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about:

'Death is swallowed up in victory.  
Where, O death, is your victory?  
Where, O death, is your sting?' ■



## No Hiding from the Hardest Jobs

### A DAD'S VIEW

BY MATTHEW HENNESSEY

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

**I**t's ten minutes to midnight when the thought occurs to me: This is what we get paid for.

Ursula and I are standing bare-foot in the kids' room, dripping sweat and mopping up vomit. Because it is the final minutes of the Fourth of July, everyone has gone to bed late, exhausted, and, apparently, undigested.

There is a bunk bed involved. The sick guy is on top. Most of the contents of his incredibly small stomach have gone over the edge, but some hasn't. Some has gone on the wall; some has gone on the mattress; some has

gone on his books and toys. This adds a degree of difficulty to the cleanup.

One of the cleaner-uppers is feeling frustrated—and selfish. It's me. I want to close the door and leave the whole yucky mess until the morning. I want to say, "Oh, well, I guess this room is off-limits forever now." Slammo. Night night.

I'm stuck. There are a thousand places I'd rather be—mostly my own bed, where I was winks away from sleep just moments ago. There are a hundred thousand things I'd rather be doing. I can't do them. I have to do this.

We've been married for nearly 15 years. This isn't our first barf-o-rama. But Ursula is eight-months' pregnant and doing much of the work herself. I'm mostly fetching things. Responding to commands. Grumbling about the unluckiness of this awful, unbidden thing.

What did we do to deserve this? Why can't we just have a normal life, with normal hard things to do like mowing the lawn or planning vacations or opening sticky pickle jars? Why do we have to have ghastly hard things to do, like cleaning vomit off bunk beds, books, and toys during the wee small hours of the morning?

I look at my wife, on her hands and knees, scrubbing the children's mattresses like a lowly washer woman. I look at myself, standing in my t-shirt and underpants, loading up the Swiffer WetJet with a cartridge of multi-purpose floor cleaner solution.

And I think: This is what we get paid for.

Actors have a joke. Their large salaries, they say, are for all the waiting around they do on movie sets. The few moments when they actually get to perform in front of the camera are done gratis. That's the good stuff, they say. That's the fun. We do that for free

You get paid for the stuff you don't enjoy, not the stuff you do.

For parents, it begins at the beginning, with the diaper changes and midnight feedings. No one else can do it. Only you. You are the daddy. You are the mommy. This is your baby, in your house, on your changing table.

But baby bouncing and diaper wiping are only appetizers for a 20 year-meal that you make and pay for yourself. You also get to do the dishes and take out the trash. If you don't do it, it won't get done.

Personally, I've killed many bugs that I would've preferred not

to tangle with. There have been boiler explosions, loud parties in the neighborhood, and toilet-plunging emergencies. I wanted none of all of it. But that's what I get paid for.

My parents didn't want to go to the emergency room that time I split my head open on the steel radiator. My sisters didn't want to nurse my sick and helpless

mother during her last days. My priest friends don't want to visit families who have lost loved ones.

But that's what they get paid for. That's what all of us get paid for.

The other stuff—the birthdays and basketball games, the First Communions and Confirmations, the summer afternoons at the pool, the fireworks on the Fourth of July—that's the good stuff. We don't get paid for that. We do that for free. ■

**“And I think:  
This is what  
we get paid for.”**

# Health Services

## Caponi to head St. Vincent's

BRIDGEPORT—Stuart Marcus, MD, FACS, will be leaving his role as president and chief executive officer of St. Vincent's Health Services in Bridgeport as he considers other opportunities within Ascension, of which St. Vincent's is a part. Ascension is the nation's largest non-profit and largest Catholic health system.

"I have been privileged to serve alongside the tremendously talented and compassionate associates and medical staff at St. Vincent's for ten years, and I have tremendous confidence that St. Vincent's is poised to move to an even greater level of success and service to the Bridgeport community," said Dr. Marcus.

Longtime Ascension leader Vince Caponi will now serve as president and CEO of St. Vincent's Health Services. "We are fortunate to have available within Ascension a leader like Vince Caponi, who brings the requisite skills and experience to lead the St. Vincent's Health Services successfully into the future," Dr. Marcus said.

Caponi has enjoyed a long and successful career with Ascension beginning in 1983. He most recently served as inter-



VINCE CAPONI

im Wisconsin Ministry Market Executive for Ascension Health. Earlier he led Ascension's St. Vincent in Indianapolis from 1998 to 2013, and later assumed the position of executive board chair for the Central Indiana health system. He also served as executive board chair of Ascension Texas, and he continues to serve in a consultative role to Health City Cayman Islands (HCCI), Ascension's partnership with Narayana Health of India to provide care for underserved populations in the Caribbean.

"As St. Vincent's in Bridgeport continues to move forward, Vince will provide steady leadership and

guidance to the associates, physicians and volunteers who provide compassionate, personalized care to members of the community," said Patricia A. Maryland, Dr.PH, president, Healthcare Operations and chief operating officer of Ascension Health, the healthcare delivery subsidiary of Ascension.

Under Caponi's leadership, St. Vincent in Indianapolis grew from a single campus with a tertiary hospital to a statewide network with hospitals serving many rural areas. His legacy includes developing a high-quality healthcare system, building on local resources and empowering local capabilities to deliver high-quality, affordable healthcare throughout Central Indiana. St. Vincent became one of Indiana's largest healthcare employers, and Caponi led efforts to develop innovative healthcare solutions for employers and commercial markets across the state.

Earlier in his career, Caponi served in executive leadership roles at two other Ascension hospitals: St. Vincent's Birmingham in Alabama, and St. Joseph Hospital in Augusta, Georgia, as

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

## Sisters' farewell

By PAT HENNESSY

At a lively party at St. Ann Academy in Bridgeport, students and co-workers said farewell to Sister Pat Rickis, DHS. A teacher at St. Ann's for 18 years, Sister Pat had served a total of 34 years in the Diocese of Bridgeport. When she left for Putnam on May 1, her leaving brought to a close the 113 years that the Daughters of the Holy Spirit have enriched the life of the Church in Fairfield County.

The Daughters of the Holy Spirit were founded in Brittany, France in 1706 to serve the poor, the sick and children. Bishop Tierney of the Hartford diocese, which at that time included Fairfield County, was the first to welcome the small group of five French Sisters fresh from France, with very little English.

The Sisters came to Bridgeport July 1, 1903. "The Daughters' house wasn't ready yet, so the Sisters of Mercy, who were already here, took us in and kind of guided us," Sister Pat recounts. By August, the Sisters, now with rudimentary English taught to them



SURROUNDED BY HER STUDENTS, Sister Pat Rickis, DHS, enjoys a spirited sendoff at St. Ann Academy, where she taught for 18 years. Her leaving brings to a close 113 years of service to this diocese by the Daughters of the Holy Spirit.

by the Sisters of Mercy, began visiting the sick. It was a struggle for Sisters to visit and care for total strangers whose language and customs were so different from their own.

Soon they were invited to do other types of work. Within a year they were asked to teach religious education in St. Anthony Parish in Bridgeport for the children of French Canadian workers and the Sisters were soon teaching in St. Anthony and in Holy Family School in Fairfield.

For more than a century, the Daughters always had nursing Sisters, supplying visiting home health care from their convent on Pequonnock St., across from St. Augustine Cathedral. "We always cared for the poor sick, those who fell between the cracks," says Sister Pat. "The nursing Sisters didn't have a car or anything. They sometimes took the bus, but mostly they walked."

The Sisters never asked for payment other than a voluntary donation, and since their care was given to the poor and aged, their income was slight. Catholic women in Bridgeport met with the bishop and formed an organization called the Queen's Daughters, originally called the Daughters of the Queen of Heaven, to support the French Sisters. In addition to providing funds to support the Sisters, the Queen's Daughters became active in charitable work on their own, including a Home Health Care Program.

Sister Pat had come to know the Daughters of the Holy Spirit as a child living in Pequonnock, Conn. Because they valued Catholic education, her parents drove her 13 miles each way to attend St. Ann School in Hartford. "I loved the Sisters," she says. "When I learned my prayers, I learned them first in French."

From the Daughters, Sister Pat developed a preference for teaching poor children. She taught in upstate New York and Massachusetts before coming to the Diocese of Bridgeport in 1977. It would be her home for the next 34 years, first at St. Anthony's and then at Holy Family before coming to St. Ann's. Since St. Anthony School eventually merged with St. Ann Academy, her years of service came full circle.

"It's unusual to stay in one place for so long," she said. "I love Bridgeport."

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# Vacation Bible Camp

## Campers learn to reverence the Eucharist

By REBECCA VODOLA

Two Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, hosted a Vacation Bible Camp themed “The Holy Eucharist” at St. Theresa Parish in Trumbull during the last week in June.

Sister Mercedes, O.P., and Sister Pio Maria, O.P., have taught at vacation bible camps throughout the United States, but St. Theresa’s camp was their first in New England. Both sisters were happy to return to the East Coast: Sister Mercedes is a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., and Sister Pio Maria hails from Worcester, Mass. Their community is based in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Sister Pio Maria explained that she and Sister Mercedes spent the week showing the children how to reverence Jesus in the Eucharist. “We say ‘still body, still heart,’ but that’s not just something to do to be good. God speaks to you in the silence. He wants to talk to you like a friend,” the Sisters explained to



DOMINICAN SISTERS Sr. Pio Maria and Sr. Mercedes taught campers how to reverence Jesus in the Eucharist at Vacation Bible Camp at St. Theresa’s in Trumbull.

the children.

The Sisters instructed the campers with daily lessons about living a Eucharistic life and practicing virtue. “To practice virtue is not just to be a good kid, but to live for God,” said Sister Pio Maria. “The desire is there in the children. We are here simply to cultivate it.”

Each day, the Sisters gave the children an opportunity to share how they practiced specific virtues. One little girl “shared that her grandmother was patient with her at the grocery store,” said Sister Mercedes, who hopes that stories like this one will help children to identify what living virtuously looks like.

“Our community has a deep devotion to the Eucharist,” said Sister Pio Maria. “One of the greatest gifts of hosting the camp was bringing the students to daily Eucharistic Adoration.” There, the campers could actively practice prayer with the Eucharistic Lord in an age-appropriate way, using the techniques that the Sisters taught them.

On Friday, the last day of the Vacation Bible Camp, the children performed a skit about the Eucharist, from its Old Testament foreshadowing in the manna God provided from heaven to Eucharistic Adoration today. “He died so that we may be freed from sin,” one camper shared as he ripped paper chains from his hands, “and he waits for you in the Eucharist.”

Father Brian Gannon, St. Theresa’s pastor, delivered the homily at Friday’s closing Mass. Drawing from the week’s Eucharistic theme, he reminded

campers that they must feed not only their bodies, but also their souls. “Our bodies don’t live forever,” Father Gannon told the children.

“No, but our souls do!” volunteered one eager camper.

The camp drew over 160 elementary-school-aged attendees, representing a sharp increase in enrollment compared to past years. Dozens of volunteers staffed the camp. In addition to daily lessons and Eucharistic Adoration, the campers enjoyed music, arts and crafts, and recreation.

Lessons from the week culminated in a Eucharistic procession from St. Theresa School to the church on Friday. Sister Mercedes was pleased that the week ended with a focus on the Eucharist. She reflected, “If the children remember nothing else from this week, they will remember that we brought them to Jesus.”

## St. Matthew VBC a hit

NORWALK—A salamander named Sal and a bat named Radar were just two of the cartoon “Bible buddies” that taught campers at St. Matthew Vacation Bible Camp in Norwalk about biblical themes.

During the week of June 26, St. Matthew’s hosted 94 campers from pre-K through grade 5 for the camp themed “Cave Quest: Following Jesus, the Light of the World,” a national vacation Bible camp program which individual parishes can implement.

Each day is based on a “Bible Point,” such as “Jesus gives us hope,” reinforced by a “Bible buddy” like Sal or Radar. The day’s activities promote and bolster the Bible point.

At St. Matthew’s, campers came together for a morning session which briefed them on the day’s theme. They then rotated through four stations: Imagination Station, KidVid Cinema, Deep Bible Quest,



and Spelunker Sports and Games. The stations involved prayer and biblical teaching, personal testimony about the day’s theme, skits demonstrating the theme, and games that tied back to the theme.

A midmorning service project mobilized campers to fill backpacks with school supplies for organizations like Bridgeport’s Mercy Learning Center.

Campers convened at the end of each day to share what they

learned.

The camp began on Sunday, June 26, with Mass followed by a coffee and meet-and-greet reception with camp volunteers. It concluded on Friday, July 1, with a prayer service in the parish grotto follow by a family lunch.

Camp Director Joanne Obst said that “the excitement of the children, and even the volunteers, was contagious. Camp is the best week of the year.”

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# Faith and Values

## SHU Journey empowers young Catholic leaders

By REBECCA VODOLA

“As a CEO, your voice is amplified,” said Dan McCarthy, president and CEO of Frontier Communications, in his June 30 address on Catholic business leadership to the 34 high school students participating in Sacred Heart University’s SHU Journey. “You must use it accordingly. Be a role model with the right behaviors and a balanced approach to business.”

McCarthy’s keynote was a part of a weeklong residential leadership program for local high school students. SHU won a \$500,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment to fund its “SHU Journey: To God and the World.” Dr. Michelle Loris, associate dean and chair of the Department of Catholic Studies at SHU, wrote the grant and served on the team of SHU fac-

ulty and staff and Diocese of Bridgeport delegates who led the program.

Although Loris wrote the grant for 24 students, McCarthy, a parishioner of St. Rose of Lima in Newtown, sponsored 10 more so that a greater percentage of the 65 applicants could take advantage of the program.

The Lilly Endowment is a competitive grant aimed at “enhancing and sustaining the quality of ministry in American congregations and parishes” by fostering strong pastoral leadership, according to its website.

Accordingly, SHU Journey’s primary goal was to teach “how faith relates to the moral issues of the contemporary world, and how Catholics should respond to them,” said Loris. Secondary goals were developing self-awareness and understanding in teens and providing music ministry,

community service opportunities, and reflections on personal spiritual life.

The SHU Journey was held from June 26-July 1 on the Sacred Heart campus. Each day had a particular theme, ranging from God’s call to its practical application; for instance, McCarthy spoke on the day themed “Human Dignity.” He said that Catholic business leaders should use their positions as leverage to rally their business communities around the poor, sick, and needy.

“My faith is my moral compass as a business leader,” McCarthy told his young audience. He said that business leaders have to consider both the financial return and the welfare of their employees when they make decisions.

SHU Journey included several keynote speeches, like McCarthy’s, addressing Catholic leadership. The program also contained guided prayer and reflection, Masses, small-group discussion, classroom instruction, and community service at five locations, including the Merton House in Bridgeport.

Loris said she watched the teens begin “an extraordinary transformation” as the week progressed. The students, once “shy and reserved,” experienced “an awakening, becoming engaged and flourishing in the program.”

Though most of SHU



PARTICIPANTS, MENTORS and organizers celebrate Mass in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. (PHOTO BY MARK F. CONRAD)

Journey’s participants were drawn from within the Diocese of Bridgeport, several participants came from other areas in Connecticut, New York and Maryland.

“It was a transformative for their hearts and minds, in the Catholic intellectual tradition. This program was all-encompassing, with prayer, discernment, and discussion. The grace of God permeated the program,” said Loris.

“After completing the program, the participants know themselves and God better,” said Larry Carroll, executive director of pastoral services at SHU.

An essential component of SHU Journey was its seven college-aged mentors, SHU students who received training throughout the spring semester. The mentors led small group discussions and meditations.

Rebecca Dupree, a college mentor from Wolcott, Conn., said that SHU Journey “exceeded my expectations by far. It was eye-opening for the mentors and the participants. It was the toughest leadership position I’ve ever held, but it was also the most rewarding.”

High school participant

Tommy Donohue of Fairfield said that the program’s emphasis on leadership left him with important skills that he can incorporate into his parish and high school. Kate Janik, rising junior at Trinity Catholic High School and Stamford resident, said that SHU Journey “deepened faith and friendships. We had an opportunity to share our experiences and grow. The leadership skills and personal ministry we’ve learned here will help us to lead others to Christ.”

SHU Journey leaders challenged participants to formulate a concrete leadership plan to implement in their communities. “SHU Journey is meant to empower young people to go into their parishes and schools as strong Catholic leaders,” said Evan Psencik, coordinator of youth and young adult formation for the diocese. Psencik said that SHU Journey hopes to hold a reunion in the coming months when participants can evaluate their leadership plans which, by then, should be in motion.

Participant Alek Mierzejewski said, “The program lit a fire within which will burn for a long time.”

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## New Shehan Science Room

BRIDGEPORT—On July 7, the newly renovated science room at the Cardinal Shehan Center was unveiled with a ribbon cutting ceremony. A group of six members from the Bridgeport Regional Business Council’s affiliate program Leadership Greater Bridgeport 2015-2016 class had renovated the center’s science room. The group raised the necessary funds to install new electrical outlets, replace light fixtures, paint, and purchase new storage units. In addition, they secured valuable donations from local businesses such as microscopes from Aquarion Water Company, tables from Bigelow Tea and electrical equipment from Santa Energy. With a newly renovated science room the Shehan Center will be able to offer even more children the opportunity to use a variety of science equipment and learn in a well-lit and appropriate work area. The renovated science room will allow the center to offer a more in-depth science program all year round. “A year-round science program and a newly renovated science room will help us further grow our youth’s appreciation and understanding of science,” said Shehan Center Executive Director Terry O’Connor.



# Pastoral Services

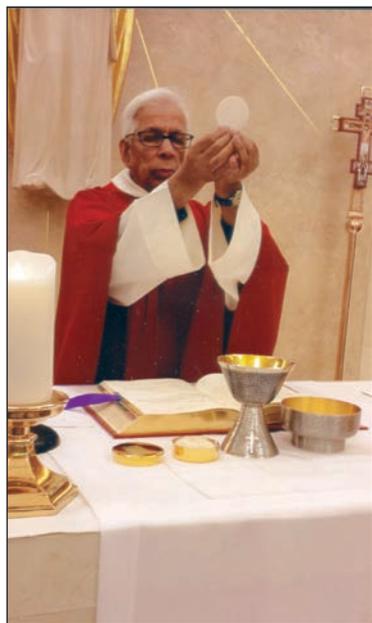
## Chaplains breathe life into Catholic identity

By PAT HENNESSY

“When you walk into a hospital room, that’s one of God’s children in the bed,” says Father John Punnakunnel, a chaplain at St. Vincent’s Medical Center in Bridgeport. “I go and touch their hand, and start to talk to them. We’ll talk about what happened, and I’ll ask about their family. If that person is in pain, when we talk the pain goes down.”

The presence of chaplains at St. Vincent’s, the daily Mass celebrated in its chapel and the assurance that a priest is on call at all hours for emergencies are some of the most visible signs of the Catholic identity of the medical center. In addition to two full-time and two-part time priests, the Pastoral Care staff includes chaplains of several Christian denominations and a Jewish rabbi in order to respond to the spiritual needs of all patients.

Founded by the Daughters of Charity in 1903, St. Vincent’s Medical Center is a member of Ascension Health, the nation’s largest Catholic healthcare system. “It’s important to realize that we are formally a ministry of the Catholic Church under canon



THE PRESENCE OF CHAPLAINS like Father John Punnakunnel, including daily Mass celebrated in the chapel and pastoral connection to patients, breathes life into the ministry of faith at St. Vincent’s.

law,” emphasizes Bill Hoey, vice president of mission and ethics at St. Vincent’s. “Every year, the president of Ascension Health gives a report to the Vatican on the fidelity to the Catholic identity, and we give a yearly report to Bishop Frank Caggiano. Every

associate at St. Vincent’s agrees to abide by the ethical and religious directives of the Church.”

In addition, an independent audit every three years allows St. Vincent’s to formally assess their mission and the way they express their Catholic identity. “We have regular financial audits and health care assessments,” Hoey points out. “If we’re serious about our ministry, it makes sense to have a regular spiritual assessment.”

“When people come here, they’re vulnerable. They’re poor in spirit,” says Deacon Tim Bolton, supervisor of Pastoral Care. “Being available to other people doesn’t mean knowing the right thing to say. It’s about showing up, just being there.”

To show others in ministry how to connect with patients, Deacon Bolton has initiated a program to bring anyone in parish outreach, especially Eucharistic ministers and deacons, into the hospital experience. They spend time visiting patients and then reflect together on their experience. “We want to show them how to be with people in a meaningful way, to respond to people’s emotional and spiritual

needs.”

The chaplains at St. Vincent’s understand that listening and responding to the situation of the patient and family is at the heart of their pastoral role. “One day I may be talking with a family about funeral preparations, another time I’ll be helping them make marriage arrangements,” says Father John. “When I am bringing the Sacrament of the Sick, if there are family members present I’ll ask each one to make the sign of the cross with their thumb on their loved one’s forehead. They are blessing their mom, they’re blessing their dad. Whether they’ve been going to church or not, they’ll be touched in return by the Holy Spirit.”

Personal experience brought Father John to his role as priest-chaplain. Born in India, he had joined the Salesian order as a brother when an accident landed him in the hospital. “Our archbishop in Calcutta visited the hospital every Friday. He said

that Jesus suffered and died on a Friday, so he wanted to be with the suffering on that day. I saw his example and knew that was what I wanted to be.”

In common with the medical center’s other chaplains, this gift to connect caringly with patients breathes life into the ministry of faith at St. Vincent’s.

“Father John has a unique ability to connect to a wide array of people,” says Hoey. “One of the things the Gospels emphasize about Jesus is that, when you were with him, you had his undivided attention. Father John embodies that. He can talk to you for half an hour, if you need that—or he might pull a piccolo out of his pocket to play a tune.”

“I make my ministry applicable to the person in front of me,” Father John says. “When we chaplains enter a room, we are looking at that soul; we are bringing peace to that problem.”

(To contact Pastoral Care at St. Vincent’s, call 203.576.5110.)

## CAPP conference on ‘Escaping Poverty’

NEW YORK—“Pope Francis’ Call for Escaping Poverty: Practical Examples and New Proposals,” will be the focus of a conference sponsored by CAPP-USA and Fordham University on Friday, September 23, at Fordham University, Mid-town campus.

Pietro Cardinal Parolin, Secretary of State for the Holy See, will be the featured speaker at the opening conference dinner on Thursday, September 22, at the Plaza Atrium Lowenstein. The conference program will formally begin on Friday when Theodore Cardinal McCarrick will celebrate Mass at the Rupert Mayer, SJ, chapel. Fordham University President Joseph M. McShane, SJ, will offer the welcome and introduction.

CAPP (Centesimus Annus –Pro Pontifice) is a lay-led non-profit intended for the study and spread of Christian social teaching. CAPP USA is its American affiliate. It was established by Saint John Paul II on June 5, 1993.

The Fordham Conference will examine the definition and measurement of poverty and propose specific, practical efforts which operationalize Pope Francis’ insistence that, “to enable these real men and women to escape from extreme poverty, we must allow them to be dignified agents of their own destiny,” as articulated by the Holy Father at the United Nations in 2015.

Conference speaker Archbishop Bernardito Auza will frame the issue, elaborating the Holy Father’s position on internation-

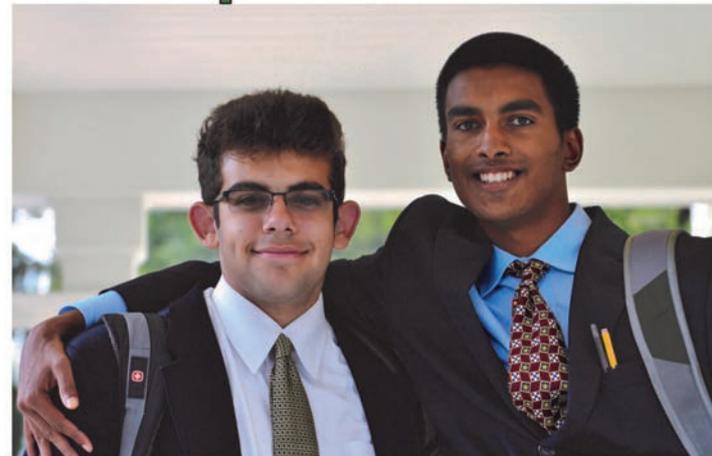
al poverty and development. Following Archbishop Auza’s presentation, conference leaders will define poverty and propose how to measure it, using the schema identified by the Holy Father.

Speakers and panelists will then investigate and propose specific, practical efforts which fulfill Pope Francis’ call.

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano recently joined the CAPP USA board and will be attending the conference.

(Conference fees are \$325/ person; \$150 for accompanying person; \$150 for clergy, religious, academics and teachers; and \$30 for students. Dinner is \$190 per person. Register online at [www.CAPP-USA.org](http://www.CAPP-USA.org). For more information, contact [iped@fordham.edu](mailto:iped@fordham.edu).)

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# Nuestra Voz

## Parroquia acoge a sus vecinos

Por MARICARMEN GODOY

El 20 de febrero del 2015, el Obispo Frank J. Caggiano le pidió al Padre Juan Gabriel Acosta, sacerdote nativo de Colombia, hacerse cargo de la Parroquia de San Ladislaus, ubicada en el sector de South Norwalk, parroquia que fue establecida en el año 1907 por inmigrantes húngaros.

Después de casi cuatro generaciones la parroquia contaba con pocos feligreses de origen húngaro, y su sacerdote, el Padre Michael Bachman, en edad de jubilación, no tenía facilidad en español en medio de un vecindario poblado de nuevos rostros hispanos.

“El Monseñor me dijo que la parroquia no estaba respondiendo a las necesidades de la vecindad,” expresó el Padre Acosta. “Y me preguntó si quería asumir este reto”.

El Padre Juan Gabriel, que tenía 31 años de edad y un año y medio de haber sido ordenado sacerdote, no dio en anese instante la respuesta porque el obispo así se lo pidió; pero se fue a su residencia, en ese entonces la Parroquia de San Joseph ubicada en South Main Street de Norwalk en donde era vicario apostólico, y con la ayuda de su consejero espiritual, la oración y la meditación, logró en una semana decirle a Monseñor Caggiano: ¡Sí acepto!

Previo al “sí”, el Padre Juan Gabriel visitó la parroquia y todos los edificios que conforman el área eclesial de San Ladislaus. Su primera impresión fue que había que poner cada cosa en su lugar. El 2 de marzo de ese mismo año, recibió las llaves, los libros de vida de la parroquia (económica y eclesial) y a partir de ese instante, sin una deuda ni un pendiente inició con profunda fe y esperanza su trabajo pastoral.

Enseguida, el sacerdote empezó a distribuir hojas volantes a los vecinos de su nuevo barrio de South Norwalk, informándoles de su nuevo nombramiento y anunciándoles que San Ladislaus empezará un Ministerio Hispano, es decir, un horario de cuatro misas semanales en español que hasta la fecha prevalecen, una escuela de catequesis para prepa-

rar a los niños para la Primera Comunión, un horario especial de confesiones y sobre todo una guía espiritual personalizada. Y en días posteriores la elección del Consejo Parroquial el que fue electo por los mismos feligreses y del que siete nombres de hispanos prevalecen en la lista.

El 29 de marzo, el Domingo de Ramos del 2015, fue la primera misa en español que el Padre Juan Gabriel celebró como el párroco oficial de San Ladislaus, en esa homilía pidió a sus feligreses que se inscriban para formar un ministerio (agrupación) de ayudantes de misa, entre ellos: niños monaguillos, lectores de la Palabra, recolectores de limosnas y un ministerio especial de bienvenida para que los feligreses se sientan acogidos en su nueva

iglesia.

“Gracias a mi Dios desde la primera misa que celebré a las 12:30 pm del Domingo de Ramos, la iglesia ha estado siempre llena. Por esa razón decidimos ampliar el horario de las eucaristías y ampliamos el horario con una misa a las siete de la noche los lunes y martes y otra el sábado a las 6:30 pm”, señaló el Padre Acosta.

De los tres monaguillos que iniciaron el año pasado con el éste número se ha multiplicado en 31. De los 20 niños que empezaron la catequesis para prepararse para la Primera Comunión este dígito aumentó a 100 más cuatro maestros bilingües, considerando que los niños toman sus clases de catequesis en inglés.



A YOUNG PARISHIONER crowns the Blessed Mother at St. Ladislaus Parish under the direction of Father Juan Acosta. An outreach to Hispanic Catholics in the South Norwalk neighborhood, initiated after his appointment as pastor in 2015, has led to a great increase in the number of parishioners, including a hundred children in the religious education program.

De las fieles húngaros que heredó como feligreses de la parroquia, este número se vio aumentado con 350 familias hispanas más que le dan el sentido multicultural y multiétnico a

la parroquia. Y que en números se transfieren en 1000 personas. Los húngaros, acorde con el Padre Acosta, en su mayoría han decidido seguir en la parroquia para aprender sobre la cultura

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# High School Sports

## Trinity's Walsh to enter Hall of Fame

By **DON HARRISON**

Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. Mike Walsh is far more accustomed to the former.

The veteran Trinity Catholic boys basketball coach, whose 596 victories rank him fifth all-time among state high school coaches, is being recognized by the Fairfield County Sports Commission (FCSC) with its highest honor—election to its Hall of Fame in the J. Walter Kennedy Community Service wing. He and six other prominent athletic figures from the county will be inducted into the hall at the FCSC's 12th annual Sports Night dinner at the Hyatt Regency in Old Greenwich on October 17.

"I'm really thrilled and humbled at the same time," Walsh admitted. "When you see the names on the plaques at the Hall of Fame, it really hits you."

Indeed, he'll be joining in the FCSC Hall of Fame two of the four coaches ahead of him on the state's victory list, St. Joseph's Vito Montelli (878) and Harding's Charlie Bentley (655).

"Vito was the first guy to call me about my election to the hall of fame," Walsh said. "I don't know how he found out so soon."

Walsh's resume at Trinity Catholic is as impressive as it is lengthy. Across 37 seasons, his teams have won 596 games against 283 losses, captured six CIAC state titles and as many FCIAC championships. He also guided the Crusaders to six other appearances in the state champi-

onship game, including a run of seven straight (1999-2005). The school's most recent state title was achieved in 2011.

Among a bevy of Trinity Catholic selections to the New Haven Register All-State Team, no fewer than three of Walsh's stars were three-time picks: Tevin Baskin (2007-09), Dave McClure (2002-04) and Rashamel Jones (1993-95). The latter, of course, gained wider renown as co-captain of the University of Connecticut's first national championship team (1999).

"It was my good fortune to get Rashamel," Walsh said. "He took us to our first state title game (1995)."

Which of Trinity Catholic's championships means the most to Walsh? Some may find the answer surprising.

"It was our first FCIAC title in 1993, before the largest crowd ever in the Wilton Field House," he said. "Fairfield was 22-and-0 and we beat 'em. They had a lot of very good players, but we had Rashamel Jones and Earl Johnson. Bobby Spillane, who was an All-State quarterback for us, scored 26 points and was the MVP of the game."

The oldest of nine children, Michael Walsh was born in Worcester, Mass., and spent most of his formative years in New Canaan. His family advocated a Catholic education, and so young Mike matriculated at then-Stamford Catholic and at Iona College.

Walsh played varsity basketball in high school and was a member of the freshman squad



**MIKE WALSH**

at Iona, but was asked to supplement the family income and so,

with reluctance, he put the game aside for a while. He graduated with a degree in business administration in 1969.

As an assistant to Gary Liberatore at Stamford Catholic, Walsh spent six seasons honing his coaching skills before taking the reins in 1981.

Baseball is also part of Walsh's coaching repertoire. He devoted portions of 40 springs and summers to managing Stamford's Babe Ruth League teams, competing in no fewer than eight Babe Ruth World Series throughout the country and in Canada. He still serves as an assistant baseball coach at Trinity Catholic.

"I've got a loving wife (Lisa), five kids and five grandchildren. I love what I do," Walsh said. "I'm blessed." ■

### 2016 FCSC Hall of Famers:

#### J. Walter Kennedy Community Service Wing:

Football coach Lou Marinelli  
(New Canaan);  
Basketball coach  
Mike Walsh (Stamford)

#### Jackie Robinson Professional Wing:

Pro golfer J.J. Henry  
(Fairfield);  
Basketball star Rita Williams  
(Norwalk)

#### James O'Rourke Amateur Wing:

Two former Basketball  
stars, the late Manute Bol  
(Bridgeport)  
and the late Maurice "Wilky"  
Gilmore (New Canaan);  
Equestrian Bill Steinkraus  
(Darien)

### NUESTRA VOZ FROM PAGE 16

hispana.

De uno solo matrimonio que se registró en el 2014, para el 2015 el padre logró celebrar tres y en el 2016 hubo cuatro bodas celebradas, y para los meses de julio hasta septiembre tiene en agenda celebrar tres más. De un solo bautismo que hubo en el 2014, para el 2015 se realizaron 45 más, y en este primer semestre del 2016 ha bautizado a 30 niños; entre julio y agosto tiene planeado bautizar a 10 infantes más. En el 2015 hubo cinco primeras comuniones; en el 2016 el número aumentó en 21 y para la primavera del 2017 la cifra llegará a 42.

La comunidad colombiana lid-

era la feligresía, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Honduras y Perú son países que también forman la parroquia; seguida por una fuerte participación de los mexicanos identificados por su devoción a la Virgen de Guadalupe.

De ahí que desde hace más de un año existe el Grupo Guadalupano de San Ladislaus, agrupación que se reúne constantemente con el Padre Acosta para planificar las festividades en honor a la patrona de México. Cristiana Soriano, miembro del grupo mariano desde hace 18 años siente que por primera vez los guadalupanos tienen un director espiritual y una iglesia que los ha acogido en forma total. "El

Padre mismo se encarga de buscar el mariachi, de organizarnos para preparar la misa y también para brindar de comer a la gente que nos acompaña en las fiestas de la Virgen", repuso.

El oficial César Ramírez, encargado del Departamento de Enlace Comunitario de la Policía de Norwalk, consideró que la venida del Padre Juan Gabriel ha sido una "resurrección para la parroquia porque con su carisma y juventud ha logrado vigorizar, atraer y dinamizar la fe de los nuevos inmigrantes que viven en South Norwalk".

(Maricarmen Godoy es editora de noticias de La Voz Hispana de Connecticut.) ■

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# Obituary

## Sister Cecile Amore, SSND, 111 years

BETHEL—Sister Mary Cecile Amore, a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, died on February 18, a day after her 111th birthday. During her long life, she was an organist, music teacher, teacher of voice, piano, and violin, and an excellent seamstress.

Antoinette Marie Amore was born on February 17, 1905, in Pietracatella, Italy. Her father went to America when she was two months old. About six years later, he sent for his wife and daughter. The family lived in Bridgeport, and grew to include a sister and two brothers.

Antoinette studied at Barnum Elementary School in Bridgeport. From the time she was a little girl, Antoinette wanted to take music lessons, but when she was in the eighth grade family financial difficulties obliged her to leave school and go to work

to help her family. At the age of 14, she began to work at a company in Bridgeport. She was paid by piecework and was so proud when she brought home ten dollars earned in one week when she usually earned seven.

Antoinette Marie became very sick and could not work for about six months. Her mother prayed hard and, when her daughter recovered, took her to a piano store. Antoinette picked out a new piano that cost \$700. She took lessons at 50 cents each from a Sister at St. John Nepomucene Convent. In three years, practicing three hours a day, she accomplished five years' work.

In her biography she wrote: "My poor mother was paying a few dollars a week for a piano long after I entered the convent." Her mother's sacrifice was not in vain. Antoinette's music studies led to

a bachelor's degree in 1939 and a master's in 1945, both from the Catholic University of America.

While taking lessons, Antoinette began feeling a desire to become a religious. She was received as a novice on August 17, 1926, and was given the name Mary Cecile.

Following the novitiate, Sister Cecile taught in elementary and high schools in New Jersey, Maryland, Washington, D.C. and New York, and at the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, Md.

She returned to Connecticut, teaching first at St. John Nepomucene in Bridgeport (1946-66) where she had first heard the call to religious life. She served at Holy Rosary (1966-73) and St. Charles Borromeo (1973-74), both in Bridgeport, and at St. Theresa, Trumbull (1974-2000).

In all, Sister Cecile served for 54 years in the Bridgeport area.

During these years, she was parish organist, taught music, gave private lessons in piano, violin, and voice and directed choirs of adults and older children.

In 2000, she became a resident of Villa Notre Dame in Wilton. A good cook and an excellent seamstress, she often practiced her skills for the benefit of her Sisters. In 2010, she moved over to Lourdes Health Care Center, where she continued to enjoy reading poetry, listening to clas-



SISTER MARY CECILE AMORE

sical and old-time musicals, and conversing with children. She always liked company.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 22 in the chapel of Villa Notre Dame. Burial followed at St. Mary Cemetery, Bethel.

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#### JULY

24	Fr. Paul Lalic	2011
25	Rev. Hubert P. Carrig	1978
26	Msgr. Francis M. Wladasz	1959
28	Rev. William G. Mahoney	1973
29	Deacon Ian Black	2006

#### AUGUST

1	Msgr. Daniel J. Foley	1999
	Msgr. John J. Toomey, P.A.	1992
2	Rev. Patrick V. Lavery	1976
	Msgr. James J. McLaughlin	1985
3	Rev. Francis E. Fenton	1995
4	Msgr. Michael J. Guerin	1981
	Msgr. James F. Leary	1994
7	Rev. Thomas G. Keeney	1990
9	Msgr. John J. Kennedy, P.A.	1955
	Msgr. Frank C. Dellolio	1983
	Msgr. Richard T. Scully	1988
10	Deacon William Rowe	2013
14	Deacon Gerardo Ramos	2007
15	Msgr. Edward J. Duffy	1977
16	Rev. Victor E. Piaskowski	1961
18	Rev. Alexander Z. Seregely	1971
21	Rev. John J. Dillon	1959
	Msgr. Thomas P. Guinan	1998
22	Rev. Michael Fay	2009
23	Msgr. Emilio C. Iasiello, P.A.	1969
25	Rev. Richard Futie	2013
26	Lawrence Cardinal Shehan	1984
28	Rev. Vincent E. Finn	1958
	Rev. Edmund C. O'Connell	1973
29	Deacon Ramon Isidro	2006
	Rev. Joseph Linck	2008

#### SEPTEMBER

2	Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Prankus	2000
3	Rev. Msgr. John F. X. Walsh	1967
	Rev. Msgr. Thomas F. Henahan	1998
4	Deacon Matthew Skurat	2013
5	Rev. John E. Fay	1954
6	Rev. Laurence F. Flanagan	1985
9	Rev. Richard Monahan	2010
12	Rev. Frank D. Yoia	1974
14	Aloysius J. Hribšek	2014
15	Rev. Colin McKenna	2015
	Rev. Joseph V. Rossitto	2004
16	Rev. William J. Conklin	1992
	Rev. Martin Dennehy	2013
17	Rev. John A. Sullivan	1953
	Rev. Robert L. Christopher	1958

# Remembering Cardinal Shehan

## ‘A Blessing of Years’

By **BARRY WALLACE**

Lawrence Cardinal Shehan's memoir, *A Blessing of Years*, came as a surprise to me. For one, I didn't know that the first Bishop of Bridgeport had written an autobiography. Shehan was our bishop when I was a boy attending St. Teresa's in Trumbull in the 1950s. I remember a saintly but somewhat stiff persona offering us his blessing at liturgies and gatherings. Our Boston-born nuns adored him. He was the visible embodiment of the success of the Catholic Church and the rise of the Irish.

The familiar small Irish face with gray hair and wire frame glasses was on the book's cover, *A Blessing of Years*. I picked it off the shelf. Published in 1982, it now seemed a century old to me. I was curious about what his biography had to say about his Bridgeport years. To my surprise I was soon immersed in reading a great Catholic life filled with Church history and personal observations. If he hadn't been a prelate, Shehan certainly could've become a writer.

His early chapters describe his boyhood in Ellicott City, a suburb of Baltimore, and his entrance

into St. Charles College where he began his studies for the priesthood at 14 years old in 1911. His family moved to a large unheated house on Kennedy Lane next to his grandfather's small dairy. The brothers played baseball in the side meadow on summer days.

At night he recalled sitting on the front porch with his mother and singing Stephen Foster songs as fireflies "flickered in the lilac." His father was a tailor-supply salesman who traveled often but made a large impression on young Lawrence for his business-like habits and his love of family. Long summer outings up the Chesapeake to a favorite picnic spot were sweetened by his aunt's homemade chocolate cakes. The future bishop loved to swim. Although slight of build, Shehan had a large character.

He felt a calling to the priesthood early. Baltimore may well have been the epicenter of the Catholic world then. Lawrence was confirmed by the legendary Cardinal Gibbons and studied where the Catholic poet, Father John Tabb, spent his teaching career. His enrollment meant that young Lawrence had to leave home and live in a school

dormitory. He was lonely and frightened but found friends and resources to help him through, as he was always to do in life.

The course of study at St. Charles was rigorous. He was a brilliant student, winning many academic awards, but he remained modest with a huge capacity for hard work—traits that sustained him in the difficult job of being bishop.

One of the refreshing characteristics of the Shehan memoirs is his frankness. He was certainly a man of power and prestige but he could be severe with himself. He suffered from anxiety and scruples and wondered if he was worthy of his calling. In one telling incident, after a period of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, he saw into the darkness of his young heart. "I seemed to grow oblivious of all around me and to see into the very depths of my soul and heart, and what I saw there I did not like..." He completed his studies in Rome and spent one summer touring Italy as Mussolini and the Black Shirts took power. Despite his simplicity, Shehan was a cosmopolitan, sophisticated man. This helped him later to make enormous contributions to the ecumenical spirit of Vatican II.

His Bridgeport years were fond ones. The new diocese was ebullient and hundreds of people greeted his train on all the plat-

form stops from Greenwich to Bridgeport, where a crowd of seven thousand waited to welcome him. Shehan had high praise for the old pastors, the parish titans that many of us will remember from childhood, men like Father Bart Skelly in Trumbull, Father Leo Finn at St. Peter's, Father Nicholas Coleman of Stamford.

After Shehan's first jubilant Mass there was a reception at the Stratfield Hotel. Being bishop was a princely experience then, and Shehan was eventually moved into the large brick mansion on Unquowa Rd. in the Brooklawn section of Fairfield, where he cut his own lawn on the weekends.

Shehan's ascendancy to cardinal came in the turbulent era of the 1960s and 70s. He was a leader in American Civil Rights movement and marched on Washington with Martin Luther



King. The cardinal integrated Baltimore's Catholic schools and played a large role in the expansion of Catholic Charities. He opposed the Vietnam War and two of his parish priests were arrested in the destruction of draft records in Catonsville, Maryland. He writes candidly about the Church crisis of those turbulent years. The burdens were staggering, but he never stopped fighting for his faith and his ideals.

*A Blessing of Years* is a surprisingly honest and lively book from a major figure in the 20th century Church, and a compelling portrait of the life of a bishop. ■

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# Column: Thomas Hicks



## The Heroism of the Ordinary

### POTPOURRI

By THOMAS H. HICKS

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

“Living is essentially a dull business” (Paul Valery) Most of us live lives of little things. Our lives are pretty prosaic. For the most part, as a poet put it, life consists of

“the trivial round, the common task.” The path marked out for us is generally a matter of quiet plodding along. Succeeding days are like those that have gone before, each one bringing its familiar duties and the same

routine—the daily treadmill of life. There are bills to be paid, machines to keep in repair; always something wrong, always something needed. There’s the dreary round of the monotonous chores of life: brushing teeth, shaving, drying the dishes, making the bed, waiting in doctor’s offices, etc. Therese of Lisieux noted that “before we die by the sword, we shall die by pin pricks.” The celebrated Catholic theologian, Karl Rahner, spoke of our being “tired wanderers on dusty roads” (The Great Church Year, p.126).

However, it is probably true that the truly heroic is usually hidden in the everyday routine.

Not the extraordinary but the commonplace is the crisis of life. It is probably in the banalities of everyday that we find the Kingdom of God. As a writer named Baron von Hugel said, “Heroism is always homely.”

For most of us, holiness will consist in the sanctification of ordinary life. The Jewish theologian Abraham Heschel spoke of being able to “sense the ultimate in the common and the simple and to feel in the rush of the passing the stillness of the eternal.” The first century Roman historian, Plutarch, observed that it is in the small, apparently trivial act, that character is most accurately reflected. Making the sacrifices to remain faithful to the performances that constitute our round of daily duty can constitute true martyrdom. There is the grandeur of the commonplace. There is St. Teresa of Avila’s famous statement: “Know that in the kitchen, the Lord walks among the pots and pans.”

But even the ordinary is lovable. One can perceive the beauty of ordinary everyday things. We can learn to love the little everyday things. Most of us, as we grow older, come to know the richness of small things. Small things become treasures. All one has to do is go to a hospital and hear all the simple blessings that we don’t realize are blessings—being able to urinate, to sleep on your side, to be able to swallow, to scratch an itch, etc. But more than this, there’s the words of a poem by Faith Baldwin: “I have come back to quiet ways; to things

of silent wonder...to dusk, to primrose dawns and lamp lit, hearth-warm nights...to the still simplicity of gentle days.” Few of us who have seen it forget the scene in Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*, where Emily, who has

**“The truly heroic is usually hidden in the everyday routine.”**

died, is allowed to return to earth to watch herself as a twelve-year old girl going through an ordinary commonplace day. One senses that the miracle of life is lived in the

ordinary moments. And something of exquisite beauty can arise from the humblest scraps of speech.

Finally, there is a story told in C.S. Lewis’ *The Great Divorce*. A man is given the opportunity to take a tour of heaven with an archangel as his guide. One of the sights he sees is a procession of rejoicing beings. At the head of the procession are numerous angels singing and dancing. They are followed by the patriarchs, the great prophets, the four evangelists, St. Paul, numerous martyrs and doctors of the early Church, saints of the Middle Ages. At the end of the procession come four angels carrying on their shoulders a golden chair on which is seated a woman of great beauty. Thinking this surely is the Blessed Virgin Mary, the traveler turns to his angelic guide and starts asking, “is that...that...?” The angel laughs and replies, “No, no, that’s Molly Schultz! You wouldn’t know her. She lived in your city in a rundown neighborhood. She was a scrub-woman, but she loved much and was faithful in so many ways to so many people. She is one of the Great Ones here.”

CAPONI FROM PAGE 12

well as hospitals in Michigan.

“Most importantly, Vince has distinguished himself as a virtuous servant leader,” Dr. Maryland said. “His strong faith and his alignment with, and support of, the principles of human dignity and the common good translate to a leadership style that promotes an authentic community of work.”

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# Column: Joe Pisani



## The true secret to lasting life

### SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

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

While I was sitting at my desk, trying hard to be a productive member of the American workforce, an email popped up on my screen with amazing news that proclaimed, “THE END OF AGING!” Good thing I was at my desk instead of wandering around, or I might have missed it.

The email said Harvard researchers have discovered the secret “to stop, slow and even reverse the symptoms of aging,” and I’m sure if I clicked on the offer, it would show me how I could grow younger for a mere \$5,000 a month. I’d look as good as Christie Brinkley and live long enough to retire at 90, thereby singlehandedly preserving the

Social Security System.

Every day there’s a new development, technique or product guaranteed to turn us into centenarians. A drug called rapamycin is being tested on dogs, which reportedly makes them bark louder, run faster and dig deeper holes.

The craziest trend is cryonics, which has attracted celebrities like Larry King and Paris Hilton, who plan to have their bodies freeze-dried so they can come back in 200 years when science has the secret to eternal life.

There’s also the emerging field of “geroscience,” which is the biology of aging. Its goal is to increase longevity—in America the average lifespan is 79—so that

we can live forever on earth. (For Christians, there’s already everlasting life, but you have to get to heaven to enjoy it.)

Thomas a’Kempis, a 14th century monk, had a different take. In *The Imitation of Christ*, he wrote: “What good is a long life if we do not use it to advance spiritually? ... Many count the years of their conversion, but often there is little to show for it. You are truly blessed if you keep the hour of your death before you and prepare yourself for it. If you ever saw anyone die, remember that you too must travel the same path. If it is frightening to die, it may be more dangerous to live long.”

Despite all the hype, there is a real secret to a long-lasting life, and you don’t have to be freeze-dried or start popping wonder pills. The secret is prayer and Mass—a growing body of research suggests prayerful people live longer, healthier lives.

Dr. Harold Koenig, director of Duke University’s Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health, told Newsmax Health that an analysis of 1,500 medical studies “indicates people who are more religious and pray

more have better mental and physical health, and out of 125 studies that looked at the link between health and regular worship, 85 showed churchgoers lived longer.”

In addition, a study by the University of Texas concluded that the more you go to church, the longer your lifespan—life expectancy is seven more years for weekly churchgoers than for those who don’t attend.

Another study in the U.S. Journal of Gerontology showed that atheists had a much greater likelihood of dying over a six-year period than believers.

Harvard professor Tyler VanderWeele published research in JAMA Internal Medicine that found women who go to church more than once a week have a 33 percent lower mortality rate than non-churchgoers.

After analyzing data from 1996 to 2012 on the habits of 74,534 women, researchers found that those who attended church frequently were 27 percent less likely to die from cardiovascular disease and 21 percent less likely to succumb to cancer. They theorized that the women enjoyed friendship, seldom smoked, had

an optimistic outlook and suffered less depression.

However, I have my own theory. When you go to church, you get graces necessary for a joyful and peaceful life even amid trials and suffering that accompany our earthly existence. The true secret to a long and fruitful life is to trust God. Take it a day at a time and don’t worry about the future.

By some divine plan that we won’t understand until we reach the hereafter, God gives each of us a certain length of time on earth to love and to grow spiritually. Everything else, including our gross annual income, academic honors, Chamber of Commerce awards and business successes, isn’t as important as trying to do his will. It’s a classic case of quality rather than quantity.

St. Francis of Assisi, who was never one to strive after earthly achievement, wealth, prestige or longevity, put it this way: “Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take nothing of what you have received, only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice, and courage.” ■

# HONDA

By **Curtiss\*Ryan**

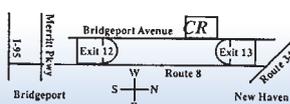
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## THE GIFT OF CULTURAL HURRICANES:

*How to Build New Bridges that Transform Catholic Families*

Parents are living in a cultural hurricane that is transforming the landscape of social connections and family life. Once strong bridges of human connection have been washed away, leaving parents feeling lost and spiritually hungry to find new avenues to get and stay connected. Dr. Tim Hogan will explore the radical cultural changes that are crashing into the family life. Participants will be guided, encouraged and supported in their efforts to construct creative strategies to effectively confront these changes head on. Emphasis will be placed on cultivating meaningful relationships and passing on the treasure of a passionate life of faith.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2016**

**10:00 AM-1:00 PM**

**The Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic Center  
Queen of Saints Room  
238 Jewett Avenue, Bridgeport**



OUR PRESENTER: **DR. TIM HOGAN**

**DR. HOGAN** is a Catholic clinical psychologist and certified Imago Relationship Therapist who directs the Grace Counseling Center in Detroit. He consults and presents workshops across the country, and contributed to the RCL Benziger Family Life series, which sponsors him for this event. He holds degrees from the University of Notre Dame and Fuller Graduate School of Psychology in Pasadena California. He blogs at [DrTimHogan.com/my-blog](http://DrTimHogan.com/my-blog), and lives with his wife and three children in Plymouth, Michigan.

Please register by Wednesday, August 3

To register contact Rose Talbot-Babey at 203-416-1648 or [rtalbotbabey@diobpt.org](mailto:rtalbotbabey@diobpt.org)

# Bits and Pieces

**BLACK ROCK SUMMER CONCERTS** have begun. They take place every **Tues.** at 6:30 pm on St. Ann Field (next to St. Ann Church), 481 Brewster St., Bridgeport. Rain date is on **Wed.** Bring your chairs, blankets, munchies, and kids. Admission: \$5; children under 12, free. There's a new band and a new food truck every week! See [www.StAnnBlackRock.com](http://www.StAnnBlackRock.com) for schedule.

**REMEMBERING LOVED ONES** lost to cancer: St. Vincent's SWIM Across the Sound is sponsoring the 19th Annual Interfaith Memorial Service on Sun., **July 31**, at 8:30 am at Captain's Cove Seaport in Bridgeport, rain or shine. No charge, open to all members of the community who have lost a loved one to cancer. For more info, contact Lucinda Ames: 203.576.5550 or [lames@stvincents.org](mailto:lames@stvincents.org).

**TALENT SHOW** held at the Shrine of Lourdes in Litchfield, 50 Montfort Rd., Rte. 118 Litchfield, Sun., **Aug. 7**, from 2-4 pm. Forms are available after Sunday Mass (12:45) in the Grotto Café or email [jbuchas@icloud.com](mailto:jbuchas@icloud.com). Requests should be received by Mon., **Aug. 1**.

**SUMMER CAMP:** "Lives of our Catholic Saints," will be held at St. Mary Parish, Norwalk, Tues.-Fri., **Aug. 16-19**, from 9:30-11 am. Open

to children entering fourth grade and older, through Confirmation. No charge (donations welcome). For more info, contact Andrea Remlin: [Lourdes\\_fatima@hotmail.com](mailto:Lourdes_fatima@hotmail.com) or 203.227.5477.

**S'MORES AND STARS** with Catholic Young Adults of Greater Danbury (CYAGD), ages 18-35. Have fun around the fire and enjoy some s'mores while watching the stars on Fri., **Aug. 19**, 8-11 pm, at St. Ann Parish, 181 Clapboard Ridge Rd., Danbury. For more info, email [catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com](mailto:catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com) or join us on Facebook at "Catholic Young Adults of Greater Danbury."

**ENCOURAGE** apostolate for friends and family of loved ones with same sex attractions or gender ID issues, meets the third Sat. of the month (**Aug. 20**) at 10:30 am and is strictly confidential. For more info contact the Norwalk Chapter: [EncourageNorwalk@gmail.com](mailto:EncourageNorwalk@gmail.com).

**MASS OF HEALING AND HOPE** will be celebrated Mon., **Aug. 22**, at 7:30 pm at Christ the King Parish, Trumbull with Fr. Larry Carew. For more info, call the Charismatic Renewal Office: 203.268.8253.

**BOWLING:** Come Glow Bowling with young adults of the area and enjoy a night of fun! Fri., **Aug. 26**, from 7:30-9:30 pm at DolrBill's Bowling, 145

Danbury Rd., New Milford. For more info, email [catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com](mailto:catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com) or join us on Facebook at "Catholic Young Adults of Greater Danbury."

**LANCER OPEN:** Notre Dame High School, Fairfield, is taking reservations for their 16th Annual Lancer Open in memory of Bob Shea. Tournament will take place at Brownson Country Club, Huntington, on Mon., **Sept. 12**. Entry fee: \$200 per player. This includes 18 holes of golf (scramble format) with cart, on-course cold beverages, tournament gifts and raffle prizes, BBQ lunch, silent auction, 2 hour open bar with hor d'oeuvres, buffet dinner and individual and team awards. For more info, go to [notredame.ejoinme.org/MyPages/2016LancerOpen](http://notredame.ejoinme.org/MyPages/2016LancerOpen) or contact Theresa Marzik: 203.372.6521 or [tmarzik@notredame.org](mailto:tmarzik@notredame.org).

**"LOURDES IN A DAY"** pilgrimage will be sponsored by the Order of Malta at St. Thomas Seminary, Bloomfield, on Sat., **Sept. 10**, from 9:30 am-4 pm. To register, contact Mark Sullivan: [slvnchrth@yahoo.com](mailto:slvnchrth@yahoo.com) or 860.523.1405.

**WOMEN'S GROUP** at Christ the King Parish, Trumbull, will resume its monthly meetings on Mon., **Sept. 12**, at 10 am. New members welcome. For more info, call 203.261.8020.

**BEREAVEMENT**

**MINISTRY:** A 12-session program held at St. Jude Parish, Monroe, over nine months will start on Wed., **Sept. 14**, from 2:30-4 pm. Sessions will be held twice a month from Sept. thru Nov., then once a month concluding in May. Registration required. For more info or to register, call the parish: 203.261.6404.

**THOSE WITH DOWN SYNDROME**, their family and friends are invited to a Mass asking for the intercession of St. Robert Bellarmine with Bishop Frank Caggiano and Fr. Richard Cipolla, Sun., **Sept. 25**, at 11:30 am in St. Mary Church, Norwalk. Reception follows. Please come and join the MOMs+DADs prayer/support group the third Thurs. of every month, at 7:30 pm at St. Mary's Parish Center. Next prayer meeting will be Thurs., Sept. 15. For more info, contact [strapostolate@optimum.net](mailto:strapostolate@optimum.net).

**WERE YOU EDUCATED** by the School Sisters of Notre Dame? We want to hear from you! We are planning future SSND reunions for New York and New England. Our next Reunion is in New York: Sun., **Sept. 25**, from 12-4 pm at the Milleridge Cottage, 585 North Broadway Jericho, N.Y. Tickets available online at [amssnd.org](http://amssnd.org). Cost: \$85 per person. Please consider sponsoring a Sister by

purchasing a program advertisement. For more info contact Joy Nazzaro: [jnazzaro@amssnd.org](mailto:jnazzaro@amssnd.org) or 203.762.4113.

**BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP** will meet at St. Stephen Parish, Trumbull, for a series of 10 weekly meetings starting Thurs., **Sept. 29**, from 4:30-6 pm. Advance registration necessary. For more info or to register, call the parish office: 203.268.6217.

**DEADLINE** for donating a veteran's brick to the St. Margaret Shrine Veterans Memorial, is Fri., **Sept. 30**. Bricks can be donated honoring a veteran of the U.S. Military, or our Allies—living, deceased, wartime, peacetime, or currently serving. The Veterans Memorial at 2523 Park Ave., Bridgeport was added to the National War Memorial Registry: [www.nationalwarmemorialregistry.org](http://www.nationalwarmemorialregistry.org). The names of the veterans on newly donated bricks will be published in the program book and read at the Veterans Mass and Blessing, Sat., **Nov. 5**, at 12:15 pm. For more info, call 203.345.3244.

**PILGRIMAGE** to Our Lady of Guadalupe and Mexico with Fr. Marcel begins Mon., **Oct. 10**. Cost: \$1,695; includes airfare, hotels, breakfast and dinner. For more info or to make a reservation, call Fr. Marcel 203.434.7208 or [marcelsajean@gmail.com](mailto:marcelsajean@gmail.com). ■

## ST MARGARET SHRINE

a diocesan shrine

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# Saint of the Streets

## Mother Teresa to be canonized in September

Mother Teresa of Calcutta will be canonized on September 4, the ninth anniversary of her death. Fittingly, the canonization of the founder of the Missionaries of Charity, who devoted her life to the poor, takes place during the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Mother Teresa was born to an Albanian family in what is now the Republic of Macedonia. When she was eighteen she joined the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish religious order that ran schools for girls in India. She arrived in India in 1929 and taught at the Loreto school in Calcutta for almost twenty years and in 1944 was appointed headmistress.

Although she enjoyed teaching, she was increasingly disturbed by the poverty surrounding her in Calcutta. On September 10, 1946, she experienced what she later described as “the call within the call” while travelling by train for her annual retreat. “I was to leave the convent and help the poor while living among them. It was an order. To fail would have been to break the faith.”

She began her missionary work with the poor in 1948, adopting a simple white cotton sari decorated with a blue border, taking Indian citizenship and

receiving basic medical training. Then she ventured out into the slums.

Her first year was fraught with difficulties. She had no income and had to resort to begging for food and supplies. She wrote in her diary: “Our Lord wants me to be a free nun covered with the poverty of the cross. Today, I learned a good lesson. The poverty of the poor must be so hard for them. While looking for a home I walked and walked till my arms and legs ached. I thought how much they must ache in body and soul, looking for a home, food and health.”

In 1950, Mother Teresa received Vatican permission to start the congregation that would become the Missionaries of Charity. Its mission was to care for, in her own words, “the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone.”

Members adhere to the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, as well as a fourth vow, to give “wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor.” Beginning as a small con-

gregation with 13 members in Calcutta, by 1997 it now numbers 4,500 members running orphanages, AIDS hospices and charity centers worldwide.

Father Paul Check, national chaplain of Courage in residence at St. Mary Parish in Norwalk, became familiar with the Missionaries of Charity in Rome, where he became a chaplain and confessor for them at their Motherhouse near the Vatican. For a dozen years he taught a two-week course in moral theology in Calcutta.

“The clue to their mission is in their name,” he said. “A Missionary of Charity is someone who brings the fullness of the love of Christ to other people.

“Sometimes Mother Teresa would walk up to a person and take hold of their hand. She’d say, ‘Do you know the Gospel

on five fingers?’ Then, taking each finger in turn she would say: ‘You...did...it...to...me.’ That was her lasting gift to the world, to bring people the message of Christ, “Love one another as I have loved you.”

As he walked the streets in Calcutta, Father Check would occasionally look into a Hindu temple to see what they were like. “Sometimes I’d see a figure of Mother Teresa displayed there. It’s clear that they perceived something holy in her.”

The first Missionaries of Charity home in the United States was established in the South Bronx; by 1984 they had 19 establishments throughout the country. The Sisters were invited to serve in this diocese by Bishop William E. Lori in 2001, when they opened a convent in St. Peter Parish in Bridgeport.

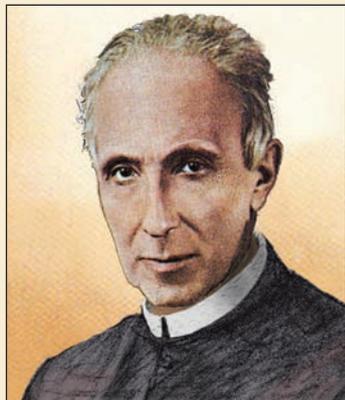
“The Sisters help out with Sunday school, but mostly they go around to see people who are homebound or sick or in nursing homes, not particularly from the parish and not always Catholic,” says Father José Rebaque, St. Peter’s pastor. “They also run a program in their convent for preschool children. It’s not for the parish; it’s simply for people in the neighborhood who need this help.”

Mother Teresa was the recipient of numerous honors, including the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize. While she was admired by the world, more importantly people recognized her as a saintly person.

Mother Teresa said “By blood, I am Albanian. By citizenship, an Indian. By faith, I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the world. As to my heart, I belong entirely to the Heart of Jesus.”

### Little Workers...

STAMFORD—On May 21, a delegation of the Little Workers of the Sacred Hearts from Stamford traveled to Calabria, Italy to participate in the beatification ceremonies of their founder, Msgr. Francesco Maria Greco. The Sisters, who operate Our Lady of Grace Preschool and Kindergarten and Villa Divino Amore preschool in Stamford, joined more than 250 fellow Sisters from around the world to see their founder declared Blessed. The Little Workers were joined by more than 15,000 faithful and 200 priests who filled the stadium in the city of Cosenza to show their devotion to one of their own Calabrese.



BL. FRANCESCO MARIA GRECO

On May 22, the Sisters joined in another celebration that took place in Acri, the hometown of Blessed Francesco. A procession of worshippers carried his relic from the chapel of the Little Workers to the Basilica of Beato Angelo. There a liturgy was celebrated by Francesco Nolè, Bishop of Cosenza-Bisignano, with 5,000 people in attendance.

# MOTHER TERESA

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