

MONTHLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT

FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE



3 Report on Diocesan Listening Sessions for Global Synod



4 Five men ordained to Permanent Diaconate

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DIAGNOSTICS

COVID-19 & FLU TESTING



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THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT



Around the Diocese

Summer of faith, fun & service

by Elizabeth Clyons

Youth center upgrade

NORWALK—The Junior Youth Group at St. Matthew's in Norwalk recently gathered to paint the walls of their soon-to-be youth center!



Summer Carnival

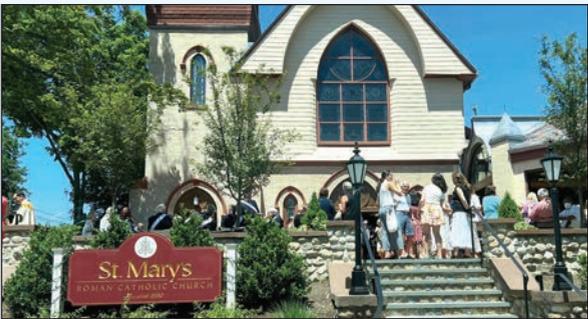
NEWTOWN—St. Rose of Lima's summer carnival had something for everyone and was full of fun for all!



St. Mary's has a lot to celebrate

RIDGEFIELD—On Sunday, July 10, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano celebrated a Mass of Rededication at St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the church building. Parishioners gathered for refreshments following the Mass.

Also this summer, kids climbed aboard for a mountain of fun at Rocky Railway Vacation Bible School, where they learned that Jesus' power pulls us through! Bible stories, games, crafts and music helped ground the kids in the solid foundation of God's love.



Bible Journey!

NEW CANAAN—Teens in the youth group at St. Aloysius spent time going on a Bible Journey! They enjoyed Mrs. Otis' homemade slow-roasted pulled pork, some fun and games, and great discussion using Father Mike Schmitz's Bible in a Year.



CHWC Summer

FAIRFIELD—Teens from St. Pius X Parish in Fairfield were hard at work with Catholic Heart Workcamp in New Haven this summer.



Giving back

WESTPORT—Teens from St. Luke's in Westport spent a week of service in Knoxville, TN with Catholic Heart Work Camp.



CAS campers

STAMFORD—Summer campers at Catholic Academy of Stamford were able to check on the fresh vegetables from the CAS Grows Garden! Welcome, summer, and all the beauty you bring!



Bible Camp brings summer fun

NORWALK—During Bible Camp at St. Matthews, campers learned about their faith by seeing the Bible come to life in a skit and visiting the Sanctuary in the church. Over 100 campers, ages 3-10 years, learned how much God loves them!



ON THE COVER

THE 3RD GRADERS at All Saints Catholic School had a **BLAST** celebrating the end of the school year with their Pre-K buddies as part of a program that pairs younger and older students as role models of friendship and faith.

CONTENTS

- 3 **CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE**
Feast, festival and fundraiser
- 6 **ANNUAL BISHOP'S APPEAL**
Help us reach goal
- 10 **PARISH MERGER**
St. Edward the Confessor/Holy Trinity
- 11-18 **SPECIAL SECTION**
Catholic Cemeteries
- 19 **PARISH MOMS**
Groups foster community
- 20 **VESTMENT DESIGNER**
Norwalk woman creates liturgical garments
- 21 **ST. VINCENT'S MEDICAL CENTER**
Farmers Market serves those in need
- 25 **CATHOLIC ACADEMY OF STAMFORD**
Summer camp program a day of fun



Diocesan News

Diocese sends Synod Summary to USCCB

BRIDGEPORT—The summary report on the 2021-2023 Global Synod on Synodality listening sessions held in parishes throughout the diocese has been submitted to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) as part of the diocesan participation in the global synod called for by Pope Francis.

The diocesan summary was submitted on July 11 by Deacon Stephen Hodson, who was appointed synod representative for the Diocese of Bridgeport by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. The report reflects comments of over 1,300 men and women who participated in listening sessions in 42 percent of parishes in the diocese, Deacon Hodson said. "The process has deepened our understanding of who we are as a community in Christ, and helped to begin the healing process that needs to occur within the Church," said Deacon Hodson,

a member of the pastoral ministry team at St. Luke Parish in Westport.

Bishop Caggiano praised Deacon Hodson for leading the process and expressed his thanks to all who participated in the listening sessions and to those who assisted Deacon Hodson in compiling the synthesis. "I am very grateful to Deacon Hodson for taking on this monumental task in a spirit of listening and conciliation," the bishop said, noting that the synthesis is a valuable document that bears further study in the coming months as the diocese discerns the comments and suggestions of the faithful.

Pope Francis launched the Global Synod on Synodality in October 2021, and since that time, delegates from parishes around the world have been working to effectively listen to and bring forward the concerns, questions and hopes of the faithful.



DEACON STEPHEN HODSON WAS appointed synod representative for the Diocese of Bridgeport by Bishop Caggiano. Here, he is pictured at his ordination to the permanent diaconate on June 15, 2019.

Deacon Hodson said the report summarizes the insights, questions and suggestions provided by the parishioners of the Diocese Bridgeport over the past seven months in response to the request by Pope Francis to con-

sult with the faithful. The faithful freely commented on a wide range of subjects including the liturgy, sacraments and spiritual practices including the Sacrament of Reconciliation, family life, the need to create more welcom-

ing parishes, the importance of engaging youth, the diminished understanding of the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the increasing role of the laity.

"These faith stories, or lived experiences, come from God and enable us to witness how God has journeyed with us in the past and will continue to journey with all his adopted daughters and sons in the future. We are being guided to share true experiences of how God has brought us to himself, healed and consoled us, brought us joy and sustained us in sorrow," Deacon Hodson said.

Though the diocese has submitted the initial summary to the USCCB, it is encouraging parishes that have not completed their report to send it for inclusion in the regional report summary that will be submitted by the Archdiocese of Hartford

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Bishop Caggiano to keynote Men's Conference

HARTFORD—The Most Rev. Frank J. Caggiano, Bishop of Bridgeport, will serve as a keynote speaker at the 2022 Connecticut Catholic Men's Conference on September 24, at Northwest Catholic High School in West Hartford. "The Most Holy Eucharist" is the theme of the 15th annual Connecticut Catholic Men's Conference, which has moved indoors again after two years of COVID-19 restrictions.

Bishop Caggiano said he is looking forward to participating in the conference, and he hopes that many men throughout our diocese join him for this day of renewal and spiritual enrichment. "The conference is a great opportunity for spiritual reflection, prayer and fraternity—one man to another offering encouragement as husband, fathers, and individuals who witness to Christ in their own lives. I strongly urge those within driving distance to reserve the time and join us," he said.

"We're gearing up for another incredible day of profound teaching, fellowship and awesome worship," said Men's conference



BISHOP FRANK J. CAGGIANO

director Ken Santopietro, who said he expects a large delegation from the diocese to attend the conference. The annual statewide conference is a collaboration between the Archdiocese of Hartford and the dioceses of Bridgeport and Norwich. "This event will serve not only as a Men's Conference, but as a mini Eucharistic Congress that will serve the spiritual needs of our men who need to be knowledgeable about the Real Presence and advocates of their Catholic faith," Santopietro said.

Santopietro said the image



FATHER CHRIS ALAR, MIC

of our conference's Eucharistic procession reflects the connection the CCMC has had to the Eucharist. "We knew this image expressed so well the truth Connecticut Catholic men have come to understand—that the Eucharist truly means that "God Is With Us." He said in order to drive home the importance of the Eucharist and the real presence to Catholic men, the conference has invited the following speakers to join Bishop Caggiano at the Men's Conference:

Father Chris Alar, MIC, entered the Marian Fathers



FATHER WADE L.J. MENEZES

of the Immaculate Conception, the religious community entrusted with spreading the message and devotion of Divine Mercy, as a postulant in July 2006. Prior to that time, he received a bachelor's of science in industrial engineering and a master's of business administration from the University of Michigan. After working as an engineering manager at a large automotive supplier in Detroit, he began his own consulting firm in Charlotte, North Carolina in 2000. Answering the Lord's call, he attended Franciscan



FATHER LARRY RICHARDS

University of Steubenville, in Ohio, for his philosophy studies, Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C., for his theology studies, and he earned his master's of divinity degree from Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut. Father Chris wrote and produced the popular "Divine Mercy 101" and "Explaining the Faith" DVD series and is the author of the bestselling books *After Suicide: There's Hope for Them and for You*, as well as *Understanding Divine Mercy*.

Father Wade L.J. Menezes, ► CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Permanent Diaconate Ordination

‘Become a living sign of service’

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

BRIDGEPORT—“You are meant to be a counter-sign of the world in which you live by becoming a living sign of service,” Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said to the five men he ordained to the Permanent Diaconate On Saturday, June 25, at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport.

Hundreds of family members, friends, clergy and faithful filled the Cathedral to celebrate the ordination of the five men who are also husbands and fathers: Christopher Greer of Westport, George Kain of Ridgefield, James Meehan of Westport, Rock Desances of Bridgeport, and Vincent Pia of Brookfield. The deacons have professional backgrounds in business, education, the service industry and photography.

The congregation broke into applause several times to show their happiness and appreciation for the men who became candidates for the diaconate on October 26, 2019, received the ministry of reader on October 17, 2020, and received the ministry of acolyte on December 11, 2021.

The bishop said that the men have “walked a long journey of discovery and formation” to arrive at the moment of ordination, which remains both gift and mystery.

He told them they will be serving in a long line of deacons whose origins are described in the Acts of the Apostles, when seven were entrusted with the ministry of charity and service to the poorest of the poor.

The bishop pointed out that the Church’s definition of ministerial service goes beyond the care provided by the contemporary service industry.

“That’s not what we’re celebrating today. Our Master and Savior defines service as a ministry to give my life as ransom for the many—that’s the Christian definition of service.”

“In a world where life is all about me, you are a sacrament of living life for others. There will never be a moment when you are not a deacon, and what you do will not be easy” the bishop told the men who knelt before him in front of the altar.

Whether in the pulpit, at work, or doing everyday things at home in ordinary life, the deacon



NEWLY ORDAINED DEACONS (l-r) Vincent Pia, James Meehan, George Kain, Christopher Greer, and Rock Desances

must pour out his life to all those who trust in him, he said.

“You can’t do it without the Holy Spirit,” he said, urging the men to be courageous, and generous of heart as they point people to Christ. “You must bring the hopes and dreams of God’s people when you come to the altar,” he said.

He said they can always turn to the Blessed Mother for help.

“How blessed we are to gather on the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary,” the bishop said, adding that he dedicated the new deacons to the Blessed Mother, who will also protect and guide their work, “Through her heart we come to the Sacred Heart of Jesus,” he said.

Deacon Rock Desances was vested as a Deacon by Deacon Donald Foust; Deacon Christopher Greer was vested by Rev. Thomas Anderson, S.J.; Deacon George Kain was vested by Msgr. Kevin Royal, pastor, St. Mary Parish, Ridgefield; Deacon James Meehan was vested by Father Terrence Walsh, pastor, Sacred Heart-St. Patrick Parish, Redding; and Deacon Vincent Pia was vested by Rev. Shawn W. Jordan; pastor, St. Marguerite Bourgeoys, Brookfield.

Wearing diaconal vestments, each newly ordained deacon knelt before the bishop who handed him The Book of the Gospels.

“Receive the Gospel of Christ whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach,” the bishop repeated five times as he presented the book to each deacon.

During the Mass, the gifts of

bread and wine were brought forward by the deacons’ family members: Mireille Desances, Kristine Greer, Marilyn Kain, Athina Meehan and Holly Pia.

Deacons of the Mass were Deacon Gerald Lambert, director of the diaconate; Deacon John DiTaranto, coordinator of diaconate continuing formation; and Deacon Brad Smythe, diaconate formation instructor.

Before giving the final blessing Bishop Caggiano said, “What a joyful glorious day God has given us,” and he asked the five deacon’s wives to stand up and receive a round of applause. He praised them for being loving partners who encouraged and supported the men in their vocations.

The bishop thanked Deacon John Di Taranto who will lead the continuing formation program for the new deacons, and Deacon Jerry Lambert for “serving as a brother and a mentor” to the newly ordained.

He also announced the assignments for the new deacons: Deacon Vincent Pia will serve at St. Margaret Bourgeoys Parish in Brookfield, Deacon Rock Desances has dual assignments at St. Joseph and St. Ladislaus Parish in Norwalk and the quasi-parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Stamford, Deacon James Meehan will serve at Assumption Parish in Westport, Deacon George Kain will serve at St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield and Deacon Chris Greer will minister at St. Luke Parish in Westport.

The role of the deacon as defined by the Second Vatican Council is

to administer Baptism, safeguard and dispense the Eucharist, assist at and bless marriages in the name of the Church, bring Viaticum to the dying, read the Sacred Scripture, preach, preside at the worship and prayer of the faithful, administer sacramentals, and to preside at funeral and burial rites.

About the Deacons

Christopher Greer of Westport received his bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He has worked as a development consultant as well as a professional sports photographer. He is a member of St. Luke’s in Westport along with his wife Kristine and their two children, Cassidy and Kevin. He participates in the adult choir as a cantor/soloist, is a member of the men’s group and an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.

George Kain of Ridgefield holds a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from the City University of New York. He has worked as a university professor and chairman in the Division of Justice and Law Administration at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury for 25 years and served as police commissioner for the Town of Ridgefield for 20 years. He is a member of St. Mary’s in Ridgefield along with his wife Marilyn. He has served as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (as well as a homebound minister to the sick), a cantor, usher, altar server and RCIA instructor. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus, an adoration chapel volunteer, a

member of the Disciples for Life Parish Retreat Team and men’s ministry. He is father of daughter Grace and grandfather of Mercy.

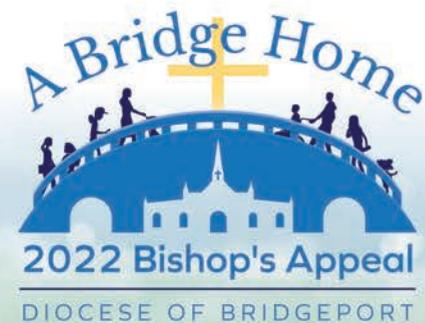
James Meehan of Westport holds a bachelor’s degree in accounting from City University of New York. He has been the owner/operator of several businesses for historical window restoration, home heating oil delivery and heating/air conditioning. He and his wife Athina attend Church of the Assumption in Westport along with their children Christopher, Andrew and Christina. At Assumption, Meehan serves as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion and reader, coordinating both ministries. He also serves in the elderly/homebound ministry, acts as financial secretary for the Knights of Columbus and is a volunteer coordinator at the Thomas Merton Center.

Rock Desances and his wife Mireille attend St. Margaret Shrine parish in Bridgeport along with their five children. Desances serves as an usher, reader, altar server and extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and has worked as a dietetic assistant, food manager in various setting and health care assistant at Laurel Ridge Health Care in Ridgefield Center since 2015. He is a graduate of the University of Quisqueya Graduate in Port au Prince, Haiti; Gateway Community College for Dietary Manager and Hotel Restaurant Management; and of St. Joseph Seminary, Dunwoodie/Yonkers, N.Y. At St. Margaret Shrine, he is a member of the Italian Society, captain of the St. Antonio Feast and a member of the Veterans Memorial.

Vincent Pia has worked as a writer, photographer, professional picture framer and art conservator. He is a member of St. Marguerite Bourgeoys in Brookfield, with his wife Holly and children Caitlynn and Brandon. He is active in the parish, serving as a reader, an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, altar server, parish Rosary leader, adult faith formation facilitator, a member of the Knights of Columbus (having previously served as both officer and director) and a former member of the choir. ■

A Bridge Home

2022 BISHOP'S APPEAL



- + HOPE
- + RENEWAL
- + EVANGELIZATION

The Bishop's Appeal supports services that continue to engage those in their faith and build a strong bridge to so many who are struggling.

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When you make a gift to the Appeal you are part of building a bridge that:

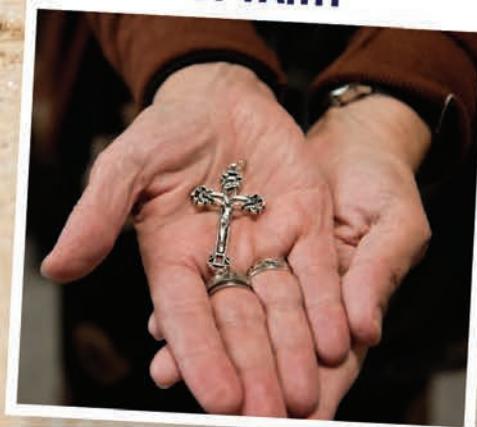
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Thank you for your support, God bless you.

2022 Bishop's Appeal

Uniting parishes in faith and fellowship

By **JOE PISANI**

In the midst of the 2022 Bishop's Appeal, St. Joseph Church in Brookfield confronted a financial setback. The agreement to rent their school building to the Danbury school system was terminated and the parish lost that income. After consulting with the finance board, Father George "Chip" O'Neill said they still chose to send their extra funds from the appeal to help an inner-city parish, just as they did with the previous appeal.

"We decided we had to continue to give sacrificially as a parish rather than use the money to help with our own shortfall," he said. So, they will assist St. Ann Church in Bridgeport with the extra funds they raised. This year, despite the challenges and a troubled economy, St. Joseph is \$16,000 over its goal of \$116,000. Father said the setback over the terminated lease was a real reminder of the importance of helping others who face similar financial challenges...and to trust in God's providence.

"God always provides, and

we recognize we already have what we need...and we trust," he said. "The more we give away freely without strings attached, the more we receive in return. It always happens that way." It also helps that his parish family is a close-knit group, which he describes as "a good solid community that rely on each other." They are heavily involved in ministries in the Danbury area, including those funded by the appeal.

"We are all about food and feeding people, and most of our ministries are reaching out to those in need," Father said. Parishioners regularly help out at the Dorothy Day Hospitality House. St. Joseph's provides from 70 to 100 meals a month, and the youth group makes 50 to 75 sandwiches. In addition, parishioners prepare 15 casseroles a month to feed the hungry at Pacific House, a Danbury homeless shelter. They are also active in the H.A.L. Bag Program—Helping Another Live—which is an ongoing drive that collects non-perishable food and personal care items for the Brookfield Food Pantry.

The parish's success in the Bishop's Appeal hinges on several factors, says Father, who has made the goal in his 14 years as pastor and during his previous service at St. Patrick's. "On a weekly basis, it's important to keep people informed of how we're doing and setting the expectation of achieving the goal," he said. "This is the way I've always done it. Communication helps, with updates in the bulletin and announcements at Mass on a regular basis."

Their success also hinges on the diligent efforts of his staff. "They have been with me since I've been here and they want to keep helping in any way, shape or form they can," he says. "They do things outside of their comfort zone and never say no... I am very blessed." The parishioners realize that after they reach their goal, the surplus can be used to offer financial support to an inner-city parish. "Last year was the first year we did it, and it went very well," he said. "This year we used it as part of our marketing of the appeal." St. Ann's has a special place in

Father's heart because he served there for five years after his ordination.

Joe Gallagher, chief development officer for the diocese, says he is grateful to Father O'Neill and other pastors who participated in the Parish Partnership Program, which is writing a new chapter in charity and fellowship between parishes. In addition to St. Joseph in Brookfield, several other parish partnerships include the following: St. Rose of Lima in Newtown is helping St. Mary, Bridgeport and Catholic Charities of Danbury, St. Jude in Monroe is reaching out to Blessed Sacrament, and St. Thomas More in Darien is working with St. Mary Parish in Stamford. There are also multiple parishes participating in the partnership.

"Many pastors and parishioners are enthusiastically embracing the Parish Partnership program. It enables them to designate any funds over goal to support parishes that are pastorally vibrant but struggling financially, and it is uniting the diocese in faith and service," says Gallagher. Gallagher said he



FATHER GEORGE "CHIP" O'NEILL

realizes many parishes are not in a financial position to designate over goal funds, but for those that do, they have been blessed by the mutual sharing and deepening of relationships between parishes. "The sharing is not one way, but a genuine relationship between the two parishes where everyone is nurtured spiritually. It brings different parish communities together in a way that they grow in understanding and fellowship," says Gallagher, who notes, as a result of the program, parishioners have prayed and worshipped together, socialized and developed new friendships. ■

Bishop's Appeal at 90% of goal

By **BRIAN D. WALLACE**

BRIDGEPORT—The 2022 Annual Bishop's Appeal, A Bridge Home, has raised \$7.3 million and is at 90 percent of goal, said Pam Rittman, director of the Bishop's Appeal. "We're so close, but it's important to realize the goal is not just a number. As Bishop Frank J. Caggiano has taught us, it is a true bridge between our donors, people in need and our parish communities," said Rittman.

As the Appeal nears its goal, Rittman said it's time to thank pastors and donors who have put it within reach. It's also time for others to pitch in and push the appeal over the finish line for the good of the entire diocese, she says. To date, 13,514 donors have made gifts and each gift makes a difference and responds to the

bishop's call to reach out to those in need.

There are 32 parishes over goal and the Development Office is working with the remaining parishes to help them reach their respective goals. "We're very grateful to those who have given, whether stepping up with leadership gifts or stretching to give sacrificially in spite of their own financial challenges," said Rittman.

Rittman said that during this difficult year for many, she is inspired and encouraged by the many small donations coming in from working families that have financial challenges but have still managed to make giving to the Bishop's Appeal a priority in their lives. "We're hoping that those who haven't yet joined the Appeal can support their sacrifice by making a contribution. The Appeal not only funds key programs and ministries of the

diocese, but it sends a strong message of how we care for one another as Catholics," said Rittman.

"In his writings and videos, Bishop Caggiano has reminded us that we all have an obligation to one another, particularly as we seek to be one family of faith in Fairfield County," she said.

Rittman said that while most of the faithful understand that the Appeal funds much needed charitable works for those who are struggling, they may be surprised to learn that the Appeal touches the lives of all diocesan families through its support of vocations, faith formation programs, communications and other services that helps to make parishes more vital and welcoming. "The Bishop's Appeal is an expression of all that we share and aspire to as the people of God. We're so close to the finish line and we would love to see the campaign

reach goal before the fall," says Rittman.

Funds from the Appeal support vital new initiatives while continuing to feed the hungry, reach out to the most vulnerable, promote faith in Fairfield County, and fund the ongoing ministries and services provided by the diocese. Rittman said she expects parishioner donations to continue to come in throughout the summer and fall.

(To make your gift online, please visit, 2022BishopsAppeal.org or text the word, APPEAL, to 475.241.7849. If you have questions, please call 203.416.1470.) ■

PARISHES OVER GOAL

Saint Gregory the Great Parish, Danbury
 Saint Luke Parish, Westport
 Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, Fairfield
 Sacred Heart Parish, Stamford
 Holy Spirit Parish, Stamford
 Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, Stamford
 Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Trumbull
 Saint George Parish, Bridgeport
 Saint Mary Parish, Norwalk
 Sacred Heart Parish, Greenwich
 Saint Jerome Parish, Norwalk
 Christ the King Parish, Trumbull
 Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish, Fairfield
 Saint Bridget of Ireland Parish, Stamford
 Saint Joseph Parish, Brookfield
 Saint Cecilia-Saint Gabriel Parish, Stamford
 Saint Elizabeth Seton Parish, Ridgefield
 Saint Thomas More Parish, Darien
 Saint Charles Borromeo Parish, Bridgeport
 Saint Paul Parish, Greenwich
 Saint Andrew Parish, Bridgeport
 Saint Mary Parish, Ridgefield
 Holy Cross Parish, Fairfield
 Blessed Sacrament Parish, Bridgeport
 Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Newtown
 Saint Mary Parish, Bethel
 Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish, Shelton
 Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Danbury
 Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Wilton
 Saint Peter Parish, Danbury
 Saint Jude Parish, Monroe
 Saint Margaret Shrine, Bridgeport

Global Synod Update

USCCB FROM PAGE 3

at the end of July, he said. In addition to the “live” listening sessions, several parishes held Zoom sessions and several conducted surveys to allow those who could not attend live or Zoom sessions to respond via written responses submitted via email, online survey services or in-person drop boxes, Deacon Hodson said. Some parishes also held listening sessions with their active ministry groups which proved to very valuable as the participants were largely long-time parishioners with significant wisdom that was shared with love, along with honest critique, he said.

Deacon Hodson said participants didn’t shy away from tough topics or areas of disagreement, but always managed to voice their concerns or disappointment along with a strong love for the Church and the role it plays in their lives. Some individuals commented on the need for more joy, passion and love in the Mass, the lack of inclusiveness in the Church’s messaging, gender issues and the need to expand the role of women in the Church. Others were concerned about the shortage of priests and the lingering wounds and sense of betrayal caused by the abuse scandal.

“The goal was to let people speak about what was on their hearts—the more open-ended the questions, the better,” said Deacon Hodson, who believes the Holy Spirit inspired candid comments and reflections from the hearts of diocesan participants. “Sadness, struggle and frustration were expressed, as were love, hope and joy. Many suggestions were made in the hope that the Holy Spirit will nourish the seeds of new life for our Church, the beloved bride of our savior, Jesus Christ, who desires that all may be one.”

While local dioceses across the country submit their reports, which will be included in larger regional summaries, the Vatican is preparing a process to review the documents and produce a final synthesis. Speaking as a guest on Bishop Caggiano’s weekly radio show and podcast, Sr. Nathalie Becquart, under-secretary for the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops and a mem-

ber of the Vatican Dicastery for Communications, said she hopes to receive all of the synthesis of reports from the bishop’s conference by mid-August, and that the Vatican team has been working to prepare the

methodology and the process to review all reports. “It’s not an academic synthesis—it’s an act of discernment,” she said. “So it has to be a process, through prayer and listening. We have imagined working as a group of many diverse people, because we will receive the synthesis

from everywhere in different languages.”

Suggestions made by the laity for renewing the Church are included in the diocesan report along with strategies for evangelization and engaging the faithful in the life of the Church.

(The entire report and updates

will be available online on the Institute for Catholic Formation website, at: formationreimagined.org. Bishop Caggiano will lead Daytime Prayer as part of the closing ceremony for the first phase of the synod on September 10, 11 am at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport.)

www.scinto.com

A riddle from Bob Scinto

At R.D. Scinto, we believe in 2 four letter words. One begins with an “L”, and describes the way we feel about our tenants.

The other begins with a “D”, and describes what motivates all of our actions. These two words are not used nearly as often as they should be.

Do you know what these words are? If you need help, call and ask for Bob at (203)929-6300.



EDITORIAL

Building
a life-giving society

In response to the Supreme Court's historic decision to overturn Roe vs. Wade on June 24, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano issued a statement on the significance of the ruling and the challenges ahead. In it he offers gratitude for all those who have given witness to the rights of the unborn, and he urges all to be united in the effort to build a culture of life in our society.

"The historic United States Supreme Court ruling that overturned Roe vs Wade will be remembered as a moment of recognition and obligation; recognition that the court's decision will save untold innocent, unborn lives, and a reminder of our common obligation to reach out to pregnant women and children in need of our help.

Many faithful in our diocese have worked tirelessly over the years to provide a courageous witness in the public square to the rights of the unborn and the sanctity of human life. Their actions have been heroic and prophetic, and I am deeply grateful for their commitment.

Now through much sacrifice, advocacy, and prayer we have arrived at a place where we can move forward and build on this achievement by doing all that is possible to safeguard the lives of the most vulnerable among us. The work ahead to build a true culture of life must be shared by all of us, and it must be done with compassion and civility.

We are blessed to have many pro-life initiatives in our diocese. Through programs such as Malta House, Project Rachel, 40 Days for Life, and other efforts, we have been able to encourage and support women who choose life, and to provide shelter and other services to them during and after pregnancy. Likewise, our Project Rachel ministry works to bring healing and forgiveness to those who chose abortion. Yet, much more needs to be done and we will be seeking ways to increase our pastoral and social services.

At this historic moment, let us offer our thanks and gratitude that our prayers and hard work have been answered. Let us also remember that our Catholic faith has been consistent and unwavering in its belief that all human life must be protected and safeguarded from the moment of conception to natural death.

As we are encouraged by this long-awaited ruling, let us also acknowledge that our country remains divided and wounded. May this also be a time of reconciliation where all people of good will can find common ground to build a truly just and life-giving society."

On Synodality

In his weekly Veritas Radio (1350 AM) podcast, Bishop Caggiano recently had the opportunity to speak with Sister Nathalie Bequart, Under-Secretary for the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops and a member of the Vatican Dicastery for Communications. We're pleased to share a few of her thoughts and updates on the global synod process. You can listen to the entire conversation at www.bridgeportdiocese.org/bishops-video-news/sr-nathalie-bequart-synodality

"Last October was the first time in the history of the Church that all the baptized have been convoked into a synod. Pope Francis understands that synodality is the call of God to the Church. So, we need to embrace the synod and recognize the synod is the constitutive dimension of the Church. In this historic time, synodality is a dynamic vision of the Church in history. And we have really understood that the only way to transmit the faith today is to be a synodal Church.

The style of the early Church was the style of the community in which nobody decided things alone. And when there were conflicts and difficulties, people and bishops gathered together to talk, to pray, to discern, and to find the consensus. From the beginning of this pontificate, Pope Francis has emphasized the need for missionary transformation of the Church to continue to proclaim the gospel, and to evangelize the people. That's what Pope Francis is trying to awake. As he often says, everybody in the Church has to be protagonist. No one is a mere extra. We are all called to be missionary pilgrims on the road."



CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

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

VICAR GENERAL

VERY REVEREND ROBERT KINNALLY, appointed to Vicar General for the Diocese of Bridgeport. Father Kinnally will remain Pastor to Saint Aloysius Parish, New Canaan. Effective date was July 1.

CHANCELLOR

DEACON PATRICK TOOLE, appointed to Chancellor for the Diocese of Bridgeport. Effective date was July 1.

VICE CHANCELLOR

DEACON WILLIAM SANTULLI, appointed to Vice Chancellor for the Diocese of Bridgeport. Effective date was July 1.

PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATOR

REVEREND ROBERT WOLFE, appointed to Parochial Administrator, Saint Edward the Confessor Parish, New Fairfield. Effective date was July 1.

RECTOR

REVEREND GIANDOMENICO FLORA, recalled to the Archdiocese of Newark. Effective date was June 30.

VERY REVEREND PETER LENOX, appointed to Rector, Saint Margaret Shrine, Bridgeport. Father Lenox will remain Episcopal Vicar for Liturgy and Worship. Effective date was July 1 for a term of six years.

ORDINATIONS

REVEREND COLIN LOMNITZER, appointed to Parochial Vicar, Saint Mary Parish, Ridgefield. Effective date was July 1.

REVEREND ANH VU, appointed to Parochial Vicar, Saint Leo the Great Parish, Stamford. Effective date was July 1.

PAROCHIAL VICAR

REVEREND SEUNGYONG YI SDB, appointed to Parochial Vicar, Church of the Assumption, Westport. Effective date was June 1.

EPISCOPAL CHAPLAIN

REVEREND CHRISTOPHER PERRELLA, appointed to Episcopal Chaplain to both Saint Thomas Aquinas School, Fairfield and All Saints School, Norwalk. Effective date was July 1.

NURSING HOME CHAPLAIN

REVEREND OTONIEL LIZCANO, appointed to Chaplain, Pope John Paul II Healthcare, Danbury. Effective date was July 1.

ORDINATION DIACONATE

MR. ROCK DESANCES, appointed to Deacon to Saint Joseph/Saint Ladislaus Parish, Norwalk and to the Quasi Parish of Notre Dame Du Perpetuel Secours within the territory of Saint Gabriel Church, Stamford.

MR. CHRIS GREER, appointed to Deacon, Saint Luke Parish, Westport.

MR. GEORGE KAIN, appointed to Deacon, Saint Mary Parish, Ridgefield.

MR. JIM MEEHAN, appointed to Deacon, Church of the Assumption, Westport.

MR. VINCENT PIA, appointed to Deacon, Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys Parish, Brookfield.

TRANSITIONAL DEACONS

MR. RICARDO BATISTA COMIM, appointed to Transitional Deacon, Saint Charles Borromeo Parish, Bridgeport.

MR. JAMES DIVASTO, appointed to Transitional Deacon, Saint James Parish, Stratford.

MR. FERRY GALBERT, appointed to Transitional Deacon, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Trumbull.

MR. ANDREW LAFLEUR, appointed to Transitional Deacon, Saint Mary Parish, Bethel.

MR. MIGUEL BETANCUR LENIS, appointed to Transitional Deacon, Saint Matthew Parish, Norwalk.

MR. MATTHEW LOMAN, appointed to Transitional Deacon, Saint Gregory the Great Parish, Danbury.

RETIREMENT

REVEREND MICHAEL F. FLYNN, to Retirement. Effective date was July 5.

REVEREND DONALD A. GUGLIELMI, to Retirement. Effective date was July 1.

GRADUATE STUDIES

REVEREND DIOUS JOSEPH, leaving the Diocese of Bridgeport to pursue Doctoral Studies. Effective date was July 31.

OTHER

REVEREND PETER CIPRIANI, appointed Catholic Chaplain to the Fairfield Police Department. Effective date was June 15, for a term of three years.

IN RESIDENCE

REVEREND JOHN J. INSERRA, assigned to Saint Patrick Rectory, Bridgeport, to assist in ministry at the Cathedral Parish. Effective date was July 1.

*Reverend Francis T. Hoffmann
Vicar for Clergy
July/August, 2022*

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Editorial



For everything there is a season

A YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE

BY ELIZABETH CLYONS

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

When I was little and it came time to bid visitors farewell, I would hide upstairs. There's something about goodbyes that has never sat well with me. I would rather freeze everyone in time the way they were when we were enjoying ourselves together. They say that change is the only constant in life, but I've never done well with transitions.

It is at these times that I remember Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8:

- 1 *There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.*
- 2 *A time to give birth, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.*
- 3 *A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build.*
- 4 *A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.*

5 *A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.*

6 *A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.*

7 *A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be silent, and a time to speak.*

8 *A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.*

Change is uncomfortable and can be scary, but it is inevitable. The more we can lean into its natural rhythm in our lives, the better equipped we will be the next time we are faced with something unexpected.

Over the years, the beach where my family vacations in Massachusetts has experienced physical changes. Every year, there are noticeable differences to the formation of the dunes due to erosion. Tide pools and sandbars

pop up in different places along the beach, as its new landscape is revealed after a long winter.

These changes are natural. As natural as the tides. When we step onto the beach at the beginning of the season, there is always something new and exciting to

and approach it with excitement rather than fear.

As much as we'd like to freeze time, growing and changing is healthy and natural. We should celebrate where we've been, what we've learned and the people we've met along the way. There are valuable lessons that we learn during each stage of life and that will only continue as we move forward and gain more life experience.

Things take time.

Change takes time.

Healing takes time. As does the gradual transition between each season. We should give ourselves the same respect

as we do nature, saying, "for everything there is a season." We should look at change with the same anticipation as we do the excitement of the start of a new season, full of hope for the fullness of days to come. ■

"The more we can lean into its natural rhythm in our lives, the better equipped we will be the next time we are faced with something unexpected."

discover. As I seek to grow and make changes in my own life, I am trying not to let worry and fear of the unknown take hold. I am trying to treat each new venture as I do the discovery of the changing seaside landscape,



Americans and the Israelites

SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

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

Do you remember that scene in "The Ten Commandments" when actor Charlton Heston, as a Hollywoodesque Moses, was coming down Mount Sinai with the stone tablets and saw the Israelites engaged in all kinds of debauchery, violence, insurrection, rioting, idolatry, thievery, swindling, licentiousness, adultery and anger...pretty much like modern America?

While he was busy on Mt. Sinai, negotiating with God, the people were left to their own devices, and things went downhill fast. God wasn't good enough for them. They wanted something new to worship, so they had Moses' brother Aaron

craft a golden calf. It was an open invitation for them to pursue their baser instincts, which they quickly did.

Now, forgive me if I get my details from Cecile B. DeMille instead of the Book of Exodus. It may not have happened exactly this way, but it was pretty close. Charlton Heston did such a good job that if you haven't seen the movie, rent it.

Moses hadn't even given the Israelites the Ten Commandments, and they were already breaking them. Just as the mob was about to offer human sacrifice to the idol, Joshua blew the shofar, and Moses appeared on the hilltop and saw the people he led out of

Egypt engaging in what the modern media would probably characterize as "largely peaceful rioting." He was enraged and uttered the imprecation: "Woe unto thee, O Israel! You have sinned a great sin in the sight of God!"

At that point, Edward G. Robinson, who played the insidious obstructionist Dathan, yelled back, "We will not live by your commandments, WE ARE FREE!"

And Moses bellowed: "THERE IS NO FREEDOM WITHOUT THE LAW!" Wow. Hollywood got it right that time.

Then, Moses broke the tablets on the golden calf, and all the idolaters fell into an abyss, which probably makes you wonder where Moses is today when we need him. Of course, today Moses wouldn't have to break the Ten Commandments because everyone else already is.

So what's my point? That scene from the movie reminds me of the evening news with the rampant crime, chicanery, and civil unrest. You may be thinking, "Don't be such a Debbie Downer. Things are looking up. Our leaders have everything

under control."

Here's the way I see it: When you take God out of the equation, as the Israelites did, the numbers will never add up. All the laws, causes and campaigns won't make sense without God. You may be committed to political solutions, but you need a purpose. And that purpose is God, who should be the starting point, not an incidental factor in our lives. We're like those Israelites.

A recent survey by the Marist College Poll explored trends in faith and religion in the United States and concluded that Americans are less attached to practices such as prayer, worship and traditional institutions than ever before. An overwhelming number of the respondents, 72 percent, realize something is wrong and say our country's moral compass is pointed in the wrong direction. That means instead of pointing toward doing what's right, America's moral compass is pointed toward doing what's wrong. That conclusion is shared by 90 percent of Republicans, 77 percent of Independents and oddly only 51

percent of Democrats.

Why is our country in such a deplorable state? I think Nobel Prize author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn discovered the answer when he was trying to figure out why Russia had gone so far astray. He wrote: "Over a half century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of old people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened.' Since then I have spent well-nigh 50 years working on the history of our revolution. In the process, I have read hundreds of books, collected hundreds of personal testimonies, and have already contributed eight volumes of my own toward the effort of clearing away the rubble left by that upheaval. But if I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous revolution that swallowed up some 60 million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: 'Men have forgotten God. That's why all this has happened.'"

And the same is true of America. ■

Parish News

Editor's Note: The following decree by the Most Rev. Frank J. Caggiano formally merges Holy Trinity Parish in Sherman into St. Edward the Confessor Parish in New Fairfield (below). However, the two worship communities have always been closely related. Holy Trinity was originally founded in 1964 as a mission chapel of St. Edward the Confessor Parish. Holy Trinity is located at 15 Route 37 CTR in Sherman, and St. Edward the Confessor Church is located 21 Brush Hill Rd. For info email: parishoffice@saintedwardchurch.org or visit: www.saintedwardchurch.org

The Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano



By the Grace of God and the Authority of the Apostolic See

Bishop of Bridgeport

**DECREE MERGING
HOLY TRINITY PARISH, SHERMAN, CT
INTO
SAINT EDWARD THE CONFESSOR PARISH, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT**

In virtue of the office entrusted to me, I, the Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano, Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, duly concerned with the spiritual welfare of the souls entrusted to me, zealous of avoiding everything that may be detrimental to their well-being and desiring to promote everything becoming of their progress, having engaged with the parishioners of Saint Edward the Confessor Parish, New Fairfield, CT, and Holy Trinity Parish, Sherman, CT, having prayerfully considered the information presented to me, the law and the facts and, having heard all those whose rights may be harmed (c. 50) and, having ascertained from documents and deeds and consulted those concerned that there are no major donors or heirs to be heard and, having heard the Council of Priests (c. 515 §2) on February 10, 2022 and, having determined that the good of the souls requires it,

ESTABLISH THAT

Holy Trinity Parish be merged into Saint Edward the Confessor Parish through an extinctive union. This determination has been made to strengthen the pastoral care of the people of God in this area of my diocese, to bring the full pastoral and ministerial services of Saint Edward the Confessor Parish to the people of the extinct Holy Trinity Parish, to foster collaboration between both communities and effect financial savings and enhance economic viability that will allow for future growth of Saint Edward the Confessor Parish.

Wherefore, I, the Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano, Bishop of Bridgeport, in virtue of canon 515 §2 of the Code of Canon Law, do hereby decree that **Holy Trinity Parish, Sherman, CT be merged, through an extinctive union, into Saint Edward the Confessor Parish, New Fairfield, CT.**

- I also hereby decree that all the physical property, rights, obligations and privileges of the members of Christian faithful domiciled in the territory of the extinct parish, accorded to it by law or legitimately acquired, are to be transferred to and made part of Saint Edward the Confessor Parish.
- By this extinctive union, the territorial boundary of Saint Edward the Confessor Parish is extended to include the territory of the extinct parish.
- Furthermore, the intentions of the founders and donors of the patrimony of the now extinct parish must be respected in accordance with the law (c. 121).
- All sacramental registers, seals, and parish files of the extinct parish are to be properly transferred to, preserved and safeguarded by Saint Edward the Confessor Parish in accord with the norm of law.
- The church of the extinct parish shall remain open as an additional worship site of Saint Edward the Confessor Parish.
- The Corporation of Holy Trinity Parish will remain intact in order to receive possible legacies, bequests, donations, etc.

This decree is to be communicated to the respective administrators of the two juridical persons that are being amalgamated through this extinctive union. It is also to be communicated to all interested persons, according to the norm of law (c. 532). It may be challenged within the peremptory time limit of ten (10) days from the legitimate notification of the decree and in accordance with the norm of law (c. 1734 §2).

This decree becomes effective on July 1, 2022.

Given June 29, 2022, the Solemnity of the Apostles Peter and Paul, at the Catholic Center, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Frank J. Caggiano

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport

Robert M. Kinnally

Reverend Robert M. Kinnally
Chancellor

‘God Made Us Just Right’

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

BRIDGEPORT—Local author Allia Zobel Nolan, a Norwalk resident, wrote her most recent children’s book *God Made Us Just Right* in 2021. The title, published by Kregal Publishers, was chosen for second place in the Catholic Media Association 2022 Book Awards.

The judges of the awards commented, “*God Made Us Just Right* is a delightfully designed board book that will catch and hold the attention of children with its striking colors and fun, playful illustrations. The language is easy to understand and very engaging. The perfect blend of words and artwork will appeal to children of all ages.”

The book focuses on baby animals asking their parents why they were made a certain way, including an elephant with a long nose and a giraffe with a long neck. Their parents tell them God made them the way He did for a reason, which they explain. The book also comes with free activity pages that reinforce and help children retain what they’ve read. These pages are available free to download on Nolan’s website. “Parents can have fun doing the puzzles and word games with their children,” she said.

“God loves diversity, otherwise we’d all look the same,”

said Nolan, “and wouldn’t that be boring?” She said she wanted to write this book to encourage parents and caretakers to teach children to celebrate their uniqueness, rather than seeing them as negatives.

Nolan said she chose to tell the story through the vehicle of baby animals because everyone can relate to them, especially children. She said the best thing about getting to write children’s books is seeing the look of genuine joy on youngsters’ faces. “One of my goals in writing children’s books is getting little ones inquisitive about God and His Creations at an early age,” she said.

Nolan explained that she wanted to combat the message of comparison that is so prevalent in today’s culture. “Kids start asking questions like ‘Why can’t I have blond hair like Jill? And ‘Jean has blue eyes; why are mine brown?’ They get inundated with messages that some traits are better than others,” she said. “Celebration of diversity is the message I really wanted kids to take away from the book,” said Nolan. “God has a purpose for making everyone the way they are.”

Upon receiving this award, Nolan commented, “I am extremely happy to see that a book like this would be celebrated

in this way. It’s always nice to be acknowledged by your peers and for the hard work, dedication and love that goes into a book to be recognized.”

Allia Zobel Nolan has over



150 published titles, which range from the Divine to the feline (cats, what else?). Before branching out on her own, she was senior editor/religious books at Reader’s Digest Children’s Publishing for nine years. She has written books for children, adults, cat lovers, worriers, tween devotionals, and lots more. Her two self-published titles won Indie awards.

“My favorites are the books that make people laugh, and those that bring folks closer to God,” says Nolan.

(God Made Us Just Right is available on Amazon and wherever books are sold. For more information and to access the free activity pages, visit: alliawrites.com)

MEN’S CONFERENCE FROM PAGE 3

CPM is a member of the Fathers of Mercy, a missionary preaching Religious Congregation based in Auburn, Kentucky. Ordained a priest during the Great Jubilee Year 2000, he received his Bachelor of Arts in Catholic Thought from the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Toronto, Canada and his dual Master of Arts and Master of Divinity Degrees in Theology from Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut.

Father Wade has been a contributing writer for the National Catholic Register, Our Sunday Visitor, and other publications. He is also host of the EWTN interstitial series “The Crux of the Matter” and “The Wonders of His Mercy,” and “In Defense of the Eucharist.” He is the author of two books: *The Four*

Last Things: A Catechetical Guide to Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell and Overcoming the Evil Within: The Reality of Sin and the Transforming Power of God’s Grace and Mercy. Father Wade is also the host of EWTN Global Catholic Radio’s “Open Line Tuesday.”

Father Larry Richards: A gifted and captivating speaker, preacher, retreat master and author, Father Larry Richards, a native of Pittsburgh, Penn., was ordained to the priesthood on April 21, 1989 for the Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania.

He has served as pastor of St. Joseph Church/Bread of Life Community, also in Erie, since July 1, 2002. In addition, Father is the spiritual director and founder of DME (Divine Mercy Encounter) Retreat

Program in the Diocese of Erie. He is the founder and president of “The Reason For Our Hope Foundation,” a non-profit organization dedicated to ‘spreading the Good News.’

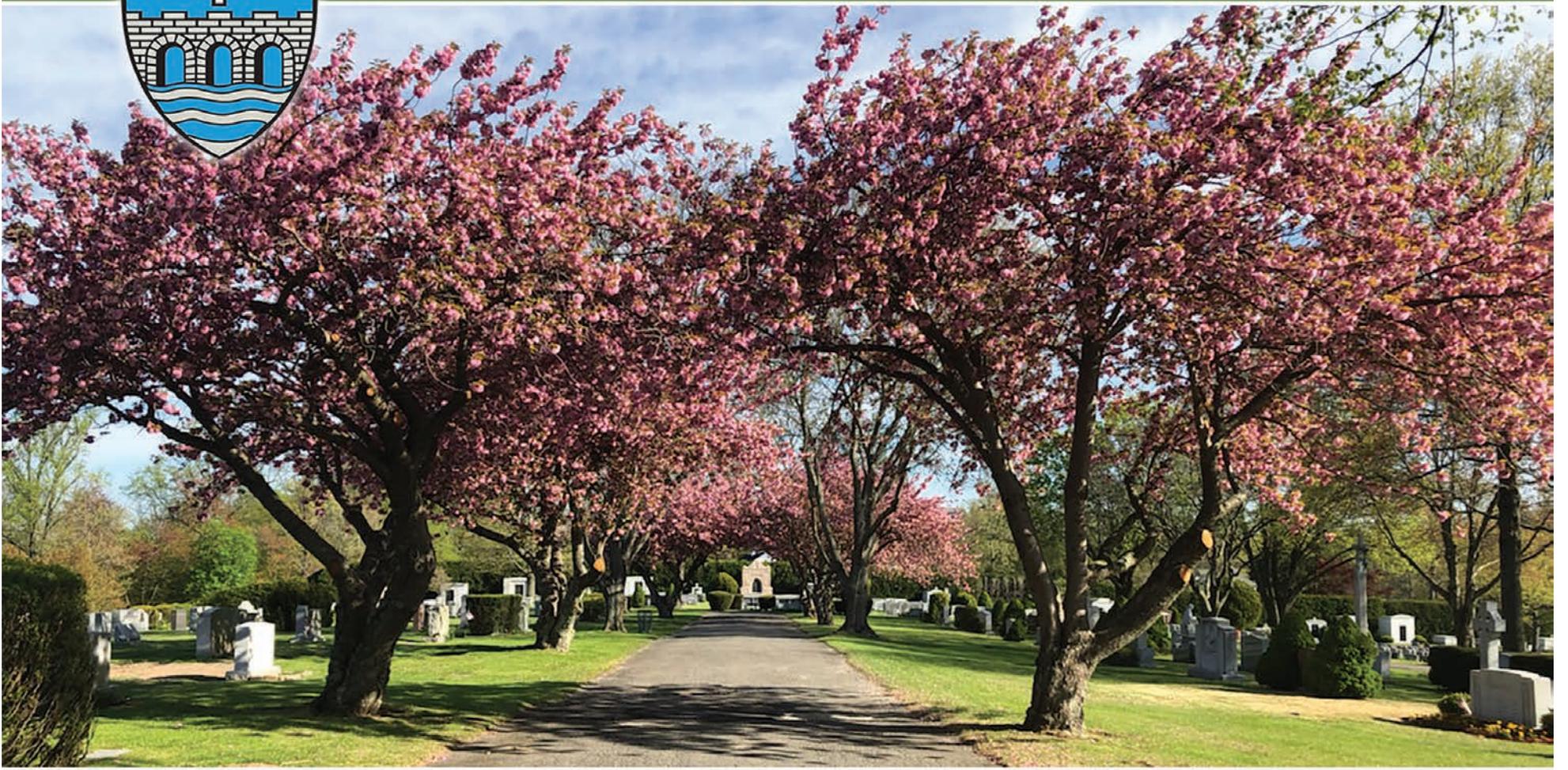
Father Larry’s first book, “Be a Man! Becoming the Man God Created You To Be” was published by Ignatius Press in October of 2009, and was the #1 best seller by Ignatius Press in 2010. Father hosts the EWTN internet radio show called “The Reason For Our Hope” on Mondays and Fridays at 1 pm (EST), and the EWTN radio show called “Father Knows Best” on Mondays and Fridays at 4 am.

(Register online at: www.catholicmen.org / purchase-tickets. For further information call: 860.484.7950.)



FAIRFIELD COUNTY Catholic Cemeteries

A MINISTRY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT



WHY a Catholic Cemetery?

Many people wonder what makes a Catholic cemetery different from any other cemetery.

In short, Catholic cemetery grounds are consecrated. These sacred grounds are an extension of the Catholic Church.

They ensure that those who are together in life are kept together in death.

Since our founding in 1953, the Diocese of Bridgeport has continued our sacred burial practice. Today there are nine active Catholic cemeteries established throughout Fairfield County serving our Catholic faithful.

These cemeteries provide beautiful places of prayer and reflection assisting in our grief.

But most importantly, Catholic cemeteries are reminders of the promise of the resurrection.

We hear about this promise in the Gospel of John: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me will never die."

– John 11:25-26

(Catholic Cemeteries Association)



“When a person comes into one of our cemeteries, it should be an inviting, welcoming, prayerful, and respectful place because it is sacred ground... The cemeteries are part of a pastoral mission of the Church and a pastoral outreach to the bereaved. It is important that we re-imagine the whole ministry of bereavement while also preserving the traditional beauty, blessing and sacredness of a Catholic funeral.”

BISHOP FRANK J. CAGGIANO

When a loved one passes there are many tasks to manage. In addition to your loss and sorrow, you have 83 decisions to make in 72 hours.

1. Consult your cemetery Family Advisor for information
2. Name, address and telephone numbers
3. How long at present address
4. Date of birth
5. Place of birth
6. Legal proof of age or birth certificate
7. Citizenship, citizenship papers
8. Social Security Number
9. Business name or employer's address/contact
10. Occupation and title
11. Father's name
12. Father's birthplace
13. Mother's maiden name
14. Mother's birthplace
15. Religious name (if applicable)
16. Military Service Serial Number (if applicable)
17. Military Discharge Certificate (if applicable)
18. Legal Will and Power of Attorney
19. Pensions
20. Insurance Policies (life, health, car, property)
21. Investments
22. Bank books, account numbers
23. Deeds to properties (house, cottage)
24. Bill of sale of automobile
25. Income tax returns, receipts, cancelled checks
26. Disability claims
27. Cemetery Certificate of Ownership
28. Marriage License
29. Addresses of children, relatives, close friends, etc.
30. Passwords: computer, accounts, social media
31. Meet with funeral director, cemetery advisor and/or clergy about details
32. Discuss options with loved ones
33. Choose cremation or burial
34. Select style of urn or casket
35. Which funeral practitioner or crematorium to call
36. Place where service is to be held, (e.g. funeral home; parish)
37. Length and location of the visitation
38. Reception location (funeral home, church, other)
39. Service type (religious, military, casual, themed, etc.)
40. Celebrant (funeral director, clergy, other)
41. Select pallbearers and other participants
42. Choose flowers and/or a commemorative display
43. Choose music (spiritual, popular, live or recorded)
44. Select readings (religious and/or secular)
45. Charitable organizations for in memorium donations
46. Select catering style (classic, gourmet, themed, custom)
47. Select the cemetery/mausoleum (niche or crypt location)
48. Vault or sectional crypt
49. Style of memorial (marker, stone, niche, bench, etc.)
50. Decorative elements and inscriptions
51. Interment service details, celebrant, etc.
52. Note the details/people to be included in obituary
53. Make notes on what to include in eulogy
54. Transportation for deceased, family
55. Determine budget and how expenses will be paid: (Full amount due at the time of crisis, or, in affordable installments available by pre-planning) Who to notify when death occurs:
56. Funeral home and cemetery
57. Doctors/medical practitioners
58. Notify relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbors
59. Insurance agents (life, health and accident)
60. Organizations (religious, fraternal, civic, veterans, unions)
61. Lawyer, accountant and executor bankers, investors, creditors, government responsibilities at time of death:
62. Set time/date of services, visitation, interment
63. Inform and instruct pallbearers
64. Clothing for the deceased
65. Create online memorial (e. g. Sharing Memories TM)
66. Social media announcements
67. Write eulogy or provide notes to assist the writer
68. Prepare home for receiving visitors
69. Check and sign legal papers, burial permits, etc.
70. Place obituary or provide vital statistics about deceased to newspaper
71. Respond to phone calls, messages, cards
72. Arrange lodging for out-of-town guests
73. Make list of callers and floral tributes for mailing thank you cards
74. Arrange for any special religious requirements
75. Check Will regarding specific wishes
76. Order the Death Certificate
77. Arrangements for care of dependents and pets
78. Arrange clergy participation, pay clergy fees
79. Pay utilities and other current or urgent bills (mortgage or rent, taxes, installment payments)
80. Pay any outstanding medical or legal fees
81. Pay florist and caterers, unless paid in advance
82. Pay funeral fees, unless paid in advance
83. Pay cemetery fees, unless paid in advance

(Information provided by Arbor Memorial – Toronto, Canada)

Catholic Cemeteries

Bereavement program offered in parishes by Catholic Cemeteries

By JOE PISANI

TRUMBULL—Carolyn Killian believes bereavement has no boundaries. She has seen the loss of a loved one afflict the young and the old, parents and children, the rich and the poor, believers and non-believers. “The grief that people face is overwhelming and exhausting,” Killian said.

As director of bereavement for Catholic Cemeteries she is in charge of programs being created for parishes throughout the diocese. “In our effort to extend support and comfort to our families, we have established a new bereavement outreach, which involves partnering with parishes interested in joining a diocesan-wide consortium,” she said.

Called the *New Day Bereavement Program*, it has distinguished itself for decades as a highly successful faith-based, small group support program.

“We have seen young people and old people in deep grief,” she said. “We’ve seen many, many parents who have lost children. There are so many people struggling to figure out how to go forward with incredible loss, and this offers a way to see where God is in their grief journey.”

Killian and her colleagues have trained 20 facilitators—with six more currently undergoing training—from St. Catherine of Siena-St. Agnes in Greenwich; St. Michael the Archangel in Greenwich; St. Roch in Greenwich; St. Thomas More in Darien, St. Mary in Greenwich and St. Cecilia-St. Gabriel in Stamford. She recently began outreach to Spanish-speaking parishes and is working with Father J. Abelardo Vasquez, the pastor of

St. Charles Borromeo Church in Bridgeport. “We’re in the initial phase and planning how we’re going to implement the program and find facilitators,” she said.

As part of her outreach to

Dominican Sister Maureen O’Brien, O.P., who has decades of experience as a grief counselor, put his work into a Catholic framework and developed *The New Day Journal: A Journey from*

healing.

New Day is a structured program that includes prayer, Scripture readings, journaling and sharing responses to questions in a confidential setting, based on *The New Day Journal* by Sister O’Brien. “We rely on the comfort provided by our Lord, and the compassion extended by fellow participants, to meet the life-changing challenges presented by loss,” she said. The participants are guided to accept the reality of the loss, experience the pain of grief and find a way to remember the deceased while embarking on the rest of life’s journey, Killian said.

Killian said she relies on volunteer bereavement facilitators to conduct the *New Day* sessions. “We depend on individuals who are interested in being trained to serve as bereavement facilitators,” she said. “Most volunteers have experienced loss in their own lives and want to accompany fellow parishioners on their journey from grief to healing.”

“People are drawn to be facilitators when they have been through grief themselves and they want to do something to help others,” she said. “Sometimes they don’t know quite what they can do, but when they hear about this, they want to sign up. It’s a healing experience to be a facilitator, and it has a huge impact on a person’s spiritual journey. It is

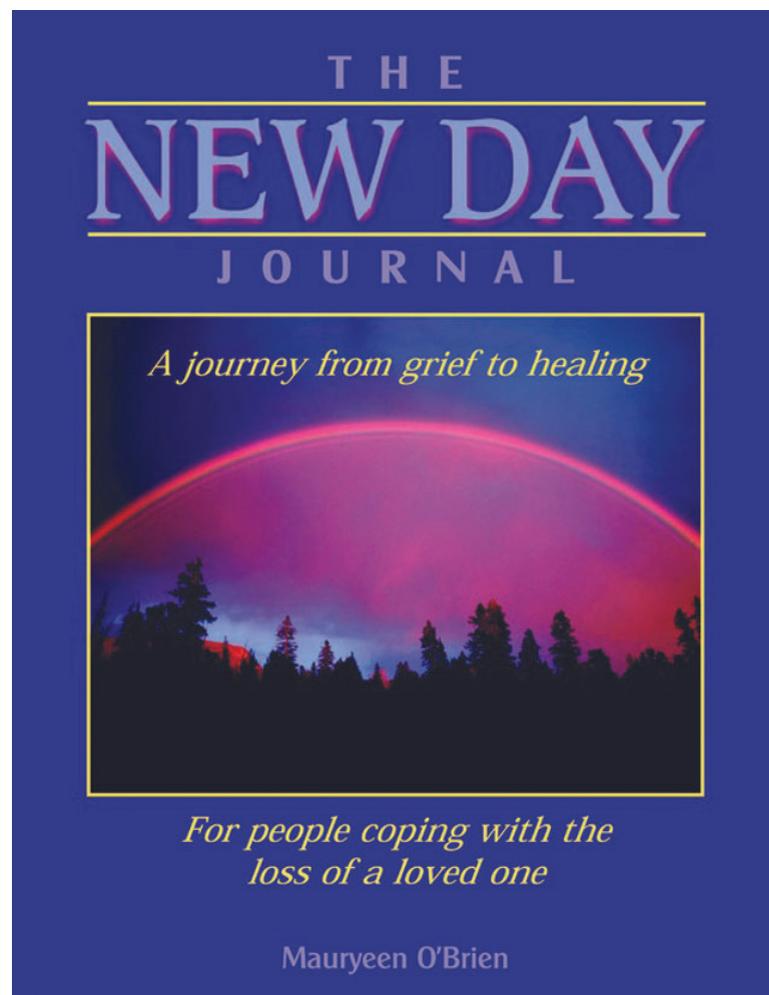
Catherine of Siena and St. Agnes Parish, Killian organized a bereavement training initiative

“Called the New Day Bereavement Program, it has distinguished itself for decades as a highly successful faith-based, small group support program.”

several years ago based on the *New Day* program, along with pastor Father William F. Platt and Jeannemarie Baker, who began Parish Partners. Killian says the necessary characteristics that facilitators must have are compassion, empathy, the ability to listen quietly and to understand that their primary role is not to give advice, but to listen. She said that those who are grieving are in so much pain they can often tell the same story numerous times...and that is part of the healing process.

She compared it to the Risen Christ’s encounter with two disciples on the Road to Emmaus. He listened to his grieving friends and let them talk about the pain they were suffering over his crucifixion. “We have to do the same thing when we walk with people in pain over a death,” she said. “They have to realize they are not alone. They have to walk through their grief. They have to realize ‘I am not the only one who is hurting.’ And also that it is God who inspires other people to show up to help them.... We are just walking with people and listening to them the way Christ did.”

(Anyone interested in supporting fellow parishioners who are grieving and would like to volunteer for this ministry should contact Carolyn Killian at: 203.404.0023 or by email at: carolyn.killian@ctcemeteries.org. For further information about the program, go to www.bridgeportdiocese.org/cemeteries/bereavement)



the Hispanic community, they have trained Spanish-speaking facilitators in Greenwich and are hoping to offer *New Day* in Spanish by next March. “We’re very sensitive to the fact that every community has its own specific traditions, and we want to be respectful and mindful of them,” Killian said. “We’re excited about the opportunity to work with the pastor and people in the parish to see how it will fit into their tradition. The Spanish community is a vibrant part of our diocese, and we want everyone to feel welcome by this program and benefit from this invitation to healing.”

New Day, with materials in English and Spanish, is based on a textbook written by psychologist J. William Worden, the foremost authority on grief.

Grief to Healing. The author of several books, Sister was longtime coordinator for the bereaved at the Family Life Office of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Killian, who was appointed six months ago, said their goal is not to displace or disrupt existing parish programs, but to introduce *New Day* to any parish community that would like it. Catholic Cemeteries will finance the training and all the materials. “We’re looking for pastors who support it and parishioners who want to be trained and participate,” she said. The bereavement groups meet for nine weeks for 90 minutes a week with about eight participants and two co-facilitators, who accompany fellow parishioners on their journey from grief to

incredibly healing to be around other volunteers. It is also an extraordinary way to get closer to God.”

As a member of the Parish Partners Ministry of St.

“People are drawn to be facilitators when they have been through grief themselves and they want to do something to help others...”

Catholic Cemeteries

Burial Support available

By **KENN DEVANE**

The pandemic has touched almost everyone at some point in the past three years. It has also shown us how fragile life is and how quickly it can change.

Those of us who have lost someone recently or in the past know the burden of that loss, the need for closure and the struggle with grief. Interestingly, Funeral Director Tom Gallagher's article in this issue of *FCC* touched on the importance of a wake for helping families and friends deal with these difficult emotions. What struck me in particular was his comment that without taking time for a traditional wake, "their wake never ends!"

In his book, *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*, author J. William Worden writes, "The funeral service has the effect of drawing a social support network close to the bereaved family shortly after the loss has occurred." Funeral homes are the ideal setting for a wake to remember the deceased and prepare for the pending burial. This helps in the closure process and is a good first step in the bereavement journey.

To help support that journey, the diocese recently initiated a bereavement program which is



parish-based and facilitated by trained volunteers. The program is structured around the *The New Day Journal: A Journey from Grief to Healing*, developed by Sister Mauryeen O'Brien, O.P., who has decades of experience as a grief counselor. Carolyn Killian is the director of bereavement and is actively recruiting parishes and facilitators across the diocese. Please see her article in this issue of the *FCC* for more information on the program.

The Diocese of Bridgeport Cemeteries cover 682 acres and we estimate that we care for almost 1,000,000 souls in those

consecrated acres. Our staff see families and friends visiting their loved ones sometimes on a daily basis and they frequently greet each other by name. We also know firsthand about the whirlwind that often surrounds a death and make it hard to stop and simply say goodbye. Our family advisors strive to make the burial process as smooth and comfortable as possible and together with our funeral home partners and the new bereavement program, our families will hopefully benefit from a support network that meets their needs and requirements. ■



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your education, career,
home, family, investments,
vacations
and retirement
but not your burial plan.

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- Pay for the burial space over time
- Select the cemetery
- Choose a traditional in-ground plot, mausoleum crypt or cremation niche
- Select the memorial monument and inscription
- Eliminate this burden from your grieving family

Our Family Service Advisors are available to answer your questions, help you with your plans and assist your family when a loved one passes.

You can contact them by leaving a message at 203.742.1450 ext. 155 or by email at advisor@ctcemeteries.org.

Can you be a Volunteer Bereavement Facilitator?

In our effort to extend support and comfort to our families, we are partnering with parishes across the Diocese of Bridgeport to offer the *New Day Bereavement Program*. This is a structured program which includes prayer, scripture readings, journaling and sharing responses to directed questions in a confidential setting, based on *The New Day Journal*, by Maurycen O'Brien, O.P.

Our need: We rely on individuals who are interested in being trained to

serve as volunteer bereavement facilitators. Most volunteers have experienced loss in their own lives and want to accompany fellow parishioners on their journey from grief to healing. Bereavement groups meet for 90 minutes a week over nine weeks with up to eight participants and two co-facilitators.

Our goal: The facilitators help guide bereavement participants:

- To accept the reality of their loss
- To experience the pain of grief

- To adjust to a world without the deceased
- To find an enduring connection with the deceased in the midst of embarking on a new life

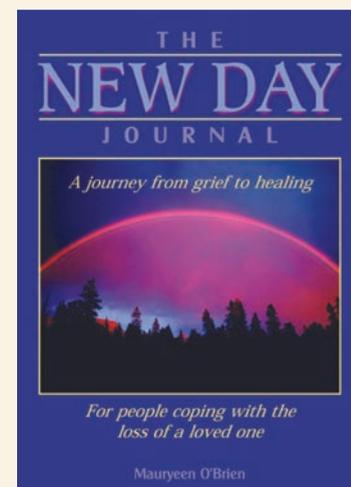
Our philosophy: We depend on the comfort provided by our Lord, and the compassion extended by fellow participants, to meet the lifechanging challenges presented by loss.

Nest steps: If you feel drawn to help support fellow parishioners who are grieving, and would like to hear more about volunteering for this ministry,

please contact:

Carolyn Killian
Director of Bereavement
Fairfield County
Catholic Cemeteries
of the Diocese of Bridgeport
203.404.0023
carolyn.killian@ctcemeteries.org

"The New Day Journal not only tells us what to expect in bereavement, but how to work through it from mere survival to healing and new excitement about life."



Paula D'Arcy, Author of
"When Your Friend is Grieving"

Catholic Cemeteries

Tom Gallagher embraces a nearly 100-year family tradition in funeral services

STAMFORD—Tom Gallagher, founder and owner of Thomas M. Gallagher Funeral Home, understands from firsthand experience what it's like to sit on the opposite side of the table, making funeral arrangements...and it's given him a lot of empathy for families who have lost a loved one.

"What makes dealing with me unique is that I have been on the other side of the table with the loss of my three brothers and my mother," he says. "I went through the tragedy of losing my brothers, Daniel, 18, Terry, 33, and Timothy, 35 when they were young, and my mother Mary Burns Gallagher, who died when she was 59. So, I know what it's like, and I can

put myself in other people's shoes because I've gone through it."

Gallagher also has a long tradition behind him that dates back to 1928, when his grandfather Leo P. Gallagher Sr. began providing funeral services in the Stamford area, followed by his father, Leo P. Gallagher Jr. (His father's business was sold in 1993 and is no longer family-owned.)

In 2013, Tom began his own independent family funeral home, which is at 104 Myrtle Avenue in Stamford, continuing a family tradition that goes back almost 100 years.

"I treat people the way I want to be treated, which is something my father taught



TOM GALLAGHER

me. That's how I run my business," he said. "I decided to open up my own business

because I felt the community wanted and needed to work directly with the Gallagher family and be provided a more personal approach. Being raised in Stamford, I also had the opportunity to meet a lot of people I call friends. By having my own business, I felt I could give them the service they deserve. They are dealing with a Gallagher—a name they have always known to trust."

Recently, he entered a partnership with Nick Cогnetta, owner of Nicholas F. Cогnetta Funeral Home & Crematory, to purchase Hoyt Funeral Home in New Canaan.

Personal service is fundamental to Tom Gallagher. "I provide comfort, familiarity and

an approach that's not directed as a business but as a service. We are here for them, not for me," he says. "This is very important to me, and people are relieved when they're dealing with someone they know on a personal level. Most of the people I serve I know, or they have been personally recommended to me. I'm honored that many families have followed me over the years."

He cites many longtime residents, such as the family of George Robotti, who was his father's oldest friend and says their relationships go back decades. Along the way, he is making new friends. For example, during the COVID-19 pan-

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

TWO CONVENIENT LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU



Both locations provide traditional funeral and complete cremation services

How our Funeral Directors can serve you

When a death occurs, there are many tasks that require immediate attention. Regardless of the day or hour, we are always prepared to respond to your needs quickly and competently.

Our main function is to assist you with all the funeral details including:

- Insure care and custody of the deceased
- Arrange funeral plans
- Arrange the music you have selected
- Assist in arranging for burial or cremation
- Secure necessary permits and death certificates
- Coordinate all details with the clergy
- Place obituary and funeral notices in newspapers
- Supervise the funeral or memorial service

Assist in arrangements for cemetery space, grave opening and closing, flowers and monuments
 Arrange transportation for you and the members of your family prior to, during, and after the funeral
 Make the necessary arrangements for transportation, funeral service, and burial, if the deceased is to be sent to a distant location

Thomas M. Gallagher Funeral Home | 104 Myrtle Avenue
 Stamford, Connecticut 06902 | 203.359.9999

Hoyt Funeral Home & Cremation Services | 199 Main Street
 New Canaan, Connecticut 06840 | 203.966.0700

Cremation

Our staff can replace burial myths, rumors and guesses with facts, options and knowledge. For instance, since 1963 the Catholic Church has allowed cremations. Your loved one's cremated remains (cremains) can be buried (interred) in the sacred ground of an existing plot, or you can purchase a new plot, family estate, private or community mausoleum or columbarium provided the following conditions are met:

- Whenever possible, the body should be present for the funeral. It can be subsequently cremated, either immediately following the funeral or at a later time.
- The remains must be stored in a worthy vessel (an urn which is made of solid material, beautiful and dignified).
- The remains must be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium.
- The remains may not be scattered on the sea, from the air, or on the ground, or kept in the home of a relative or friend. No part of the remains should be separated out from the whole (e.g. kept in a locket).
- Whenever possible, a memorial plaque or stone should mark the place where the remains are buried.

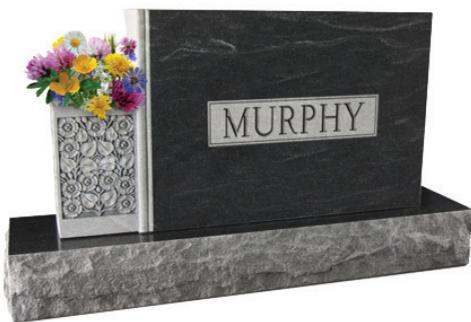


FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| Who can be buried from the church? | Can we have a eulogy? | for the deceased? |
| Can those who have died as a result of suicide be buried from the church? | Are priests the only ones who can lead the scripture service or the cemetery service? | Do such songs have a proper place in the funeral liturgy? |
| Can someone who has been unable to attend church because of living in a nursing home still be buried from a parish church? | What do we do with the cremated remains after the funeral? | Why are we encouraged to pray for the dead? |
| Why does the church not sacramentally anoint bodies after death? | Can we plan our funeral arrangements months or years in advance? | Can I purchase a grave/crypt before I go to a funeral home? |
| At the time of death, whom do we call to set things in motion? | What is the difference between a funeral Mass and a memorial Mass? | Once I purchase my grave are there any additional expenses? |
| What are the funeral rites? | Are funeral Masses allowed in funeral homes? | Can I purchase my monument from the cemetery directly? |
| Are catholics allowed to be cremated? | Why can't we schedule the funeral in the parish when we want it? | What happens if a loved one passes during winter? |
| Who can read the readings at the funeral Mass? | Are there some days were funerals are not allowed by the church? | Can I plant flowers on my loved ones grave? |
| What music is allowed? | Is there a fee to the church? | Does the cemetery have payment plans? |
| | Can we include secular songs which the family chooses because they held special significance | Do I need a foundation for my monument? |
| | | How many interments are permitted in a grave? |

FOR ANSWERS TO THESE AND OTHER QUESTIONS VISIT WWW.BRIDGEPORTDIOCESE.ORG/CEMETERIES/FAQS

SOME BURIAL TERMS FOR YOUR REFERENCE



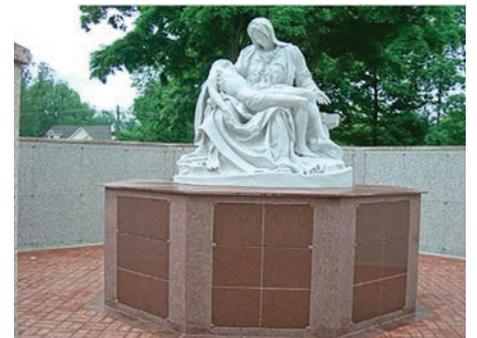
In-ground Burial

requires a cemetery plot, a casket and vault or an urn for cremains and a memorial monument or marker.



Columbarium Burial

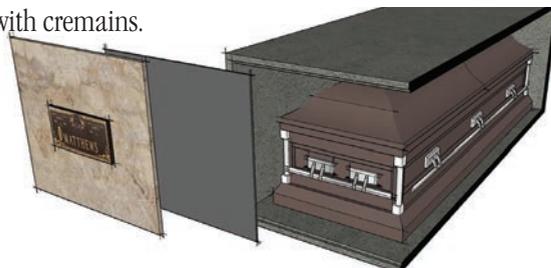
generally an outdoor structure which provides niche spaces for urns with cremains. These are sealed behind marble slabs.



Mausoleum Burial

an indoor or outdoor structure that provides a crypt (casket) space or a niche space for an urn with cremains.

The crypt is sealed behind a marble "shutter front" slab and the niche can be sealed behind marble or glass.



Family Estate

is a custom designed burial plot that enables families to build lasting tributes for generations to come.

Catholic Cemeteries

THOMAS GALLAGHER FROM PAGE 18

demic, he received a call from a family that wanted to send their deceased loved one back to Nigeria and was encountering difficulties. Tom, however, was able to work it out.

“After serving that family, other members of the Nigerian community from throughout the tristate area have continued to call me to send their loved ones back to their home country,” he said. “This is one way we have been adapting to changing times.”

Traditionally, different groups relied on funeral homes with the same ethnic background, but that has changed, and Gallagher prides himself on being inclusive and open to many different faiths and nationalities.

“For many generations, most funeral homes had their own ethnic clientele, but the Gallagher family was unique because they served every faith and met their specific needs with the same compassion, understanding and flexibility,” he said. “We have always been available for different faiths and traditions to provide the services they require. We weren’t just a funeral home that served the Irish or the Polish or the Italians. We served all faiths and backgrounds from the beginning.”

“My father had a long-standing relationship with the senior rabbi at Congregation Agudath Sholom in Stamford, and he wanted to use my services as well, and I was very honored,” he said. “When he passed away,

“I treat people the way I want to be treated, which is something my father taught me. That’s how I run my business... They are dealing with a Gallagher—a name they have always known to trust.”

his family called me to bring him back from Israel, where he had been living.”

As part of his effort, he recently started Sholom Funeral Chapel for the Jewish community, so they have a place of their own.

“This lets us have a local Jewish funeral home for their community,” he says. For further information, email info@sholomchapel.com or call 203.324.4494.

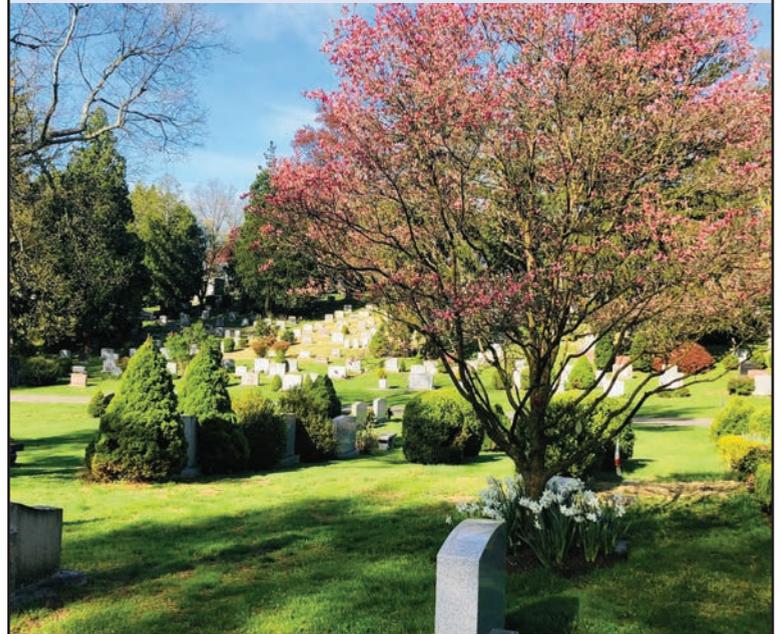
A native of Stamford, Tom

graduated from Stamford Catholic High School and Salve Regina University in Rhode Island and later attended funeral school. Tom, his wife Adela, who helps with the business, and their son and daughter live in Wilton, where his business has expanded in recent years. They are members of Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

Looking back on the changes in the funeral industry, Tom says he has adapted to stay abreast with the times, but that some things, such as good service, empathy and compassion never change and are fundamental to serving families when a loved one passes.

“I come from a very large family and I interact with a lot of my family’s friends who come to me because they recognize the Gallagher name and what it means,” he said. “It is always a great honor when my father’s friends call me because of the long-standing relationship they had with him. Not only are they my father’s friends, but they’re my friends too. I always love to hear stories about how my father or my grandfather helped a certain family when they needed it the most. And I’m committed to providing the same kind of service.”

To receive a copy of our Cemetery Information and Regulations booklet, please call us at 203.742.1450 ext.155 or email us at info@ctcemeteries.org.



DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

*Information
And
Regulations*

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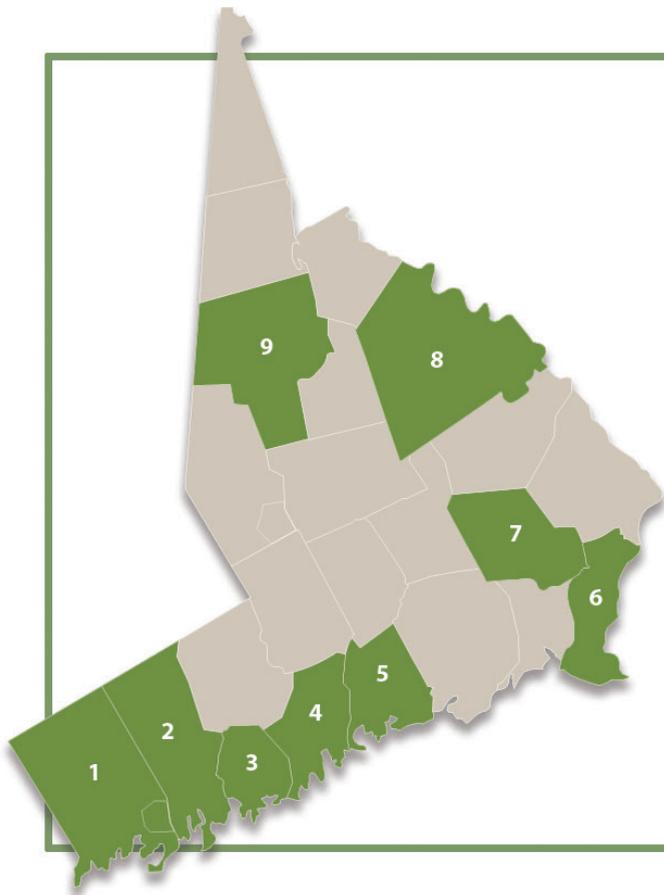
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- (2) **Queen of Peace Cemetery** | Stamford, CT | 203.742.1511
- (3) **St. John Cemetery** | Darien, CT | 203.742.1511
- (4) **St. John Cemetery** | Norwalk, CT | 203.742.1518
- (5) **Assumption Greens Farms Cemetery** | Westport, CT | 203.742.1518
- (6) **St. Michael Cemetery** | Bridgeport/Stratford, CT | 203.742.1459
- (7) **Gate of Heaven Cemetery** | Trumbull, CT | 203.742.1520
- (8) **Resurrection Cemetery** | Newtown, CT | 203.742.1520
- (9) **St. Peter Cemetery** | Danbury, CT | 203.742.1504

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You can contact them at one of the cemetery numbers listed above, by leaving a message at 203.742.1450 ext. 155 or by email at advisor@ctcemeteries.org.



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Parish News

Parish moms' groups foster a community of faith and fellowship

By EMILY CLARK

TRUMBULL—When Meghan Bausch moved with her family to Connecticut last year, she hoped to settle into their new community and find companionship for her three young children. Ideally, she wanted a faith-filled Catholic community as she had while living in California and New York. Though Bausch recognized the difficulty of meeting people in a new place, especially in the midst of a pandemic, she found what she hoped for in Everyday Fiat.

"Being a stay-at-home mom can be very isolating, and it's hard to find community. I'm so thankful that we have this," said Bausch, a member of this ministry for women at St. Theresa Church in Trumbull.

Such ministries are not unique to Bausch's parish as many churches throughout the diocese have women's groups, some devoted specifically to mothers, with a foundation of spirituality and fellowship. Meeting with like-minded women in a Christ-centered environment allows them to share their faith as well as the joys and struggles of motherhood.

That was the reason Renee Sacco and her friend Regina Berardino initiated the St. Thomas Mother's Prayer Group over 20 years ago. "It's so important to feel that you're connected with other women like you, to know you're not alone in your prayer life," said Sacco of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield. "When mothers pray for their children, amazing things will happen."

Like Bausch, both Sacco and Berardino, mothers with children in the parish school at the time, had been searching for a prayer group and started their own, specifically advocating the Rosary. Over time, it has evolved, said Sacco, as they pray for the needs of all people at St. Thomas and include the St. Michael Prayer and the Mother's Petition to Mary as well as the Rosary. Meeting each Wednesday morning during the school year, this group is now open to all women, not just young

mothers, emphasizing the importance of supporting each other at every stage of life.

"We have a list of over 40 people who were once part of the group and we're always praying for them," said Sacco. "If there's a hardship or someone is ill, we know we can turn to our prayer group, and we let the Holy Spirit guide us."

Though some mothers' groups continued to meet, whether in-person or virtually, during the pandemic, others are just now relaunching like the one at St. Jude in Monroe. Jessica Iannotta, the parish's new Family Ministry Coordinator, said there has been tremendous interest and enthusiasm in the group Meeting Other Mothers (MOM).

"This level of interest is a testament to what these mothers need in their lives—camaraderie, spirituality, a chance to be with like-minded Catholics. We've been inspired by St. Gianna, the patron saint of mothers who was very pro-life," said Iannotta, a mother of two. She has distributed prayer cards of this Italian pediatrician, canonized in 2004, to all women in the group. These cards and hand-written notes of welcome are also given to new mothers in the parish with newly



A PLACE FOR MOMS—Women's groups around the diocese provide a place where like-minded women can share their faith, as well as the joys and struggles of motherhood.

baptized babies, she added. "It's a way to reach out and promote a sense of community."

Never in recent years has that sense of community been needed more than it is now. Many of the women in Meeting Other Mothers expressed a desire to connect with others, and Father Joseph Gill, parochial administrator at St. Jude's, said this group will help them forge the bonds of friendship. "How important it is for the Church to fill the void [left by COVID-19] by bringing people together based upon our common faith in Jesus Christ," he said. "It can help us all resist the isolation and loneliness."

In addition to prayer, members of these local mothers' groups

also meet socially. Iannotta plans to start a book club and offer art class outings, while Sacco said the women at St. Thomas have enjoyed Christmas brunch at a member's home and an end-of-year get together before the summer break. Such fellowship, she said, "allows us to become connected socially too."

A social connection combined with prayer lead to what Bausch calls a "really nice blend" in Everyday Fiat at St. Theresa. Not only does this group consist of newer mothers with toddlers but older women as well who offer wisdom and share advice. It's a time of fellowship, said Bausch, as they meet each Friday morning to

chat about their lives and tell stories, read and discuss the Sunday Gospel, plan a meal train for a member having surgery, all of which start with the same purpose and foundation—their common Catholic faith.

"We embrace our mother Mary's fiat as we say, 'yes' to God's call," Bausch said. "In the midst of motherhood, we say a simple 'yes' when we're corralling the kids, changing diapers, making meals. It's our fiat."

And it's a way—through fellowship, community and prayer—for these women to live their faith and learn from one another as they balance the many roles in their lives. ■

'Into Life: Love Changes Everything'

STAMFORD—Are you looking to enter deeper into the same spirituality of life from the Sisters of Life? In response to the overturning of Roe vs Wade and the diocesan call to serve women in need, Project Beloved, in cooperation with the Church of the Holy Spirit, will host "Into Life: Love Changes Everything"—a 12-part original series starting Tuesday, September 6, and running Tuesday nights from 7:30-8:30 pm at Church of the Holy Spirit parish hall, 403 Scofieldtown Rd., Stamford, Conn.

Rooted in the wisdom of the Sisters of Life, this series introduces participants to new

ideas for building a culture of life and solidarity, offers the opportunity for prayer and reflection, and develops and refines skills for accompanying women through an unexpected pregnancy.

This program is for:

- People who want to learn how to better accompany women through an unexpected pregnancy
 - People who desire to reflect on and live a spirituality of life
 - People who want to discover a new way to engage pro-life issues beyond political polarization
 - Anyone who is curious about a pro-life vision of the world
- Learn what it means to deeply listen to and understand the heart



of another, how to rejoice in the beauty of the individual person, and what it means to truly accompany someone into God's

life and freedom.

(Please RSVP by September 1, to Noelle Amann at noelle.gross@gmail.com or 857.345.0808.) ■

Sacred Vestments

Designer uses talents to honor God

By KATHY-ANN GOBIN

NORWALK—Creating a cassock for her son's first altar server duties at Mass was the beginning of a blossoming faith-filled company steeped in textile expertise, honed from some of the most famous fashion houses in the world.

Sacra Indumenta, which means sacred clothing, was borne from the desire of accomplished textile designer and now sacred vestment designer, Susan-Jayne Caballero, to use her talents to honor God.

"God formed me to have all of this training in textiles and is calling me now to do this," she said, while sitting in her home office surrounded by books of inspiration and exquisite materials from around the world waiting to be transformed into sacred vestments or liturgical accessories. Caballero, a graduate of the

Fashion Institute of Technology, studied abroad at ESMOD, a French private school of fashion and has worked with iconic fashion houses including Tommy Hilfiger, Diane Von Furstenberg and Ralph Lauren, the latter as a designer for 15 years.

"As the love of the Mass continues to grow and people return to churches, new garments are needed," she said. "There is this rediscovery of beauty in the Mass." This beauty is intricately reflected in the garments that she makes. Caballero sounds almost poetic as she describes the process of selecting the proper materials and making the garments with both form and function with bias-cut gussets, appliques and godets.

Inspiration, she said, often comes from historic pieces and the beauty of European churches she visited during her time studying abroad. As fate would have

it, she met her husband Heitor, at a Lutheran church in New York City where he was working while studying the sacred art of liturgical music. Through his faith as a Catholic, their marriage and growing family, she said, "I started to see the fullness of grace," recalling the many interactions at their children's Catholic school and church, St. Ignatius of Loyola in New York City.

She credits those interactions with opening her eyes to a conversion from the Lutheran religion to Catholicism. "My conversion is essential to this company," she said, adding that she wanted to give her hands over to God. She became a Catholic in 2012 during the Easter Vigil Mass. "It's a really cool feeling because through the love of my first vocation and as a mother and a wife that I came to love what *Sacra Indumenta* is becoming



SUSAN-JAYNE CABALLERO, ACCOMPLISHED textile designer and now sacred vestment designer, use her talents to honor God.

through making a cassock for my son," she said. "He got to serve Christ," she said. "That is my inspired moment."

And the inspiration that started it all, her son Sebastian's first server surplice and his cassock, made from a vintage 1930s pattern, hangs on a sewing mannequin and stands in her design room, a highly organized converted garage space with numerous rows of fabrics and materials, a cutting board and two walls of bookshelves packed with inspirational and historical reference materials. "I run the company the way I ran things in the industry," she said, adding that visits to the Garment District in New York City to source materials also affords her an opportunity to catch up with former colleagues in the fashion world.

Caballero designed a 12-piece rose con-celebrant Mass set for Father Paul Murphy, pastor of St. Thomas More in Darien, to wear during the two Sundays on the Liturgical calendar where rose is designated, Advent and Lent. "They are quite spectacular," Father Murphy said of the vestments created by Caballero. "That's the result of her personal touch."

Father Murphy said he was familiar with Caballero's work, and she came highly recommended by priests in the diocese. "I asked her to come in and told her what we were looking for. We went over designs, different colors and fabrics," he said. "She came up with patterns and made sure they were fitted properly." "By having the personal touch of Susan-Jayne we had far more options and it shows in the end results," Father Murphy said of

the vestments that were gifted by St. Thomas More parishioners, Brian and Laurie Conroy.

"It was very kind of them," Father Murphy said. "They very generously stepped forward when they realized we did not have rose-colored vestments." The Conroy's gift was in loving memory of Laurie Conroy's grandmother, Virginia Bloom and it helped the parish to continue to update and upgrade its liturgical vestments.

"It was a beautiful moment," Caballero said of seeing Father Murphy wearing the rose-colored vestments during the Mass. "It moves beautifully," she said of the vestments and Mass set that took four and a half months to create. "When it is a Mass set you see the luster of the set and brocade of the motifs working together," she said. "A priest wears his vestments to be clothed like Christ. I cannot remove my fascination and adoration of what that means," she said, adding it is important to bring the finest things of the earth as offerings, such as silk or linen. "What is the finest thing you can give to Christ, if you know it fails in comparison to what He gives?"

Caballero said her company continues to grow by word of mouth through the Church community and priests who also find examples of her work on several social media sites. "Creating these sacred vestments and liturgical accessories has to be done through the lens of adding beauty to the Mass," she said. "There is nothing more beautiful than the Mass and honoring God."

(For more information on her work visit www.sacraindumenta.com.)



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July/August 2022

St. Vincent's Hospital farm stand promotes health and wellness

By EMILY CLARK

BRIDGEPORT—For many, one of summer's pleasures is visiting a farmers' market for local produce, but that can be difficult for those living in Bridgeport on a limited income. St. Vincent's Medical Center, in partnership with the Bridgeport Farmers Market Collaborative (BFMC), aims to change that as it continues its weekly farm stand, providing fresh fruits and vegetables to a community most in need.

Boxes filled with red leaf lettuce, pickling cucumbers, yellow squash and more lined the tables outside the hospital's main entrance. All produce, plus homemade honey, jams and relishes, is provided by Killam & Bassette Farmstead of South Glastonbury which has served this farm stand for the past three years. Under the bright midday sunshine, city residents and St. Vincent's staff chatted as they made their purchases on a recent Tuesday.

"One day a week for six months, this is not a food desert. Our farm stand addresses food insecurity and helps the underserved," said Edna Borchetta, SVMC mission services and community outreach specialist who also manages the popular stand. It is open every Tuesday from 11:30 am-4 pm through November. The term "food desert" is often used to describe urban areas where access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh fruits and vegetables) is restricted or nonexistent due to either an absence of grocery

stores, lack of transportation or an inability to afford healthy foods.

Bill Hoey, SVMC vice president of mission services, said this service and the farm stand itself allow all people access to affordable, good quality food, an extension of the hospital's historical mission. "St. Vincent's was built to address health disparities and inequalities," said Hoey, "It's rooted in our core values and in the loving mercy of Jesus."

Traditional forms of payment are accepted in addition to Bridgeport Bucks, \$5 coupons that can be used at any of the BFMC markets. The BFMC also doubles incentives for those participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Because each person deserves reverence when shopping for their family, Hoey added, extra coupons are sometimes given to customers to ensure they get what they need. "This is their store," he said. "It's heartbreaking when they have to put something back." He recalled seeing shoppers who would have had to go without another bag of carrots or a basket of strawberries for their children if not for a few additional coupons.

The hospital's mission also extends to nutrition education as Chef Raquel Rivera of A Pinch of Salt offers live cooking demonstrations once a month, showing visitors how to prepare a healthy dish using produce they purchased from the farm stand. As she gave cooking tips and answered questions, Rivera



sautéed a batch of fresh vegetables, herbs and rice, encouraging her audience not to waste anything. "I see the farmer has carrots today," Rivera said. "You can even use the tops!" Once the dish was complete, visitors delighted in tasting free samples. This, Borchetta said, shows how



ONCE A WEEK, the farm stand at St. Vincent's Medical Center provides fresh fruits and vegetables to a community most in need.

the program comes full circle and has so much to offer.

In addition to the farm stand and cooking demos, nurses and community health workers are also on hand to prescreen for diabetes, answer general health questions, provide blood pressure checks and distribute handouts with recipes, nutrition information and stress relief strategies in both English and Spanish. According to Jocelyn Maminta, director of multimedia for Hartford HealthCare, once community health workers iden-

tify a need, they can direct people to resources, provide referrals and make appointments.

Milagrosa Seguinot, a certified community health worker, said the response to these health and wellness services has been so positive. "Sometimes they [visitors] don't know all the resources so we inform them, educate them, and give them simple tips," she said. "We want them to feel comfortable and to let us meet their needs." And they do, benefitting from the outreach that embodies the philosophy of St. Vincent's, proving Borchetta's comment: "We are living our mission and doing God's work."

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St. Anthony Gift Shop

She made a deal with God to spread his word

By **JOE PISANI**

Kathleen Conroy-Cass made a deal with God. It went something like this: "If you take care of my family, I'll do everything to spread your word." That was more than 25 years ago when her oldest daughter suffered a series of medical ailments and was in and out of the hospital with a condition the experts couldn't diagnose. Kathy was desperate and prayed for her daughter...and for personal direction. "I was working as a part-time bookkeeper at the time but told God I would work anywhere," she recalls.

To fulfill her part of the bargain and spread the good news, she became somewhat of a traveling saleswoman with a cabinet of religious items she kept at the back of St. Anthony Parish in Ansonia. She took her little business on the road and would fill up Rubbermaid bins with prayer books, rosaries, medals and statues and set up tables at church events in the Diocese of Bridgeport and

Archdiocese of Hartford.

From those humble beginnings came St. Anthony's Book & Gift Shop in Orange, which has been in operation almost 25 years. To Kathy, it's more of a ministry than a business, and she has been spreading the word to Catholics, Christians and anyone who walks through the door. "People need to know they're not alone," she says. "People need to know that God is with us all the time and that they have a guardian angel. Even though I never know who's coming through that door, I always spread that message."

Many customers come in and confess, "I'm not really religious." Kathy lets them look around and offers to help them. While there, they inevitably open a book, see a saying on a plaque, or read words from a psalm. "They go out different than when they came in," she says. There are occasions, too, when people confronting a crisis find themselves drawn to St. Anthony's because they see his image outside.



KATHLEEN CONROY-CASS HAS OWNED and operated St. Anthony's Book & Gift Shop in Orange for almost 25 years.

"Sometimes I meet them at the door. Maybe they just had a miscarriage or had a child die or be addicted to heroin or had a friend commit suicide," she says. "I've had people crying in my arms because of a tragedy they suffered, especially the death of a child. One woman was at the door, and she cried and cried and I held her and told her I was so sorry." Many of them are looking for God at critical moments in their lives, whether it's recovery from an addiction or an unexpected pregnancy. "It's a ministry," she says. "Sometimes I joke that if the minimum wage keeps going up, I'll go be a greeter at Walmart, but God always takes care of me, and I love what I do."

Sherry Smarz of St. Joseph Church in Shelton often helps Kathy at St. Anthony's and said, "I love this store. It's my happy place, and I feel like I'm helping spread the word." On feasts of the Blessed Mother, customers pray the rosary in front of the store, where there is a life-sized statue of Our Lady of Fatima. "Our Lady watches over the people going through this intersection, and some of them even pull in the driveway just to say a prayer to her," Kathy said. Recently, a dozen people gathered to pray outside in view of the traffic on Route 34. "Afterward, a couple from Colombia came in and said, 'This was a miracle. We were driving by and saw you praying the rosary, and we had to come back,'" she recalled.

During these times when Catholics are under attack, Kathy says, "We have to give public witness. I tell people not to be afraid. I'm not afraid because I've got God on my side. When we leave this world, hopefully he'll say to us, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'" The mother of three children, who helped her with the store

over the years, tells customers, "I sell everything but church wine and white shoes." If you don't see it, she'll get it.

St. Anthony's offers everything from "birth to death," including christening outfits, baby gifts, wedding gifts, items related to the Sacraments, and death and bereavement, such as urns and caskets. There are also Christian books, materials for recovery programs, medals, jewelry and holy cards. "People are always thrilled to find a Catholic store because there are hardly any more around," she said. Her clientele includes parishes and customers from throughout the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Along the way, many people have helped her—most notably

St. Anthony, whose relic is on display in the shop and Father Nick Pavia, who helped her move to downtown Derby in 2013. "Father would always come in the store," she recalled. "He even blessed it for me." Several thousand customers supported her when she got caught in a planning and zoning dispute in Orange. "It's a miracle I'm here," she says.

Then, there was that deal she made with God over her sick daughter, who today is the mother of three sons. For a while, her daughter ran a satellite St. Anthony's in Winsted, next door to a health food store. "While she was working there, we learned that all those years her problem was actually celiac disease," an autoimmune disorder caused by intolerance to gluten in foods, she said. "If we hadn't had that store, we never would have found out."

Kathy kept her side of the bargain...and God kept his.

(For online shopping, visit: www.stanthonygift.com. The shop, at 461 Derby Avenue is open Wednesday through Friday from noon to 6 pm and on Saturday from 11 am to 4 pm. Kathy can be contacted by email at: godatwork2000@gmail.com or by phone at 203.888.3390.)

DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT JULY 31—SEPTEMBER 3

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. Fention	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. Louis A. DeProfio, P.A.	2018
		Msgr. Edward J. Duffy	1977
	16	Rev. Victor E. Piaskowski	1961
	18	Rev. Alexander Z. Seregely	1971
	20	Rev. Louis Pintye, O.F.M.	2017
	21	Rev. John J. Dillon	1959
		Msgr. Thomas P. Guinan	1998
	22	Rev. Michael Fay	2009
	23	Msgr. Emilio C. Iasiello, P.A.	1969
	24	Rev. Nicholas Calabro	2015
	25	Rev. Richard F. Futie	2013
	26	Rev. Msgr. Edward Scull	2016
		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. Pranicus	2000
	3	Rev. Msgr. John F. X. Walsh	1967
		Rev. Msgr. Thomas F. Henahan	1998

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Sports

Several bright lights from 2022 sports season

By DON HARRISON

The dominant names in the Diocese of Bridgeport high schools' 2022 spring sports season?

Well, one can begin with Marco Firmender, Fairfield Prep's junior All-American midfielder in lacrosse. Moving over to softball, junior shortstop Niamh Dougherty and senior pitcher Lauren Wasikowski of St. Joseph turned in superlative seasons and were selected to the Coaches and GameTimeCT All-State teams. In golf, Prep senior Michael Rothberg shot a 2-under-par 69 to lead the Jesuits to a repeat Division-I state championship.

Firmender scored 34 goals and registered 18 assists this spring to spark Prep into the CIAC Class L semi-finals. He was even more productive as a sophomore, netting 49 goals and adding 10 assists as the Jesuits advanced to the Class L title game.

In addition to his 2022 US Lacrosse All-American designation, Firmender was named to the Connecticut High School Lacrosse Coaches Association's All-State team for the second straight year. He was also voted the Southern Connecticut Conference's 2022 Player of the Year.

Firmender, who already has committed to attending Pennsylvania, was a linebacker and special-teams contributor to Prep's 2021 state championship runner-up football team. In the classroom, Mark is a member of the National Honor Society and volunteers as a Prep peer tutor.

For St. Joe's, an 18-7 won-lost record in softball was comparatively lackluster, but coach Jeff Babineau takes the opposite view. "For us, it's something like a down year, but with the talent we had, we had a very fine year," he declared.

"Four of our losses were by one run," he added, most notably the 2-1 setbacks against Masuk, the ultimate state champ, first during the season and then in the CIAC Class L quarter-finals. Co-captains Dougherty and Wasikowski, Babineau pointed out, were the principal reasons for the Cadets' "very fine year."

Niamh, who was born in

Dublin, Ireland and then moved with her family to Bermuda, Westport and ultimately Easton, enjoyed a breakthrough season. Consider a portion of her noteworthy statistics: .526 batting average, 1.211 slugging percentage (fifth highest in the state, 9 home runs (fifth best in the state), 46 runs scored (second highest in the state).

Babineau isn't certain, but he believes Dougherty set a St. Joe's single-game record on May 10 when she walloped three homers against FCIAC opponent Darien, resulting in an 18-1 triumph. She drove in seven runs that afternoon.

"She's already hit 16 homers in two seasons and has a good chance to break our career record," Babineau noted. Jenn Vazquez accumulated 18 during her four Cadet seasons (2010-13).

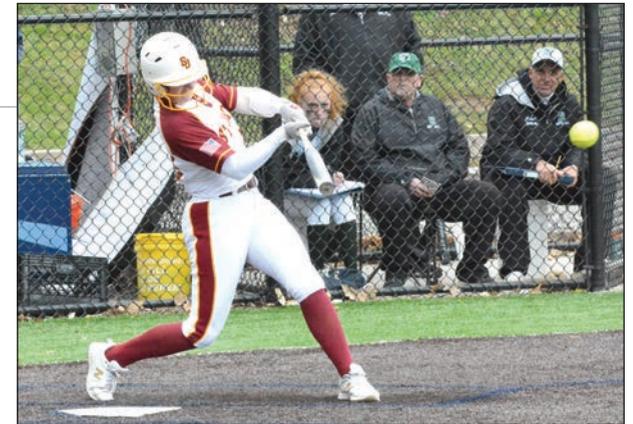
Dougherty, who has committed to attending Colgate, is spending a portion of the summer abroad—accompanied by her softball bat and glove. "I'll be playing with the Irish National Travel Team, and we'll have games in the Czech Republic, Austria, Belgium and a Barcelona tournament at the end of July," she explained.

Wasikowski followed up on her superb junior year (19-2, 0.97 ERA, 234 strikeouts) with another first-rate spring, and if not for a few tough-luck losses, her 14-5 record might have approached the previous season. She compiled a 0.62 ERA this spring, fired three no-hitters, posted 12 shutouts and struck out 266 batters in 135.2 innings.

Lisa, who was selected to the GameTimeCT and Coaches All-State teams for the second straight year, will enter the University of Rhode Island on scholarship this fall.

Another Diocesan softball player of note, Immaculate of Danbury's Sara MacKinnon, completed her scholastic career with another outstanding season. The Mustangs catcher batted .451, drove in 31 runs and scored 29 times, leading Immaculate to a 15-9 record and earning her a repeat on the Coaches' All-State Team. MacKinnon is headed to Providence College in the fall.

LAUREN WASIKOWSKI concluded her two-year career at St. Joseph with a superb senior season: 14-5 won-lost record complemented by a 0.62 earned run average.



NIAMH DOUGHERTY of St. Joseph High put forth a memorable junior season, batting .526 and walloping nine home runs—including three in one game.



SARA MACKINNON batted a robust .472 during her career at Immaculate High and was a two-time All-State selection.

Prep's Rothberg was the medalist in the D-I state championship held June 6 at the Stanley Golf Club in New Britain. He was a two-time Coaches All-State pick and, academically, graduated summa cum laude and was a member of the National Honor Society

He plans to attend Sacred Heart University and become a member of the Pioneers' golf team.



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Column: Thomas Hicks



Solitude

POTPOURRI

BY THOMAS H. HICKS

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

“All the unhappiness of men arises from one single fact, that they cannot stay quietly in their own room” (Blaise Pascal).

Today, in both secular and religious society, the presumption seems to be that shared experiences are the only ones that count. However, a more mature spiritual life involves the neglected disciplines of solitude and silence.

Jesus had a manifest need for solitude. He often sought solitude. He needed to be alone quite a bit. After an outpouring of healing he sought quiet withdrawal—Mk. 1:35: “In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there

he prayed.” There’s Lk. 5:15-16: “Crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus habitually withdrew to deserted places where he could be alone and pray.” He even spent whole nights in prayer—Lk. 6:12: “He departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer.”

The renown spirituality scholar, Henri Nouwen, stated that “without solitude it is virtually impossible to have a spiritual life. We do not take the spiritual life seriously if we do not set aside some time to be with God and listen to Him.” St. Athanasius said that solitude is as essential to the spiritual life as water is to the survival of fish.” And the Muslim Sufi, Sarnad, taught that if you

wish to meet the Lord, then practice solitude. We need to spend time without other humans, to be alone with God.

There’s the astounding and galvanizing story of John Fairfax, who alone in 1969 rowed across the Atlantic. He was at sea for months on end with only himself for company. He kept a diary of his journey. He wrote that for a while he experienced loneliness but reached a point of liking it. There was “the vibrancy of the stillness.” He came to realize what mattered to him in life and what did not. He switched his transistor radio on for shorter and shorter periods each day and sometimes not at all. “I loathed having my solitude shattered by the sound of human voices chattering.” Even the diary in which he recorded his progress came to feel like a hinderance. “Writing spoiled things; it was like having company.” After months without human contact, Fairfax was invited aboard a passing German ship. The German crew was kind and gave him delicious treats and supplied him with some needed goods. Fairfax wrote: “but

once these had been supplied, I craved for the solitude that had been mine for so long.” Back in his boat, he felt relief. “Solitude was like a cherished companion without whom I was at a loss.” So much so that, spotting another ship a few nights afterward, “I switched off my torch, lest they see it and I watched the ship disappear.”

In 1934, Richard Byrd volunteered with a group of others to establish a weather station deep in the Antarctic, near the South Pole. The last minutes found his would-be companions turning back. Byrd settled in alone, and stayed for four and a half months, as the temperature outside the hut dipped to 83 degrees below zero. Byrd became meditative. He wrote that out of the silence came a “gentle rhythm.” Just as John Fairfax aboard his tiny boat on the Atlantic, Byrd wished he didn’t have to have the radio on. Speaking of his experience in Antarctica he said “I felt more alive than at any other time in my life. I became better able to tell what in the world is wheat for me and what

is straw. I was never bored.” In his diary for April 14, Byrd recorded: “took my daily walk at 4 PM today. I paused to listen to the silence. There was great peace. I could feel a oneness with the universe.” On another occasion, writing in his diary, he refers to feeling more alive than at any time in his life. He wrote of gaining something he had not fully possessed before—an appreciation of the sheer beauty and miracle of being alive. After his time in Antarctica Byrd noted: “I live more simply now, and with more peace.”

These solo adventurers tell of being not just unafraid of solitude but loving it. They became totally at home in it. Our Catholic spiritual writers call us to build times of solitude into our lives, times that should be treasured and guarded. We should carve out a sacred place for ourselves, a place designated for times alone with God.

Preferably, one should identify a place in one’s home, and build a time of solitude into the day. One unplugs from the demands of family life and trusts that God will care for one’s family while one is in solitude for a little while. Occasionally, one may bring young children to share in this special time. One may be surprised at how well children respond.

In classic Catholic tradition, processes like illumination, purification, letting go, transformation can result from this practice. We can learn how lovely apartness can be, and when alone we can be more alive. The time set apart for being and listening may grow from 10 minutes to 20 minutes and perhaps a half hour. We strive to be faithful to the practice. Ideally, one may have some access to woods or the sea. Hosea 2:14: “I will allure her, and I will lead her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart.” But for most of us there are the words of Mt. 6:6: “Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father in secret.”

Praying involves more than vocal prayers. Indeed, Jesus warned against wordy prayers (cf. Mt. 6:7).

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Catholic Academy

CAS Summer Camp offers fun for all!

STAMFORD—The Catholic Academy of Stamford's Summer Camp is back this summer and in full swing! The CAS campers are having fun in the sun, enjoying many outdoor games and activities including staying cool in the inflatable pools and checking on the CAS Grows Garden. They also enjoy indoor activities including getting creative with arts and crafts, games and free play. The campers also love the treats that go along with each theme day, including Hot Dog Day, Pancake Day, Ice Cream Sundae Day and the occasional



their school friends and teachers. Danielle Cavazzi, parent of a CAS summer camper remarked that "This was Arianna's very first experience in an all-day summer camp program and she loved every minute of it! CAS

Pick up was organized and easy. Arianna loved the water fun and crafts. She would come home and talk nonstop about her day at camp. As parents, our minds were at ease knowing the care, professionalism and safety that the teachers provided. Thank you for a great experience CAS!"

Daina Basile, a parent of two CAS summer campers shared that her daughters "Leah and Giada were so excited to kick off another week at CAS Summer Camp! As working parents, this camp has been a life-saver! We love that our girls get to spend the week playing outside and having fun making arts and crafts with their friends. It's been so reassuring to know that CAS' wonderful teachers and staff are running the program and watching over them all day. Thank you CAS for providing a safe, well-organized, affordable option for your community."

The CAS Summer Camp runs from June 20 through July 29. ■



visits from the Mr. Softee ice cream truck and a food truck. CAS parents are delighted to have the summer camp back in action this year as an option for their children to spend their summer days playing with

Summer Camp, just like school at CAS, is a nurturing, loving & safe environment. Add in the warm weather, outdoor activities and themed days, and you get Happy Campers! Drop-off/



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The Diocesan Choir will sing for all major liturgical events celebrated by Bishop Caggiano. Rehearsals will be held on Monday evenings at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport beginning in October. The choir is open to singers of High School age and older. Prior musical experience and the ability to read music is helpful, but not required. All adult participants must be in full compliance with the Diocesan Safe Environments Policy including Virtus Certification.

For further information about the Diocesan Choir, contact the Diocesan Director of Music Ministry:

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Shelton pide a gritos sacerdote hispano para su parroquia

POR MARICARMEN GODOY

SHELTON—La parroquia Saint Joseph que pertenece a la Diócesis de Bridgeport, ha pedido desde hace varios meses que nombren formalmente un sacerdote hispano de planta en su iglesia debido a que cada semana crece la feligresía, y desde hace meses cuentan en calidad de “asistente de fin de semana” con el Padre Carlos Castrillón Castro, quien pertenece a la Diócesis de Hartford y por ende no puede tomar las riendas del Ministerio Hispano de la iglesia.

Acorde con el P. Carlos, que es párroco titular de la parroquia Reina y Señora de los Apóstoles en Derby (Lady Queen of the Apostles), por pedido del párroco Michael Dogali, párroco de Saint Joseph en Shelton, desde abril y desde la Semana Santa, se encuentra como voluntario ofreciendo los sacramentos y la misa dominical del mediodía en la iglesia de Shelton, pero no puede formalmente ser parte de la parroquia porque pertenece a otra diócesis.

Aunque reconoció que tiene agendado una llamada telefónica con el P. John Pérez, Vicario de Asuntos Hispanos de la Diócesis de Bridgeport, para contarle el pedido de sus feligreses en torno a un sacerdote de planta en Shelton.

“Me gusta mucho estar en Shelton porque es una comunidad que crece cada semana. Cada domingo hay nuevas familias con sus niños que llegan a la misa y ya he podido hasta realizar unos bautizos, pero no puedo ser el párroco a pesar de que los feligreses estaban intentando firmar una carta al Obispo Caggiano para pedirle que me dejen como su sacerdote”, dijo el P. Carlos. Carta que Camilo Páez, de origen ecuatoriano y el cantante de planta del Coro Hispano de la iglesia de Saint Joseph, reconoció como cierta.

“En realidad queremos que el P. Carlos se quede aquí. Solo deberían hablar entre obispos, quedar en un acuerdo y darnos al padre. El nos comprende, nos apoya, siempre está de buen ánimo. ¡El debería quedarse con

nosotros!” dijo Páez, que acude a Saint Joseph (San José) desde que llegó de su natal Ecuador hace 21 años y comparte en forma voluntaria el liderazgo del coro.

Como parte del Coro y miembro activo de la parroquia San José, se encuentra Andrés León, también es ecuatoriano y llegó a Shelton hace apenas un año con su esposa que logró una posición como médico en el Hospital Griffin en Derby.

Andrés, se encuentra muy comprometido con su parroquia de Shelton. Desde Guayaquil, su ciudad natal, es muy devoto del padre adoptivo de Jesús y junto a su esposa, que también tiene devoción josefina, decidieron activarse en su nueva parroquia y optaron por ser parte del ministerio musical, tal cual lo venían haciendo desde niños en la iglesia María Madre de la iglesia de los Ceibos.

Como regalo de vida se casaron las vísperas de San José Obrero en el Año Jubilar de San José, declarado por el Papa Francisco en el 2021 y apenas hace unas horas bautizaron a su



LOS NIÑOS inmigrantes recién llegados no acompañados son la prioridad de la parroquia de San José, siguiendo con las indicaciones del Año Jubilar declarado por el Papa Francisco, dedicado al padre adoptivo de Jesús.

bebé y la consagraron a San José. Y como la pareja son criados dentro de una parroquia religiosa cuando se mudaron a los Estados Unidos, lo primero que hicieron fue buscar su iglesia porque saben de antemano- que al no tener su familia de sangre los miembros de San José son su familia extendida.

Y este legado de Los Ceibos de Andrés y su esposa, lo confirma el P. Carlos quien dice que ya escuchó cantar el himno a San José y también el nuevo repertorio sacro que los jóvenes músicos deben montar en el coro para fortalecer el ministerio musical.

Conforme con el P. Carlos, a Shelton llegan alrededor de doscientos feligreses. La misa dominical del mediodía casi siempre está llena y están dando la bienvenida

frecuentemente a los recién llegados.

A nivel espiritual, al ser San José el padre adoptivo de Jesús, según el P. Carlos, la iglesia tiene un trabajo claro en cuanto a la figura de San José. “Para la iglesia San José es el padre silencioso de todos, mas aun de los niños que cruzan la frontera solos y que se aventuran a vivir una nueva vida sin sus padres biológicos. Todos deberíamos ver en San José el padre que nos hace falta y el padre que nos fortalece”, repuso.

Si usted desea acudir a la misa en español del mediodía en la parroquia de San José, se encuentra ubicada en 50 Fairmont Place, Shelton CT 06484. O puede llamar a la parroquia al 203.924.8611. ■

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Vocations

We need the love of Christ

We live in a world that is governed by laws. The laws of physics, the law of gravity. And we also live in societies, communities and families, all governed by their own laws and rules. Some are written down, some are not. But all of these laws are meant to serve those who must abide by them. They are meant to protect life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Now, it is true that our laws and our rules do not always live up to this beautiful goal. Why? Because our world has fallen. But, in the vision of the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation, we are told of the appearance of a new heaven and a new earth, of a new kingdom to come.

We can be sure that there will

still be laws and rules in this new City of God. But the central question is: What will those new laws be? Certainly this new kingdom will not be ruled by sin. No. In the new paradise and the new earth, there will be only one law: the law of love written on the cross.

Remember that in the Gospels, Jesus doesn't just suggest that we love one another. He commands it. He institutes love as a law that must govern a new world, replacing one governed by sin and weakness.

And the most beautiful thing of all is that we do not have to wait for this law to take effect in our lives. Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, we can begin to build a

kingdom served by this beautiful law of love here and now.

The laws of men can only seek to limit what our frailty and sin can do to harm us. But the law of love alone is capable of actually overcoming sin and opening new horizons of freedom and fullness of life made possible by the gift of grace.

And so, Jesus leaves as His legacy the very same love that led him to the cross, entrusting it to the Apostles to put into practice as a new way of governing the world. But the Apostles were only able to do so for a limited period of time. And it is no secret that our world still needs that legacy of love. So who will carry it forward? Who has been entrusted with this

legacy for generations to come?

Priests.

We need priests because we don't just need love in our world. We need the love that is willing to offer itself in a complete gift to another, seeing the good of the beloved as its ultimate goal. We need the love that is merciful, the love that forgives and frees us from sin. We need the love that makes itself truly and really present to us.

In truth, we need the love of the cross. We need the love of the sacraments. We need the love of Christ. And, if we want that love to be present in our world today, then we need more priests.

Jesus not only commands us to love one another. He commands us to love one another as He has loved us. And, in our day, we learn what that love looks like



FATHER CHRIS FORD

from a priest, from the one who gives up his earthly life so that others may have eternal life.

Each time we pray the Our Father, we ask for the coming of this new kingdom, which means we ask for the new law of love to truly reign in our lives. Let this prayer sink deeper and deeper into our hearts. Let us pray deeply for the coming of God's kingdom and let us ask God for more priests to show us his face and how we should live the law of love. ■

Young adults gather for 'the gift of the Mass'

By KATHY-ANN GOBIN

STAMFORD—Every Mass is a gift of grace and blessings from God. That was the message shared with dozens of young adults gathered at the group's monthly Mass at Holy Name of Jesus Church. "Let us never take it for granted, the gift of Mass," said Father Joseph Gill. "We are taking part in the grace and blessings of Calvary made present here at every Mass."

Father Gill, pastor of St. Jude Parish in Monroe, said the Mass following an hour of Adoration and confessions at the Romanesque-style church. "If you don't know what's going on, anything can be boring," said Father Gill, after asking those in attendance if they had ever been bored during Mass. "Unfortunately, some people think it should be entertainment. The Mass is not entertainment, it is worship," he said, adding, "We should not be asking, what do I get but what do I give?" "When I lift the Eucharist during Mass, you should be saying, 'Lord, I give you my life,'" he said, imploring those gathered to ponder, "What can He do with your ordinary life, when you offer it to him?"

Father Gill said everyone suffers from the disease of sin. "We are all infected with this disease. The Eucharist is the medicine of immortality." By going to Mass,

he said, "We are tapping into all of the graces God has done for us." Participants of the Mass were given the opportunity to receive Holy Communion by mouth while kneeling at the altar railing. An hour of

and community.

"These events are really an opportunity for young adults to meet other like-minded Catholics and see that they are not alone, that there are other young adults in



Adoration and confessions preceded the Mass with musical accompaniment by Don Rickenback.

"It's really beautiful to have these events for young adults," said Marissa Sherlock, adding there aren't many faith-filled opportunities or activities for young adults after college. Sherlock said she agreed with Father Gill that people shouldn't expect to go to Mass to be entertained. "It really is good to sit and be with God." Sherlock, along with many of the young adults gathered, before heading to a local bar/restaurant for fellowship

Stamford that also seek such fellowship," said Robert O'Brien, from the Development Office of the Diocese of Bridgeport. "After the Mass, we all gather at a local bar/restaurant in Harbor Point to socialize, and the priests will usually join us. It's a special group and we're consistently growing each month."

(The Young Adults Mass, followed by fellowship, is held at Holy Name of Jesus Church on the second Wednesday of every month, next Mass August 10. An hour of Adoration and confessions precedes the 7 pm Mass.) ■

A celebration of seminarians

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

STAMFORD—Seminarians in the diocese of Bridgeport recently gathered at Holy Spirit Church in Stamford for an all-day retreat, followed by Solemn Vespers and dinner with members of the Blessed Michael

McGivney Society. Bishop Frank J. Caggiano celebrated Mass for the men, followed by Solemn Vespers.

During Solemn Vespers, Sebastian Sanmiguel Lopez was instituted as a reader and David Klein and Matheus De Araujo Seixas were instituted as acolytes. Each of the candidates were called forward by the bishop. The bishop then spoke briefly to the candidates about the particular ministry and how they are to carry it out in their lives. Members of the Blessed Michael McGivney Society gathered to share dinner with the men they are supporting.

The McGivney Society was established to provide support to men who are discerning vocations. Society members will help by providing financial support and accompaniment to programs that foster and sustain seminarians in discerning and forming vocations.

"The goal is to cultivate a missionary attitude towards fostering vocations," said Bishop Caggiano. "Society members are answering the call to renewal in a unique way by fostering discerning, forming and accompanying priestly vocations."

Music for Solemn Vespers was provided by Dr. William Atwood, diocesan director of music and Allison Savage, cantor. *(For information on joining the Blessed Michael McGivney Society, email Joe Gallagher at: jgallagher@diobpt.org.)* ■





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